Framing the "Syrian" of Late Antiquity: Engagements with Hellenism

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In a scholion written ca. 700 CE concerning a homily of Severus of Antioch (active as bishop, 512–518), Jacob of Edessa, the notable intellectual and grammarian, expressed his bemusement at a linguistic mishap that had prompted previous scribes to miswrite the name of God.[1] Because of unfamiliarity with Hebrew, certain Greek-speaking scribes copying the Septuagint and other related writings had mistaken the Hebrew tetragrammaton (יהוה, but perhaps altered to be יהיה), which Jewish scribes had often retained in Greek manuscripts, for Greek letters with similar graphic forms. They had therefore rendered the name of God as *pipi* (ΠΙΠΙ) within certain manuscripts of the Septuagint, and this mistake had persisted within Syriac translations of Greek Scripture. As a result, it was not unusual for YPYP, the Syriac transliteration of ΠΙΠΙ, to appear as God's "Hebrew" name under the false assumption that this was what Old Testament Jews had called him.[2] The word, as Jacob observed, had been inserted into manuscripts through the negligence of the ignorant, and it was the goal of learned men to expunge it.

As Jacob explained the misconceptions that had prompted this error, he did not merely illuminate certain complexities of rendering translations of holy writings in late antique Syria. He also expressed insightful definitions of who he conceived Syrians (*Suryāyē*) to be,

and he situated them in relation to the use of Greek and Syriac language.[3] While stating that many foolish scribes contributed to the longevity of God's false name by erroneously claiming to follow the tradition of wise men, he noted that such wise men included "Greeks (*Yawnāyē*) who translated the Scriptures into the Syrian language." Jacob's statement indicates that he was classifying those who were bilingual in Greek and Syriac as Greeks. Equally as interesting, the scholiast also asserted that the fools who misread God's name had claimed to follow the authority of "other Syrians" who had received such translations from these Greeks.[4] These "other Syrians" whom Jacob described were speakers of Syriac, but his decision to label bilingual wise men as "Greeks" and Syriac-speaking ones as "other Syrians" has significant implications. It indicates that Jacob conceived of both the Greek speakers and Syriac speakers of Syria as belonging to a more broadly defined collective of Syrians. If Syriac speakers were the "other Syrians," then the Greek speakers and bilinguals of Syria were simply Syrians. In other words, Jacob's statements hint that language was not (at least in every instance) the single significant feature that defined someone's belonging inside or outside a social group, whether this group was defined according to ethnic, cultural, or institutional criteria.

Jacob's implication that language was not always the defining component of an individual's belonging within a social or cultural collective is extremely significant for identity formation in late antique Syria. In fact, Jacob's statements highlight the lexical and semantic range that the terms "Greek" and "Syrian" could occupy. Although Jacob in his works generally used nouns such as "Greek" or "Syrian" to denote language groups and thereby to distinguish Greek speakers from Syriac speakers, his description of the sagacious and learned men whom foolish scribes claimed to imitate had added an additional twist.[5] By classifying Syriac speakers as "other Syrians," Jacob emphasized that the Greek speakers of Syria who had performed scriptural translations also were, at some level, Syrians.[6] His wording emphasized the conceptualization of the "Syrians" (*Suryāyē*) as a regional collectivity.[7] Although he could label Syrians with the gentilic nouns "Greek," "Syrian," and, in certain

cases, "Aramean" to refer to their language usage, he also conceived of speakers of Greek and Syriac in Syria as belonging to the same broader group of Syrians, as defined in social, regional, and civic terms.[8] Language was not an insurmountable social barrier, and it did not prevent people from engaging in "Greek" or "Syrian" social performances.

Socio-Cultural Performance and Language in Late Antique Syria

Although writing after the Arab invasions, Jacob's complex use of the terms "Greek" and "Syrian" is relevant to the current scholarly discussion of identity formation in late Roman Syria, which constituted many of the provinces of the diocese of *Oriens*. The widespread use of Syriac as a spoken and written dialect during this period has been the subject of much recent scholarly attention. It is well established that what literary sources of late antiquity call "the language of the Syrians" is often Syriac, although in certain cases Christian Palestinian Aramaic or other Aramaic dialects are described in the same way. Many scholars have explored the relationship between Syriac and Greek, and they have demonstrated a cross-fertilization of words, ideas, and concepts between the speakers of both languages in late antiquity, especially during the fifth through seventh centuries.[9] Recent scholarship has also described the spread of Syriac, especially before the doctrinal disputes of the sixth century, as emerging within civic and ecclesiastical frameworks that were permeated with Greek language and cultural idioms.[10]

The significance of speaking Syriac and Greek for identification as a Syrian or as a Greek (*Hellēn*) has not been as thoroughly studied.[11] It is the dominant trend of contemporary scholarship to assume that the difference between a "Greek" or a "Syrian" individual or institution was primarily a matter of dominant language, as well as putative genealogy (Greek/Syrian ancestors) or civic origins (i.e. a city was established by Greeks as a Greek civic polity).

For this reason, it is conventional to treat many cities of Syria, their civic cultures, and their traditional religious activities as "Greek" manifestations because of their "classical" institutional structures or their "Greek" beginnings. A common narrative thread of scholarship on late antiquity is in fact the decline or transition of these "Greek" civic entities.[12] More relevant to this essay is the fact that language is oftentimes treated as the marker of significant social, ethnic, or cultural self-perceptions, and civic or ecclesiastical institutions are conceived of as "Greek" because they relied foremost on Greek language for doctrinal formulation, social networking, or ritual. This line of analysis tends to posit that any claim of a meaningful and continuous Syrian identity, if it existed, would have been anchored within the use of a "Semitic" language in ways that linked Syrians to a pre-Hellenistic past.[13] To speak or write in Greek is thereby classified as the "un-Syrian" endeavor of people who thought of themselves as Greeks.

This prioritizing of language use and its association with ethnic or cultural classification premises that identifications as a Greek or a Syrian were strictly expressed through the use of Greek or Syriac (or other Aramaic dialects). It relies on the assumption that Greek and Syrian identifications and social performances were essential categories that persisted in an unchanging and antagonistic relationship framed by linguistic difference. Furthermore, it assumes that language use primarily would have framed "Syrian" historical identity and memory (if these even existed), and it treats any cultivation of Greek language as evidence for the adoption of a Greek identity in ways that compromised "Syrian" social or cultural performance. In fact, this line of analysis even tends to premise that Syrians, because of their apparent failure to generate a common ethnic or cultural identity based on shared Aramaic speech, never consciously created a common "Syrian" identity or social mentality in the face of Greek cultural encroachment. This emphasis on language thereby imputes that during late antiquity Near Eastern language and culture merely infiltrated civic or ecclesiastical bodies that Syrians conceptualized as Greek because of their reliance on Greek language and culture. It also assumes that any meaningful

Syrian identity that could have existed in late antiquity would have had its origins in the pre-Hellenistic period and that a thread of "Semitic" language and its usage would have been responsible for transmitting it. The possibility that Greek speakers defined themselves primarily as Syrian is not acknowledged, and it is not considered that Syrians, whether Greek- or Aramaic-speaking, interwove diverse cultural idioms to craft new categories of Syrian identification in ways that distinguished themselves from "Greeks," however defined.

Evidence suggests a more complicated picture. Many self-defining Syrians spoke Greek, and Greek and Syriac speakers often classified themselves as members of a common Syrian *ethnos* in ways that either distinguished them from Greeks or added important nuances to what types of Greeks they were. This Syrian *ethnos* was a meaningful social, civic, and regional collectivity without strictly being an ethnic group. Although the Syrian *ethnos* was in many ways the product of Roman imperialism, it still constituted a significant identification form by which Syrians could stress social commonality with each other and differentiate themselves from other identity groups. Accordingly, although the terms "Greek" and "Syrian" constitute useful and perhaps indispensable analytical categories in exploring the institutional structures and language usages of late antique Syria, they often disguise how cultural idioms were experienced by the subjective agents who interacted with them. Cities, churches, and people that predominantly used the Greek language were not necessarily "Greek," and differences between Greeks and Syrians did not have to be located in language use or in ethnic or cultural distinctions framed by language. In fact, concepts and performances of Greek and Syrian identification changed over time, and they interwove traditions and idioms of Greek and Near Eastern origin, including Greek and Syriac speech. Such transformations in many ways determined what the identifications "Greek" and "Syrian" meant in various contexts and how they related to Greek and Syriac speech or writing. In fact, even Greek-speaking inhabitants of cities that had been originally established by Greeks and endowed with the institutions of "Greek city-

states" often defined themselves and their communities foremost as "Syrian." Such Syrians could be Greek, but not necessarily so.

The categories of "Greek" and "Syrian" underwent numerous permutations as the forces of Greek colonialism and Roman imperialism had an impact on the social and cultural performances and perspectives of the Near East's inhabitants. Initially, under the Seleucids, the Syrian *ethnos* denoted an ethnicity that was in theory descended from the ancient Assyrians or Arameans. Syrians therefore were excluded from Greek civic polities even as they adopted Greek language and cultural idioms. Roman imperial intervention, however, generated the concept of the Syrian *ethnos* as a social and civic collective, not an ethnicity defined by common descent. Although the members of the Syrian *ethnos* could differ significantly in language, cultural characteristics, or ethnicity, they nonetheless conceptualized themselves in a meaningful way as members of a discretely defined social group and regional collective of "Syrians." Many such Syrians also conceived of themselves as Greeks by virtue of their citizenship within Greek civic communities. Syrians reckoned such polities to be Greek in collective terms, and all citizens of Greek city-states were by definition Greek. Such Greek collectives, however, integrated "Greeks" with Near Eastern genealogies, cultural practices, and even language usages. Finally, in late antiquity, Syrians reckoned Greeks to be pagans or an exclusive type of pagan who cultivated Greek literary and cultural *paideia*, and they no longer considered Greek city-states to be collectively Greek. While both Greek- and Aramaic-speaking Syrians were conscious of their common membership in the social and civic collective of the Syrian *ethnos*, they conceptualized their civic communities as Syrian, as opposed to Greek, and they framed Greeks in more exclusive terms as erudite practitioners of Greek classical letters or simply as pagans.[14]

Greek and Syrian Identification within the Roman Empire

The categories of Greek and Syrian, their use as identification labels, and the performances associated with them were affected foremost by the various stages of Roman intervention within the Near East. When the Seleucid Greek kings had established their royal authority over the Near East and Mesopotamia after Alexander's initial conquests, they implemented an imperial system that distinguished between the citizens of Greek communities and local Aramaic speakers whom Greeks categorized as Syrian or Assyrian because of their putative descent from the inhabitants of the Assyrian or Aramaic empires. According to the broadest definitions, Syrians generally inhabited the territory between the Mediterranean Sea and the Tigris River, and even to a certain extent beyond.[15] Within Greek settlements, Greek citizens inherited their status as members of Greek civic bodies through patrilineal descent in ways that enabled them to distinguish themselves from those whom they classified as members of the Syrian *ethnos* or *genos*, or ethnic Syrians.[16] Subsequently, Roman intervention prompted Greek communities to extend citizenship and positions on civic councils to ethnic Syrians, even if their perceived genealogies, language, or cultural traits were not Greek.[17] Such Syrians therefore participated in the civic-cultic rituals of their Greek city-states, and they engaged in Greek civic performances that registered as such among citizens of their cities and of peer Greek city-states in Syria, which sent representatives to common games, cultic festivals, and assemblies of the provincial or regional *koina*.[18] Such activities integrated them into the Roman imperial system, and by late antiquity, they had generally bred the perception among Syrians that they were also Romans.

Because of these processes, the expressions of Greek identification that were manifested within the Near East during the Roman period were innovative and diverse. Categories of Greek civic performance became increasingly fluid as they departed from classical Greek paradigms and assumed Near Eastern symbols in local contexts. Although certain notable Syrian authors, such as

Lucian, Tatian, and Justin Martyr, mastered the classical trends of Greek sophists while articulating different critical positions toward Greeks in general, many inhabitants of Syria expressed their Greek identifications and group affiliations by cultivating local symbols and traditions.[19] In this way, the Roman administration collaborated with sympathetic notables to transform their settlements into perceived Greek civic communities, and civic councils exercised local governance in ways that restructured Near Eastern traditions so that they could function within Greek civic systems.[20] The result was that the concepts of Greek and Syrian, instead of being reckoned as antagonistic ethnic or cultural categories, were reconstituted as intersecting civic ones. Many Syrians, regardless of their ethnic genealogies, embraced the concept of being a Greek citizen, of belonging to a Greek constitution (*politeia*), and of engaging in the civic performances of the network of Greek cities that had been integrated into a regional collectivity called the Syrian *ethnos*.[21] In such ways, the Roman imperial system had produced the perception that all inhabitants of Syria were Syrian by *ethnos*.[22]

During this period, the *ethnos* of the Syrians referred to a discrete category of Greek and Aramaic speakers with a common identification, not merely a shared region framed by imperial boundaries or an "ethnicity" defined by a common genealogy or language. Although any notion of a common "Syrian" regional culture, if it existed, was vague and unclearly defined at best, inclusion within the Syrian *ethnos* was socially meaningful for local subjects. In its broadest manifestation, it included the Phoenicians or "Syro-Phoenicians," who also inhabited the various permutations of the province or provinces called Syria. Accordingly, by the high Roman imperial period, the citizens of Syria's Greek cities were both Greek and Syrian regardless of their ethnic genealogies. This notion of a Syrian *ethnos* persisted even as the original province established by Pompey in 63 BCE was divided into several smaller "Syrian" provinces in the centuries that followed and as Rome conquered "Syrian" territories in Mesopotamia. Although Syrians could in theory have located their "Syrianness" in ethnic genealogies that began with the remote figure of Aram, the ancient Arameans, or Assyrians, as Josephus and Strabo suggest, many Syrians were Syrian by means of their civic performances within their regional *ethnos* even if they conceived of themselves as descended from Greeks.[23]

The Greek city-states of the Syrian *ethnos* were "Greek" in a collective sense. Their citizens (*politai*) were by definition Greeks in ways that distinguished them from Syrians who did not have Greek citizenship. The citizens of Nysa-Scythopolis, for example, dedicated an honorific statue to an emperor, and they noted on the statue's base that their community was one of "the Greek cities of Coele-Syria."[24] Likewise, the inscription erected by so-called "Greeks among the Danaboi" in the Hauran seems to represent a group of Greek citizens who dwelled among certain villagers, that is, the Danaboi.[25] In Scythopolis' sister city of Canatha, citizens defined themselves in similar ways. One Canathene, Avidos Agrippa, described his deceased friend "Thaimos Julianos" as a "civic councilor and citizen of the Canathenes in Syria" in a Greek funerary inscription. He then referred to him as a "Syrian decurion" in Latin.[26] In a later inscription, a certain Rufinus called himself in Greek an "Arab of the venerable city of Canatha."[27] His use of the term Arab was not meant to denote strict ethnic affiliation or genealogy, but it reflected the fact that by his lifetime, Canatha had been transferred from the *ethnos* of Syria and its discrete network of Greek cities to the *ethnos* of Arabia and its Greek cities. In such contexts, the labels Syrian or Arab did not constitute a denial of Greek identification, but it clarified what types of Greeks their users were, that is, citizens of Greek cities in Syria or Arabia. These same cities were, as the orator Nicolaus of Damascus stated, *poleis Hellēnides*, and Josephus referred to Scythopolis and many of Canatha's sister cities as "Greek."[28] In a reference to the citizen body of Caesarea Maritima, Josephus claimed that the city's Syrians asserted to their Jewish rivals that their city was one of Greeks.[29] Similarly, *The Gospel of Mark* claims that within the boundaries (*horia*) of Tyre, Jesus had encountered a woman whose daughter was possessed by an evil spirit. The woman was a Greek (*Hellēnis*), but "a Syro-Phoenician (*Syrophoinikissa*) by birth (*genos*)."[30] Although *Hellēnis* may have referred to her use of Greek language, the term could just have

easily described a gentile who conversed with Jesus in Aramaic or Phoenician. Since Tyre was now a Greek community, the woman was a Greek, but her ethnicity, language, or provincial affiliation framed her in social terms as a Syro-Phoenician.

While the categories of Greek and Syrian increasingly served as intersecting civic concepts, and as persons of Syrian or Near Eastern ethnic extraction earned Greek citizen status, Greek civic performance interwove Greek and Near Eastern idioms. While Greek idioms dominated most public media, especially inscriptions, coins, and public buildings, certain civic performances and many personal practices also featured elements of Near Eastern culture. A pair of inscriptions commemorating the construction of a canal at Antioch at Daphne in 73/4 CE, for instance, indicates that certain neighborhoods were named after citizens with Persian names, including Pharnaces, a gymnasiarch.[31] At nearby Apamea, the most significant divinity of the civic pantheon was the Mesopotamian diety Bel.[32] By the second century CE, the Greek citizens of Gerasa had incorporated into their civic pantheon the so-called "Arabian god" (*theos Arabikos*) and the Arab divinity Pakeidas, who was apparently worshipped in the form of an aniconic altar in conformity to certain "Arab" traditions.[33] Likewise, the citizens of Hierapolis-Mabbug venerated the divinity Atargatis, whom Greek speakers often called the "Syrian goddess." Although Lucian indicates that her cult's rites incorporated many Near Eastern idioms and traditions, Hierapolis-Mabbug was a member of the Greek city-states of the Syrian *ethnos*, and like many such cities, it hosted regional Greek games. A certain Aurelios Septimios Eirenaios from Laodicea won the boxing competition at the games there three times in the early third century CE.[34]

Similar processes occurred in the regions of the middle Euphrates or Mesopotamia that the Romans conquered during and after the second half of the second century. In the 160s CE, the Romans conquered Dura-Europos, a city whose architectural forms and cult reliefs mostly reflected Near Eastern artistic conventions.[35] Either before or at the time of the conquest, a certain Konon, a member of the Greek community (*Europaios*), portrayed himself

on a mural in one of the city's temples with a Near Eastern style of dress.[36] Shortly after the Roman conquest and the establishment of a civic council, a civic councilor with an Aramaic name, Iabsumsos, son of Abdaathes was shown alongside his friend, the eunuch Otes, on a mural that Otes had commissioned in another room of this same temple.[37] Iabsumsos' family had not appeared in papyrus documents as having citizen status previously. Likewise, three citizens with the a "Semitic" and Persian names of Goras, Orthonobazos, and Zabidadados, whose family had apparently been recently enfranchised, celebrated the fact that they had become civic councilors and priests of Artemis.[38] In the mid-third century, the Syriac-speaking Aurelios Abidsautas was elected onto the civic council of the newly established Greek city Neapolis, but when he signed civic documents that his city's scribes had composed in Greek, he used Syriac.[39]

Finally, the citizens of Palmyra erected bilingual inscriptions in Greek and Aramaic, recast caravan trading as a civic office and a form of euergetism, and crafted an innovative form of civic life that relied heavily on local symbols. Although recent scholarship has rightly emphasized that most aspects of Palmyrene culture were Near Eastern by origin, a fact that militates against simply reckoning it and other such settlements of Syria as a Greek city, it is also worth adding that the Palmyrenes may have been interweaving Greek and Near Eastern idioms to produce innovative expressions of both Greek civic affiliation and Palmyrene identification from the first to the third centuries CE.[40] In general, Palmyrenes used the Near Eastern dedicatory formula "for the life of" when they dedicated temples and altars in order to prompt a divinity's protection of family members. They also used the Greek honorific formula "in honor of" on statue bases to celebrate civic benefactions that leading citizens had made.[41] These two formulae appear frequently in both Palmyrenean and Greek inscriptions at the city, with occasional occurrences in Latin. Such epigraphic activity indicates that the Palmyrenes had generated a Greek civic ethos and conceived of themselves as members of a network of Greek city-states while embracing Near Eastern idioms and kinship connections.[42] Equally

as significant, the formula "in honor of" was generally neglected in the Aramaic inscriptions of Edessa and Hatra during this period, an indication that the Palmyrenes maintained a sense of commonality with the Syrian *ethnos*' Greek city-states in ways that similar Aramaic-speaking cities in the Parthian kingdom or its surrogate principalities had not. The civic council of Palmyra even dedicated an honorific statue and inscription in Greek and Aramaic to a gymnasiarch (*gmnsyrks* in Palmyrenean).[43] Such an inscription indicates the existence of a gymnastic institution that trained Palmyrenes to compete in the Greek games which other *poleis* of the Syrian *ethnos* patronized. It is perhaps this context of Greek civic performance that produced a funerary sculpture with an inscription in Palmyrenean Aramaic that describes a deceased woman simply as a Greek (*ywnyt*). Although editors typically posit that *ywnyt* is a cognomen, this usage perhaps suggests that Palmyrenes could communicate solely in Aramaic but conceive of themselves as Greeks.[44] If Syrians could use Hellenism to "give voice to" local traditions, they could also express Greek identification through Near Eastern practices.[45]

The Transition to Late Antique Syria

Such innovative expressions of collective Greek civic identification were undermined by significant historical processes of the late third century. During this time, tetrarchic and Constantinian reforms increased direct imperial interference in civic affairs and undermined the civic councils of Greek city-states, thereby disrupting the civic processes of cohesion through which the experience of collective Greek identification had been produced. As Greek civic institutions and the structures of the provincial and regional *koina* eroded, the Roman imperial administration and networks of Christian bishops and their churches increasingly oversaw the organizing principles and maintained the interconnectedness of Syrian cities.[46] As Christianity spread, many churchmen perceived the Greek civic-cultic performances of the past to be tainted with

pagan connotations. Finally, the reign of the emperor Julian (361–63), which featured an effort to support organized pagan cult practices and to espouse the cultivation of Greek *paideia* and cult as the mark of true Greeks, stimulated breaches between Christians and "Hellenes."[47]

Amid such significant transformations, the inhabitants of the Syrian provinces increasingly disassociated their own civic behaviors from concepts of Greek performance, and authors writing in both Greek and Syriac reserved the term "Greek" or "Hellene" for practitioners of Greek literary and cultural *paideia*, the inhabitants of Greece itself, or, according to Christian perceptions, for pagans. In the fourth century, those who called themselves Greeks were those whose mastery of Greek *paideia* enmeshed them within networks of highly erudite and like-minded elites, and in certain cases its use as a vehicle for pagan worship helped its practitioners articulate a religious "community" that mirrored and countered that of contemporary Christians.[48] Most Syrians, whether Christian or pagan, did not belong to such exclusive networks of "Greeks." Equally as intriguing, while a Greek speaker could use the term *Hellēn* generically for a pagan, Syriac-speakers used its Syriac counterpart *Yawnāyē* not uniformly for a pagan but specifically for a pagan who cultivated Greek *paideia* in its cultural, literary, and religious manifestations. This may in part explain why late antique Syriac versions of the Pauline epistles often retain "Greeks" (*Yawnāyē*) when they translate references to "*Hellēnes* and barbarians" but otherwise cast the distinction between Jews and Greeks as one between Jews and Arameans. While the Pauline epistles used "Greeks" to describe pagan gentiles, late antique Syriac speakers perhaps believed that "Arameans" better encapsulated pagans in general since the Syriac *Yawnāyē* now referred specifically to pagans with Greek *paideia*.[49]

Amid such important transitions, Syrians increasingly perceived themselves to be members of a cohesive regional and social collectivity, or *ethnos*, that incorporated Greek and Aramaic speaking elements. Although "Syrian" could be used to describe Aramaic and its speakers, authors increasingly described members of

the Syrian *ethnos* as "Syrian by birth (*genos*)" regardless of their language or genealogies.[50] By contrast, they no longer necessarily conceived of their cities as constituting "Greek" collectivities. Such perceptions of Syrianness were largely the products of the Roman imperial process. By classifying all the inhabitants of Syria as "Syrian," the Roman administration had generated a concept of a Syrian *ethnos* that the inhabitants of Syria had increasingly assumed for themselves. Despite tremendous variations in local cultures, this category was meaningful to Syrians even if their *ethnos* was comprised of Greek and Aramaic speakers or persons who still could claim to be Greek or Syrian by genealogy or language.[51] Such forms of Syrian self-identification survived even while the Roman administration continued to divide the diocese of *Oriens* into smaller provinces over the course of late antiquity and as the structures of the regional *koina* and its assemblies deteriorated. During this time Syriac, which originated in the region around Edessa, became the most widely spoken Aramaic dialect of this Syrian *ethnos* even if it was not widely used west of the Euphrates until the sixth century.[52] Other Aramaic dialects, such as Christian Palestinian Aramaic, were generally restricted to circumscribed localities or regions.[53] Still, whether they spoke Greek, Syriac, or another Aramaic dialect, Syria's inhabitants framed themselves in meaningful terms as members of a "Syrian" regional collectivity and socially knit group.

The Antiochene orator Libanius was in many ways an exemplar of Greek literary culture and religion in an era of ascendant Christianity and increased imperial interference, but he did not conceptualize pagan or civic traditions, in isolation, as "Greek." In fact, like previous Greek sophists, when Libanius used the term *Hellēn*, he was most often referring to those who shared his mastery of Greek letters. By contrast, he did not call those who worshipped pagan divinities Greeks, but he used an assortment of more general phrasings, such as "those on our side" or "those honoring the affairs of gods."[54] While Libanius indicated that a defining feature of many Greeks was their worship of pagan gods, worshippers of pagan gods, including Greek divinities, were not necessarily Greeks. To

be Greek, they had to cultivate the study of classical Greek literature and culture and the forms of ethical self-maintenance to be derived from it. They had to have mastered Greek *paideia*, a feat which even Christians could in theory accomplish.[55]

Libanius therefore marks a transitional point in how Syrians conceptualized the Greek civic foundations of Syria. Libanius prioritized literary and rhetorical activity as what made a city a true repository of Greeks and Greek culture.[56] For instance, in his panegyric to his home city of Antioch, Libanius emphasized the Greek genealogy, or *genos*, of its ancestors and described the city with traditional Greek terminology for civic institutions. Yet, he never explicitly classified contemporary Antioch's collective civic activity as Greek, and despite the city's Greek origins, he suggested that waves of subsequent immigrants (*xenoi*), a term which could include both Greeks and barbarians, had diluted the city's original "Greek" or "Ionian" citizen populations.[57] It was perhaps for this reason that he emphasized that the city was a haven for Greek culture rivaling Athens because of the eloquence and mastery of Greek *paideia* that elites like him had fostered, for true status as a Greek was, as he suggested, generated through *logoi*, not *genos*.[58] For him, the city was more beautiful than its rivals because of its "Hellenic *paideia* and *logoi*."[59] Such statements indicate that Libanius did not conceptualize Antioch as a Greek civic collective so much as a city where Hellenism resided. It was a Syrian collective in which certain men who were Greek by *logoi* dwelled.

Libanius believed that civic councils (*boulai*) of erudite Greeks had traditionally perpetuated Greek civilization. Their governance facilitated the civic performances that enabled common citizens to be "Greeks" in a collective sense. By this time, however, the civic councilors of Antioch were no longer responsible for local governance. Roman administrators had increasingly undertaken this task, with many people of councilor rank studying Latin so that they could earn Roman bureaucratic positions.[60] The civic council also had become fragmented; certain councilor individuals or families were hoarding resources, clients, and power; and others were fleeing the monetary burdens imposed on them by Roman

magistrates.[61] For this reason, when Libanius argued that Antioch's civic council was able to perpetuate the traditions of Greece and the "sons of Greece," he explicitly linked such a trend to the cultivation of *logoi*, not to their citizenship within a Greek collective.[62] The broader civic community which such men had in the past governed through their persuasive *logoi*, but which was now administered by Romans, was not strictly speaking Greek. Even worse, the appeal of Christianity had prompted many Antiochenes to refrain from participating in the cults of the city's traditional gods or from valuing Greek classical letters.

Accordingly, when Libanius referred to his civic affiliation and those of his fellow Antiochenes, he used the label Syrian, and because so many of Antioch's citizens no longer participated in pagan civic traditions or cultivated Greek learning, he refrained from conceiving of them as a Greek community.[63] When he wanted to emphasize the knowledge of classical literature and eloquence that he shared with likeminded patrons, clients, students, and friends, he used the label *Hellēn*. Although the erudite elites, civic councilors, and divinities who resided in Antioch were Greek, Antioch was in total a city of Syrians. For this reason, Libanius begged a friend who lived in Greece to send him a letter because, "It is a great thing for Greece to hear from your mouth that you love me, but for Syrians to see that I am honored by you in your letters."[64] In a letter to the sophist Themistius, he advertised the notable qualities of a certain Julianus, who, while being "the best Syrian," was also the best of the *philologoi* because he knew "our (Greek) letters" and had experience in "those of the Italians."[65] Likewise, even as cities throughout Syria ceased to hold Greek games, a *Syriarch* hosted games in Antioch for the Syrian *ethnos* and its "seventeen cities."[66] The cities represented were "Syrian" even if the elites who funded the games and the athletes who participated in them were engaging in exemplary "Greek" activity according to Libanius' understanding of the term. A short letter to an Antiochene named Olympius is most compelling. It reads:

> You are a harbor to Syrians, even if they do not have a part in *paideia*, and you are in turn a harbor to those who at least participate in *paideia*, even if it does not happen that they are Syrians. You rejoice in even my friends to some degree, even if they are from somewhere else, even if they do not know *logoi*. Now, I find that the man who brings these letters [to you] has it all. For Heliodorus is both our fellow-citizen (*politēs*) and our companion in ethics (*sunēthēs*), and he is a clever speaker. Use your typical conduct toward the man.[67]

Initially, Libanius had praised Olympius for befriending both Syrians who did not practice Greek *paideia* and practitioners of Greek *paideia* who were not Syrian. He then proceeded to describe to Olympius how Heliodorus "had it all." He was both a Syrian, and because he had mastered *paideia*, a Greek. Accordingly, as he closed his letter, Libanius insisted that Olympius show kindness to Heliodorus because he was a fellow Syrian (*politēs*) and a shareholder in Greek *paideia* (*sunēthēs*). In this case, Libanius' use of "citizen" (*politēs*) constituted a formal parallel with his previous description of the Syrians that Olympius befriended, and his phrasing "companion in ethics" (*sunēthēs*) referred to the Greeks who practiced *paideia* without necessarily being Syrian. Like Libanius and Olympius, Heliodorus was a Syrian by belonging to a Syrian civic community but a Greek by virtue of his training in classical letters and culture.

After the end of the fourth century, no evidence indicates that pagans outside of Greece even called themselves Greek anymore, and the label is typically found only among Christian authors who criticize pagans.[68] As this trend occurred, Greek speakers frequently categorized themselves as Syrians, in addition to other identity categories such as Roman or Christian. In fact, Greek-speaking churchmen of Syria, like John Chrysostom and Theodoret of Cyrrhus, understood Syrians to be the inhabitants of all the provinces of the Roman East in which the various dialects of the language of the Syrians were spoken.[69] Like Libanius, they acknowledged that certain Syrians could differ in terms of their speech or genealogies,

but Greek language did not necessarily signify classification as a "Greek."[70] Accordingly, when Theodoret, who likely spoke Greek and Syriac, noted that both Syrians and Assyrians referred to a city sometimes called Antioch on the Mygdonia as Nisibis, he was referring to the name that Greek- and Syriac-speaking Syrians normally used.[71] Likewise, he praised the Syriac poet Ephrem, some of whose works were circulating by Theodoret's day in Greek and Syriac, for "daily watering the *ethnos* of the Syrians with streams of Grace."[72] When John told his congregation that the villagers of the countryside spoke a "barbarous" language or a "language different from ours," he was positing a linguistic difference that distinguished not "Greeks" from "Syrians" but "civilized" urban dwellers from peasants.[73] The same could be argued for the numerous occasions in which Theodoret distinguished between the language of the "Greeks" and that of the "Syrians."[74] Greek speakers could perceive speakers of Aramaic to be uncouth and could frame themselves as "Greeks" as opposed to "Syrians" when referencing linguistic criteria. Nonetheless, those who were "Greek" or "Syrian" by language were still members of the Syrian *ethnos*.

When Theodoret described pagans in Syria or elsewhere as "Greeks," he was conventionally referring to pagans.[75] For him, Syrian Christians were not Greeks, even if they spoke their language. For this reason, Theodoret could praise the Syriac poet Ephrem for not being contaminated by Greek *paideia* while treating his own mastery of the classical Greek corpus as unproblematic for his status as a Christian pitted against "Greeks."[76] In an apologetic discousrse that he wrote in Greek, Theodoret therefore criticized "Greeks," and he not only emphasized that the Greek philosophers had stolen many ideas and cultural idioms from barbarians, but he also mistakenly maintained that one of Greece's famed seven sages, Pherecydes, was a Syrian and therefore a barbarian from whom Greek intellectuals had profited.[77] Theodoret's reluctance to categorize Greek speakers and even Christian practitioners of Greek *paideia* uniformly as "Greeks" explains John Chrysostom's confusion concerning why *Acts* 11:20 used the word *Hellēnistai* to describe the gentiles to whom Jews had begun to preach in Antioch

during the first century CE.[78] John commented that *Acts* called such gentiles "Greeks" (*Hellēnes*) because the Jews "probably knew Greek" and were preaching to Greek speakers in Antioch. Later in this sermon, he stated that the Jews had "perhaps" called the pagan gentiles of the city "Greeks" because they did not speak Hebrew but spoke Greek.[79] While John posited that *Acts* framed gentiles as Greeks because of their spoken language, the uncertainty of his statements also indicates that he thought that this usage was anomalous. He therefore needed to explain why *Acts* called Antiochenes "Greeks" when he and most members of his congregation did not uniformly deem Greek speakers of Antioch to be such.

Syrians, Greeks, and Syriac Authors

Such categorizations indicate that Syrians in general did not define Greek speech as the mark of a foreign culture, but they instead recognized Greek literary *paideia*, whether it was to be celebrated or condemned, as the study of a tradition foreign to the Syrian *ethnos*. Similar perceptions appear in the works of Syriac Christian authors, who tended to conceptualize Greeks as those who used Greek *paideia* to frame their worship of Greek or Near Eastern divinities within a coherent theoretical and ethical system. In such instances, writers of Syriac used the word *Yawnāyē* to refer to peoples' association with Greek culture, literature, or intellectual traditions, whereas the more inclusive term *hʃanpē* was used to describe pagans.[80] It is for this reason that the fourth-century Syriac poet Ephrem could conceive of the philhellene emperor Julian as the king of Greece but accuse him of bringing paganism, not Hellenism, to his homeland.[81] While Julian himself vaunted the sort of classical learning that Ephrem deemed to be the "venom" or "folly" of Greek wisdom, it constituted only one form of idolatry.[82] Such Syriac authors understood that legitimate members of the Syrian *ethnos* could speak either Greek or Syriac, but they disputed whether Christian Syrians should study Greek classical literature and be perhaps unduly affected by its potentially pagan values.

Jacob of Sarug, who was active as bishop during the late fifth and early sixth centuries, wrote Syriac homiletic verses that exhorted his audience not to attend theatrical performances of Greek myths.[83] Jacob, like most Syriac speakers, only called pagans *Yawnāyē* when he could definitively link them to the cultivation of Greek literary *paideia*, and in his estimation, pagans, or *hǝanpē*, could attend the spectacles of Greek myths or worship Greek gods without actually being Greeks themselves. In a lengthy description of pagan deities throughout the entire known world, he specifically associated pagan worship with Hellenism only when he discussed the teachings of "Greek philosophers."[84] A similar description of theatrical spectacles appears in the chronicle of pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, which recounts the "evil festival of the myths of the Greeks" that was celebrated in Edessa.[85] It classifies those who attended such spectacles as engaging in pagan worship but does not strictly refer to its practitioners as "Greeks."[86] The homilies of Severus of Antioch, originally written in Greek but surviving in Syriac translation, also adhere to this model. The Syriac versions of Severus' sermons typically render pagans as *hǝanpē*, but they on occasion call "Greeks" those whose philosophical sophistry deceived others to engage in idolatrous worship, both before and after the emergence of Christianity.[87] Finally, Jacob's homily on Ephrem perhaps frames the Syrians as a regional collective of both Greek and Syriac speakers distinct from Greeks. After emphasizing that Ephrem's poems were better than the greatest ones written by Greeks, Jacob referred to Ephrem as the "crown of all Arameanism," thereby defining him as a preeminent Syriac or Aramaic author. At the same time, Jacob claimed that Ephrem was the "greatest orator among the Syrians." Although Jacob may have meant that Ephrem was the greatest "orator" to write in Syriac, his reference to the Syrians, as had been the case in Theodoret's praise of Ephrem, also may have cast Ephrem as the most eminent "orator" of the Roman empire's regional collectivity of Syrians, both Greek- and Syriac-speaking.[88]

John of Ephesus, who was bilingual in Greek and Syriac, was an active author in Syriac during the sixth century CE.[89] In one of his works, he referred to himself as John the Syrian because of his Syrian origins, and when he described someone as a Syrian, he often was referring not to speech or strict genealogy but to his membership in a *genos* of Syrians who inhabited the various provinces called Syria, Phoenice, and Palestina, as well as Osrhoene, Mesopotamia, and Euphratensis.[90] John conceived of the eastern Roman empire as being divided between "every land of Greeks and Syrians." For instance, in his biography of Jacob Baradaeus, he praised Jacob for appointing anti-Chalcedonian bishops throughout the land of the Greeks and the land of the Syrians, as well as Armenia and Cappadocia.[91] In another account, he elaborated that the land of the Greeks described in his biography of Jacob was Anatolia, the islands of the eastern Mediterranean, and Constantinople, while the "land of the Syrians" constituted the parts of *Oriens* where Syrians lived.[92] John assumed that Greek and Syriac speech so typified Syrians that an individual's status as a Syrian only became dubious when he communicated in an entirely different language. Accordingly, he remarked that although an ascetic named John was a Syrian by *genos* (*gensā*), many believed that he was the member of an obscure ethnic group whose language he had adopted.[93]

The fact that many Syrians spoke either Greek or Syriac posed logistical problems. Syrians sometimes suffered difficulty in communicating, and since Greek speakers were more likely to be urban dwellers or elites, Greek or Syriac speech could have been perceived to mark gaps of social status or authority. Also, as late as the fifth century, Syriac or Aramaic seems to have been generally deemed as "barbaric" west of the River. Yet, such a linguistic gap, which could prompt authors to distinguish between "Greeks" and "Syrians" according to their speech, was not generally conceptualized as a significant rift that ultimately differentiated Syrians from those who were not Syrian.[94] To speak either language was deemed a Syrian trait, even if wealthy urban dwellers or aristocrats were more likely to speak Greek than peasants or the poor. Several Syrian authors for this reason document how Syrians endeavored to overcome the logistical problems that affected the Syrian *ethnos* when linguistic barriers prevented Greek- and Aramaic-speaking Syrians from interacting with each other or from forming certain

bonds of solidarity. Theodoret, for instance, celebrated a certain monastery that was able to integrate Syriac and Greek speakers into identical ascetic regimens tailored to their linguistic needs.[95] According to Mark the Deacon, a miracle of God enabled a boy who spoke in "the Syrian tongue," probably Christian Palestinian Aramaic, to command the bishop Porphyry in Greek to burn the shrine of Marnas in Gaza.[96] Likewise, an anonymous chronicler celebrated the leadership of Severus of Antioch and Philoxenus (or Aksenaya) over both Greek and Syriac speakers. Severus was well versed in Greek *paideia* and had a firm grounding in Greek speaking theologians, but Philoxenus had thoroughly studied the works of those who wrote "in the Syrian tongue," Diodore of Tarsus, and Theodore of Mopsuestia.[97] According to John of Ephesus, the ascetic Tribunus, from Sophanene along the Roman-Persian frontier, mastered both Greek and Syriac, a trait which certainly enabled him to consult ascetic masters of both languages and serve as their interpreter.[98]

Epigraphy provides further evidence that Christian congregations in sixth-century Syria could consist of Greek and Syriac speakers who did not locate significant ethno-cultural difference in the use of disparate languages.[99] Inscriptions engraved upon the lintel of a door of a church at Zebed in Greek, Syriac, and Arabic perhaps exemplify such a trend.[100] The Greek inscription and its Syriac counterpart include a date of 511 CE, and these inscriptions clearly commemorate the construction of a martyrion for St. Sergius and indicate a congregation of both Greek and Syriac speakers. Similar late antique inscriptions from Zebed are particularly intriguing because while being bilingual, they often consist of Syriac words simply transliterated into Greek.[101] For instance, an inscription commemorating a deaconess did not use the Greek word for deaconess (*diakonos*) but instead transliterated the Syriac word for it into Greek (σαμασθα). Such inscriptions suggest congregations of bilingual Christians or otherwise Syriac speakers who wrote with Greek letters.[102]

As Christian preachers endeavored to bridge the linguistic divide of the Syrian *ethnos* and the problems that it posed, they

sometimes renounced pursuits of Greek *paideia* that were of little help in resolving this issue. Although Christians still read classical authors during late antiquity, hagiographers could praise their saint for neglecting Greek classical literature, but not necessarily Greek writing or speaking. An anonymous Syriac hagiography of the fifth century stressed that Rabbula of Edessa had been born to a pagan father who, as a priest, had participated in idolatrous rites with the emperor Julian when he had passed through Syria during his eastern campaign. Rabbula had been educated in Greek letters, but when he converted to Christianity and subsequently adopted an ascetic regimen, he had explicitly renounced the gods of the Greeks and, by implication, his study of Greek classical literature.[103] Likewise, according to the hagiographer Elias, the bishop John of Tella had been trained in the "writings and the wisdom of the Greeks" by a *paidagōgos* in his youth, but he convinced his *paidagōgos* to abandon Greek literature in favor of learning the psalms in Syriac.[104] John's decision expressed his understanding of Greek *paideia*, but not necessarily Greek speaking, as a foreign pursuit often undertaken by Syrian elites.[105] Accordingly, when John decided to learn the psalms in Syriac, he was emphasizing his veneration of Christian Scripture over classical Greek letters. At the same time, such ability to navigate both Greek and Syriac speech and writing, a feature typical of the Syrian *ethnos*, could bring cohesion to Syrians in ecclesiastical or monastic communities. Greek-speaking Christians such as John Chrysostom thereby stressed that Aramaic speakers, "although different from us in tongue, share our language of faith." He even argued that the divisions between Greek-speaking Christians and "Greeks" were more insurmountable than those among Christians who spoke different languages.[106]

Syrians and Syriac Speakers

If the Syrians of late antiquity in many instances conceived of themselves as members of an *ethnos* distinct from that of Greeks despite their widespread use of Greek speech, they also distinguished

themselves from other Syriac- or Aramaic-speaking groups. Syrians were generally aware that people dwelling beyond the eastern frontier of the Roman empire, whose boundary was demarcated by the city of Nisibis, spoke Syriac or a similar Aramaic dialect. Yet, such Syriac speakers did not belong to the Syrian *ethnos*. Greek and Syriac speakers from both sides of the frontier also used the terms Assyrian, Aramean, or other names denoting different *ethnē* or *genē* to describe the Syriac speakers in territory administered or, after the Arab invasions, formerly controlled by the Persians.[107] The political boundaries of the Roman and Persian empires therefore separated the Syriac- or Aramaic-speaking population of the Mesopotamian region into different social groupings. These distinctions in many ways remained intact throughout late antiquity despite the emergence of complex social networks and Christian affiliations that cut across the frontier. In fact, during the sixth century, as the Chalcedonian faction secured its grasp over the eastern Roman empire and the Church of the East became the supreme church of Persia, anti-Chalcedonian churchmen and monks preached to the Syriac-speaking inhabitants in both the Roman and Persian empires.

The ministry of John of Tella represents such a trend. As Justinian's regime deprived anti-Chalcedonian bishops of their episcopal sees during the 520s, John of Tella planted the seeds of a dissenting church and clerical hierarchy by appointing anti-Chalcedonian priests on both sides of the Roman-Persian frontier, and some of the men whom he ordained were apparently Syriac speakers who originated outside the boundaries of the Syrian *ethnos*.[108] Sympathetic contemporaries, such as an anonymous chronicler, conceptualized John's network of monks and priests as a *politeia*, a corporate society for which John served as a "head."[109] When John was eventually apprehended in the frontier zone of Persia by a joint expedition of Roman and Persian authorities, he told a Persian magistrate that he did not know the difference between the *politeia* of the Persians and that of the Romans. When he was in Persia, he thought that he was among the Romans. When among Romans, he believed himself to be in Persian territory.[110] Subsequently, the ministry

of Jacob Baradaeus realized this vision of an anti-Chalcedonian church spanning eastern Rome and Persia.[111]

The development of an anti-Chalcedonian church anchored in both the Roman diocese of *Oriens* and Persian Mesopotamia perhaps anticipated how "Syrians" were classified after the Arab invasions. After Roman and Persian authority had declined, as we have seen in Jacob of Edessa's scholion, "Syrian" could be used to describe the Greek- and Syriac-speaking inhabitants of Roman Syria. Despite such continuity, a significant trend was nonetheless occurring. After the collapses of Roman and Persian power in the Near East, inhabitants of Syria increasingly used the term "Syrian" to refer to the Syriac-speaking Christians in territories once controlled formerly by both Persia and Rome, and they often referred to themselves as both Syrians and Arameans (or sons of Aram). In certain such instances, "Syrian" and "Aramean" were interchangeable, but in others "Syrian" denoted an Aramaic speaker of what had formerly been the Roman Syrian provinces while Aramean described an Aramaic speaker in general.[112] Likewise, in the twelfth century, Michael the Syrian, citing the ninth-century author Dionysius of Tel-Mahre, argued that those who were correctly called Syrians inhabited territory west of the Euphrates River, but he stressed that many misinformed people believed that all Aramaic speakers from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf were "Syrians."[113] Accordingly, during the period of Arab control, the terms "Syrian" and "Aramean" became increasingly synonymous and could refer to all Christian Syriac speakers regardless of geographic location, even if authors like Michael insisted that Syrians only dwelled west of the Euphrates or another similarly circumscribed region. Such usages distinguished Syrians from their Arab or Moslem conquerors. After Roman and Persian authority in the region collapsed, the tendency for Syrians in Roman territory to conceptualize their counterparts in Persian regions as members of different regional collectives had declined. As Greek speech disappeared and the imperial borders of Rome and Persia disintegrated, the definition of a "Syrian" as a Greek or Syriac speaker within the Roman Syrian provinces became obsolete.[114] Instead, Syrians and Arameans

were according to the broadest definitions the Syriac- or Aramaic-speaking Christians under Islamic rule.

Conclusion

Language alone did not constitute the definitive feature by which late antique Greeks and Syrians framed meaningful social identifications, group associations, or cultural performances. Although linguistic differences could be significant in distinguishing Greek from Aramaic speakers and were wrought with connotations of elitism or prestige in various contexts, the notion of the Syrian *ethnos* as a significant social and civic collective endured throughout the Roman and late antique periods. Many members of this Syrian *ethnos* could frame themselves as "Greeks" in various situations according to civic, religious, educational, linguistic, or cultural criteria, but it must be emphasized that language or even Greek culture in general were not exclusive factors in determining conclusively one's Greek or Syrian belonging. People who defined themselves as Greeks in many instances cultivated Near Eastern cultural forms and sometimes even spoke Aramaic, and in certain cases Syrians who spoke Greek or cultivated Greek idioms framed themselves as being definitively "not Greek." In fact, the literary and epigraphic evidence indicates that many late antique Syrians, whether Greek- or Aramaic-speaking, reckoned themselves to be citizens of "Syrian" cities and members of a broader Syrian *ethnos/genos* framed by social performance within local and regional collectives maintained by Roman imperial governance. While certain Syrians were pagan practitioners of Greek *paideia* and thereby Greeks, most members of the Syrian *ethnos*, both Greek- and Aramaic-speaking, both pagan and Christian, were not Greeks during late antiquity.

Abbreviations

AMS	*Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, ed. Paul Bedjan, 7 vols. (1890–97)
AAAS	*Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes*
CIS	*Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
EA	*Epigraphica Anatolica*
FGrH	*Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, ed. Felix Jacoby, 3 vols. (1923–58)
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller
IGLS	*Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*
IGR	*Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes*
INJ	*Israel Numismatic Journal*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
OCA	*Orientalia Christiana Analecta*
OCP	*Orientalia Christiana Periodica*
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PO	*Patrologia Orientalis*
RAC	*Rivista di archeologia cristiana*
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SCI	*Scripta Classica Israelica*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

Notes

[1]The manuscript containing the scholiast's comments dates to the ninth century, and it consists of the Syriac translation of Severus' homilies done by Jacob of Edessa, a project that Jacob completed in 701 CE with the aid of a previous translation from the sixth century, perhaps, but not certainly that of Paul of Callinicus. The scholion is generally attributed to Jacob himself, as is maintained by F. Graffin, "Jacques d'Édesse: réviseur des homélies de Sévère d'Antioche d'après *B.M. Add.* 12.159," in *Symposium Syriacum*, 1976, *OCA* 205 (1978), 250 and previously Eberhard Nestle, "Jakob von Edessa über den Schem hammephorasch und andere Gottesnamen: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Tetragrammaton," *Mitteilungen der*

deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 32 (1878), 464 and 476–80. The scholion can be found in *Homiliae cathedrales*, ed. and trans. Maurice Brière, in *Les homélies cathédrales de Sévère d'Antioche*, *PO* 29 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1960), 190–207 [694–711], with 40–50 [544–554] describing the manuscript in question (B.M. Add. 12, 159). An older edition and translation is in Nestle, "Jakob von Edessa," 480–500. Also, for Paul's work on Severus of Antioch in general, see D. King, "Paul of Callinicum and his Place in Syriac Literature," *Le Muséon* 120.3–4 (2007), 328–31 and for recent discussion of Jacob's use of a sixth-century translator, with bibliography, see Lucas Van Rompay, "Jacob of Edessa and the Sixth-Century Translator of Severus of Antioch's Cathedral Homilies," in *Jacob of Edessa and the Syriac Culture of His Day*, Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden, vol. 18, ed. Bas ter Haar Romeny (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 189–204.

[2]This discussion is in *Homiliae cathedrales* CXXIII, 193 [697] specifically.

[3]Because of the spread and prevalent use of Syriac, as opposed to other dialects of Aramaic, in late antiquity, I will refer to the Semitic language called the "language of the Syrians" in late antique sources as Syriac, except for instances in which the use of a different Aramaic dialect can be postulated (i.e., Christian Palestinian Aramaic). This usage follows widespread convention, but see the reservations of Fergus Millar, "Ethnic Identity in the Roman Near East, A.D. 325–430: Language, Religion, and Culture," *Mediterranean Archaeology* 11 (1998), 162–63, republished in *Rome, the Greek World, and the East*, vol. 3: *The Greek World, the Jews, and the East*, ed. Hannah Cotton and Guy M. Rogers (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 383–84 and David G. K. Taylor, "Bilingualism and Diglossia in Late Antique Syria and Mesopotamia," in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text*, ed. J.N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 302–3.

[4]*Homiliae cathedrales* CXXIII, 193 [697].

[5]For instance, in the scholion itself, Jacob usually uses "Syrian" to describe Syriac speakers. Also see Letter 13 (18 and 21) for a linguistic categorization of Syrians and Greeks (as Syriac and Greek speakers), in W. Wright, "Two Letters of Mar Jacob, Bishop of Edessa," *Journal of Sacred Literature* 10 (1867), 430–60.

[6]Since Jacob examines how the name of God was spoken in specific languages of various peoples, it is clear that he often uses a gentilic noun to refer to groups of people who spoke the same language, not strictly to their regions of birth or their genealogies. See *Homiliae cathedrales* CXXIII, 190–207 [694–711].

[7]I use "Syria" to refer to the provinces of the later Roman empire inhabited by the Syrian *ethnos* or people who were known to speak the "language of the Syrians" in antiquity. These include (by the sixth century) Syria Prima, Syria Secunda, Phoenice, Phoenice Libanensis, Palestina Prima, Palestina Secunda, Palestina Tertia, Euphratensis, Osrhoene, Mesopotamia, and, in certain instances, Arabia. Theodoret, *Quaest. in Judic.*, ed. Natalio Fernández Marcos and Angel Sáenz-Badillos in *Theodoreti Cyrensis Quaestiones in Octateuchum* (Madrid: Textos y Estudios Cardenal Cisneros, 1979), 19.5–9, for instance, stresses that the inhabitants of many of these provinces spoke some form of the "language of the Syrians" and indicates that those called Syrians, Phoenicians, Palestinians, Osrhoenians, or Euphratesians based on their provincial affiliation could be defined more broadly as Syrians. Likewise, John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 50 (*Lives of James and Theodore*), ed. and trans. E.W. Brooks, *PO* 19 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1923–1925), 154–55 [500–1] classifies at least the territories in *Oriens* north of Jerusalem as the "land of the Syrians," although his usage does not necessarily exclude territories farther south. In fact, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 25 (*Life of John of Hephaestopolis*), *PO* 18 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1924), 527–29 [325–27] indicates that a Palestinian from Gaza could be described also as a Syrian. *Vie d'Alexandre l'acémete*, ed. E. de Stoop, *PO* 6 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1911), 673–74 [33–34] infers that the province of Mesopotamia was deemed to be part of Syria. Jacob of Edessa later treats these provinces as the "lands of Syria," although he frequently distinguishes the former Roman provinces officially named Syria from that called Mesopotamia. See Jacob of Edessa, *Hexaemeron* 3 and 5, ed. J.B. Chabot and A. Vaschalde in *Iacobi Edesseni Hexaemeron*, CSCO 44 (E Typographeo Reipublicae, 1928), 114–16 and 207.

[8]In *Homiliae cathedrales* CXXIII, 197 and 205 [701 and 709], Jacob refers to "us Aramaeans, that is, Syrians." Perhaps Jacob conceived of "Syrians" as constituting a specific group within a broader range of "Arameans" (Aramaic speakers). This usage is verified by Michael the Syrian (12*th* century), who cited the statement of the ninth-century author Dionysius of Tel-Mahre. According to him, Dionysius defined "Syrians" as those who lived west of the Euphrates river but who "speak the language of us Arameans," of whom the Syrians only constituted a part. See *Chronique de Michel le Syrien: patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166–1199)*, vol. 4, ed. and trans. J.B. Chabot, Appendix II (Paris: Culture et Civilisation, 1910), 749–50.

[9]Sebastian Brock, "From Ephrem to Romanos," *Studia Patristica* 20 (1989), 139–51; "Greek and Syriac in Late Antique Syria," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, ed. Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 149–60; "Greek Words in Syriac: Some General Features," *SCI* 15 (1996), 251–62, and "Syriac Culture, 337–425," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume XIII: *The Later Empire*, ed. Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 714–19. Also, Lucas Van Rompay, "Past and Present Perceptions of Syriac Literary Tradition," *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 3.1 (2000), pars. 1–23 and Taylor, "Bilingualism and Diglossia," 324–31. Sebastian Brock, "The Syriac Orient: A Third 'Lung' for the Church?" *OCP* 71.1 (2005), 6–8 has advocated for conceiving of the Christian tradition of the "Syriac Orient" as representing a distinctive stream with points of intersection with the traditions of the "Greek East" and the "Latin West." For Hellenism in Syria, see Glen Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (Ann Arbor, MI: The

University of Michigan Press, 1990), 29–41. John F. Healey, "The Edessan Milieu and the Birth of Syriac," *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 10.2 (2007), pars. 1–34 emphasizes a lack of Greek culture in Mesopotamia before late antiquity, during the time of Bardaisan.

[10]As argued by Fergus Millar, "Ethnic Identity," 159–65 and 170 (repr. 378–90 and 395–96); *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408–450)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 107–16: "Theodoret of Cyrrhus: A Syrian in Greek Dress?" in *From Rome to Constantinople: Studies in Honour of Averil Cameron*, ed. Hagit Amirav and Bas ter Haar Romeny (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 105–125; "Libanius and the Near East," *SCI* 26 (2007), 155–80, and "Community, Religion and Language in the Middle-Euphrates Zone in Late Antiquity," *SCI* 27 (2008), 67–93.

[11]I will typically translate references to the *Hellēnes* of both the classical and post-classical periods as "Greeks" in keeping with a widespread convention of classical studies, although I also recognize the problems with the term raised or implied by scholars who opt to translate it as "Hellenes."

[12]For Millar, "Ethnic Identity," 170 (repr. 395), these are "self-governing" and "(in principle) pagan Greek cities," an argument which he also pursues in "Libanius" and "Community, Religion, and Language." The extensive work of A.H.M. Jones on the "Greek" cities of the eastern Roman empire has profoundly influenced this tradition. See for example Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937, *2nd* ed., 1971) and *The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940). Many seminal discussions of cities of the later Roman empire thereby tend to frame a city as Greek based on its primary language, its Greek origins, and its "classical" institutions. For instance, when Bryan Ward-Perkins, "The Cities," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume XIII: *The Later Empire*, ed. Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 377 describes the "classical city" of the late Roman empire's eastern provinces, he specifically means the "Greek" *polis*. Likewise, while J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, "Administration and Politics in the Cities," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume XIV: *Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, A.D. 425–600*, ed. Averil Cameron *et al.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 212–17 and *The Decline and Fall of the Ancient City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 30–74 and 400–16 speaks of "later Roman," "classical," or "Greco-Roman" cities, he locates the cities of the eastern empire in the "Greek east" or "Greek provinces."

[13]Millar, "Ethnic Identity," 165 (repr. 388). Likewise, Millar, "Ethnic Identity," 164 (repr. 386) and *A Greek Roman Empire*, 109 correctly indicates that Syrians did not establish a concrete ethnic identity framed by language use, but he seems to posit that any discrete self-defining Syrian *ethnos* would have consisted of Syriac speakers who distinguished themselves in ethnic or cultural terms from Greek

speakers primarily because of differences in language. He therefore postulates that "Syrians" operated within "political and communal structures" that were "predominantly Greek" without creating a coherent social identity that distinguished them from Greeks. While Millar, "Theodoret of Cyrrhus," 107–8 admits that criteria other than language use could have been used to frame identities, his general account emphasizes language (Greek vs. Aramaic) use, advocates that no evidence for a "distinctive, non-Greek, historical identity" existed, and assumes that any meaningful "Syrian" identity would have to link Syrians through cultural and historical memory to pre-Hellenistic Aramean states or other precursors. While Millar correctly emphasizes that most forms of late antique "Syrian" identity and culture were relatively new products created by centuries of cultural interaction and interweaving, he does not allow for the possibility that it was within this context of cultural intermixing that Syrians located their common identities as Syrians in ways that could differentiate them from Greeks, even while they often cultivated Greek cultural forms. Likewise, although Maurice Sartre, "The Nature of Syrian Hellenism in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Periods," in *The Sculptural Environment of the Roman Near East: Reflections on Culture, Ideology, and Power*, Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion, vol. 9, ed. Yaron Z. Eliav *et al.* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 25–49 (especially 27–32) has recently advocated a sophisticated model by which "being Greek" could involve "hybrid" culture practices that are not limited to language, he seems to follow the assumption that Greek performance will always involve Greek language and traditions and "indigenous" identities Near Eastern ones. Whereas Sartre depicts Syrians as alternating between different Greek and local languages or traditions to express different identities, I want to examine how Syrians redefined "Greek" and "local" or Near Eastern traditions.

[14]Millar, "Libanius," 174 posits that provincial labels (Syrian, Cilician, Arab, etc.) constituted "pseudo-ethnic" names that referred to geographical origin or "identity groups" that provincial governors administered but not to meaningful social groups. As such, these labels precluded differentiation between discrete groups of Greeks and Syrians, however defined. I however will try to establish that the Syrian *ethnos* was a significant social grouping and that membership within it meaningfully marked points of both intersection with and difference from Greeks in various contexts. Even if Syrians spoke Greek, inhabited what had been established to be Greek city-states, or studied Greek classical letters, they could define themselves as different from Greeks.

[15]Although Greeks began to distinguish Syria from Assyria in the classical period, the classical Greeks and Seleucids understood Syrians and Assyrians to be identical according to the broadest definitions, with "Aramean" being the name that they used for themselves. See Richard Frye, "Assyria and Syria: Synonyms," *JNES* 51.4 (1992), 282 and the ancient examples represented by Herodotus, 7.63,

Strabo, 1.2.34 and 16.1.1–2, and Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.4 and 1.19. The inscriptions of Persian kings contained in Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, trans. Peter T. Daniels (Winona Lakes, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 173 mention only Assyrians and not Syrians as subject populations, which further suggests that Greeks called Assyrians Syrians. In recent support of Frye, Robert Rollinger, "The Terms 'Assyria' and 'Syria' Again," *JNES* 65.4 (2006), 284–85 has explored the evidence constituted by a bilingual pre-Hellenistic Luwian-Phoenician inscription from the region near Adana. The Phoenician portion describes Assyrians as "'SHRYM" while the Luwian portion calls them "su+ra/i-wa/i-za-ha(URBS)," which means the "Syrian House." Accordingly, when the Greeks came to the Near East, they encountered the interchangeable use of Syrian and Assyrian. In his account of the various *ethnē*, Josephus *AJ* 1.143–7 distinguishes the Syrians from the Assyrians, but he holds that Aramus, son of Shem, was the common ancestor of the "Arameans, whom Greeks call Syrians" and that Aramus' four sons ruled nearly the entire region between the Mediterranean and the Persian gulf.

[16]As argued in Pierre Briant, "Colonisation hellénistique et populations indigenes: la phase d'installation," *Klio* 60 (1978), 57–92. The existing evidence from the Seleucid and Parthian periods indicates such trends. Cuneiform texts from Babylon differentiate the *Babilaya* (Babylonians or Babylonian citizens) from the *pulite* or the *pulite sa ina Babili* (Greek citizens/citizens who are in Babylon). T. Boiy, *Late Achaemenid and Hellenistic Babylon*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, vol. 136 (Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2004), 194–95 and 206–7. Likewise, see the recently discovered cuneiform document that describes how in Babylon the Babylonians engaged in violence with "the Greeks, as they are called, the *p[olitai]* . . . who anoint with oil just like the *pol[itai]* who are in Seleucia, the royal city" in 163/62. The translation is from R.J. van der Spek, "Multi-ethnicity and Ethnic Segregation in Hellenistic Babylon," in *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity: The Role of Power and Tradition*, ed. Ton Derks and Nico Roymans (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 108. At Dura-Europos, no persons with Near Eastern names were called *Europaioi*, the title used for the Greek citizens, in the community's epigraphic and papyrus documents before the Romans conquered the city in the 160s CE. C.B. Welles, "The Population of Roman Dura," in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honour of Allan Chester Johnson*, ed. P.R. Coleman-Norton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), 270. Similarly, Josephus, although writing during the Roman-Parthian period, conceptually divides the city Seleucia on the Tigris between its Greek population and a faction of "Syrians," which was *empoliteumenon*. This most likely refers to Syrians who practiced politics and had civic rights within a separate civic body, or *politeuma*. Josephus, *AJ* 18.372; Getzel Cohen, *The Seleucid Colonies: Studies in Founding, Administration, and Organization*, Historia Einzelschriften, vol. 30 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1978), 86. Citizenship in newly established Greek communities was typically reserved for ethnic Greeks, but under the Attalids certain of the local autochthonous may have been given citizenship in the *polis* of Tyriaion. See the inscription of Tyriaion and commentary published in L. Jonnes and M. Ricl, "A Royal Inscription from Phrygia Paroreios: Eumenes II Grants Tyriaion the Status of a *Polis*," *EA* 29 (1997), 1–31 and by Jonnes in *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* 62.393. When Antiochus IV granted certain Jews of Jerusalem Greek citizen status, it was an anomaly of his particular reign. 2 Macc 4:9 and 12–14.

[17]Josephus, *AJ* 14.74–91 describes how Pompey and Gabinius reestablished Greek city-states that had been suppressed by the Hasmonean kings. Strabo, 8.7.5 and 14.3.3 indicates that Pompey had made Cilician pirates citizens of Greek city-states. In the first century, Philo of Alexandria, commenting on Rome's patronage of Greek civic life, praised the emperor Augustus for "adding to Greece by means of many Greeces" and for "bringing Hellenism to *Barbaria* in the regions most in need." Philo, *Leg.* 147.

[18]*IGR* 3.1012 and Luigi Moretti, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche*, Studi pubblicati dall'Istituto Italiano per la storia, antica, vol. 12 (Rome: Angelo Signorelli, 1953), nos. 72 and 78 show that by the second or third centuries the following cities of Syria, Phoenicia, or Palestine held Greek games that attracted regional participants and even some from beyond: Antioch, Berytus, Ascalon, Apamea, Sidon, Gaza, Beroia, Tripolis, Caesarea Maritima, Chalcis, Tyre, Caesarea Philippi, Damascus, Neapolis, Hierapolis-Mabbug, Laodicea, Leukas, Scythopolis, and Zeugma. *IGR* 1.445 records the games staged by the *koinon* of Syria, Cilicia, and Phoenicia. For more on the provincial *koinon* of Syria and the regional *koina* in the province (*eparcheia*) of Syria, see Kevin Butcher, *Coinage in Roman Syria: Northern Syria, 64 BC-253 AD* (London: Royal Numismatic Society, 2004), 13, *ILS* 8819 and 8819a, and C.B. Welles, "The Inscriptions," in *Gerasa, City of the Decapolis*, ed. Carl H. Kraeling (New Haven, CT: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1938), no 53. By Trajan's reign, the regional *koina* of the Syrian *ethnos* can be identified as Syria, Phoenicia, Commagene, and Tyre.

[19]On Lucian and Tatian, as well as Justin Martyr, see Laura Nasrallah, "Mapping the World: Justin, Tatian, Lucian, and the Second Sophistic," *HThR* 98.3 (2005), 283–316. Also, Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 31 and 124–28.

[20]For the constitution and activity of civic councils (*boulai*), see the summaries of Maurice Sartre in *D'Alexandre à Zénobie: histoire du Levant antique* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 649–54 and "Nature of Syrian Hellenism," 35–36.

[21]Greek citizens could trace "non-Greek" ethnic genealogies by using the expressions "sons of" or tribe (*phylē*). See for example the dedicatory inscription of Pouplios Ailios Germanos, a civic councilor of Canatha who claims that he is "of the [sons] of Bennathes," the name of a specific Near Eastern kinship group,

clan, or "tribe" based on common descent (or perhaps a village name). See W.H. Waddington, *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1870), 2339. Such expressions of ethnicity were especially common at Palmyra. Recently Maurice Sartre, "Nature of Syrian Hellenism," 25–29 has emphasized the variety of regional manifestations of "Syrian Hellenism" and how Syrians, such as Palmyrenes, could alternate between cultural forms and practices of identification on a contextual basis.

[22]A scholiast of Photius' *Bibliotheca* (ninth century) perhaps retains this Roman-era usage. While apparently describing the autobiographical statements of Iamblichus, the author of the *Babyloniaca* in the second century CE, the scholiast states that Iamblichus was a Syrian by *genos* through the lineages of both parents and that he was "not a Syrian of the Greeks who inhabited Syria, but of the autochthonous." See *Photius: Bibliothèque*, vol. 2, ed. René Henry, *2nd* ed. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2003), 40, n. 1.

[23]Strabo, 1.2.34 and 16.1.1–2 and Josephus *AJ* 1.143–47.

[24]The inscription is published in Gideon Foerster and Yoram Tsafrir, "Nysa-Scythopolis: A New Inscription and the Titles of the City on its Coins," *INJ* 9 (1986–7), 53–58. Numerous municipal coins bear legends emphasizing that Nysa-Scythopolis was a Greek *polis*.

[25]Maurice Sartre, "Communautés villageoises et structures sociales d'après l'épigraphie de la Syrie du Sud," *Epigrafia e antichità* 12 (1993), 133–35. Also, Maurice Sartre, *Histoires grecques: Snapshots from Antiquity*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009), 331–37.

[26]*IGR* 1.25. For more Greek funeral inscriptions commemorating Syrians or dedications raised by Syrians, see *IGR* 1.211, 1.266 (a dedication by a soldier who calls himself "Iamour, son of Asamos, Syrian Ascalonite"), and 1.279.

[27]*IGR* 1.839. Henry Innes MacAdam, *Studies in the History of the Roman Province of Arabia: The Northern Sector*, BAR International Series, vol. 295 (Oxford: BAR, 1986), 53 and 79 describes Canatha's transfer to Arabia. See Michel Gawlikowski, "The Syrian Desert under the Romans," in *The Early Roman Empire in the East*, Oxbow Monograph, vol. 95, ed. S.E. Alcock (Oxford: Oxbow, 1997), 51–52, who notes that Emesenes only appear in literature or inscriptions as Phoenicians after their city was integrated into the province of Syria Phoenice, whereas all inhabitants of the province of Arabia were called Arabs even if they were not nomads or descendents of "Arabs." But also see L. Robert, "L'épitaphe d'un Arabe à Thasos," *Hellenica* 2 (1946), 43–50 (47), who explores the potential for "Arab" as a reference to ethnicity in *IGR* 1.839.

[28]Josephus, *BJ* 2.97 and 7.364. For Nicholaus of Damascus, see *FGrH* II, 90.136. His account is preserved by the Byzantine author Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

[29]Josephus, *BJ* 2.266. Also see *AJ* 20.173, in which Josephus calls the Caesareans Syrians.

[30]Mark 7:26.

[31]Denis Feissel, "Deux listes de quartiers d'Antioche astreints au creusement d'un canal (73–74 après J.-C.)," *Syria* 62 (1985), 79–83, lines 32–34 from stele A and 33 from stele B. Likewise, Plutarch, *Ant.* 46.2 records an Antiochene named Alexander, who could speak Parthian and Aramaic, implicitly in addition to Greek, during the ascendancy of Marcus Antonius in the 30s BCE.

[32]A partially intact inscription consists of a dedication made by Aurelios Belios Philippos, who, in addition to being the diadoch of the Epicureans in Apamea, was a priest to "the greatest holy god Belos," the Babylonian god Bel. M F. Smith, "An Epicurean Priest from Apamea in Syria," *ZPE* 112 (1996), 120.

[33]Welles, "Inscriptions," nos. 17–22. An *archibōmistēs*, which apparently means "overseer of the altar," was responsible for administering the cult of Pakeidas. His name was Ameros, son of Ragelos, and his title of *archibōmistēs* suggests that Pakeidas was worshipped in the form of a rock altar, or betyl in keeping with "Arab" practice.

[34]Lucian's *de dea Syria*, the notable treatise about the Syrian goddess, has recently been edited and translated by J.L. Lightfoot, *Lucian on the Syrian Goddess* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), who provides ample discussion of the text, the goddess, and the city of Hierapolis. The inscription commemorating the victories of Aurelios Septimios Eirenaios can be found in *IGR* 3.1012.

[35]See Lucinda Dirven, *The Palmyrenes of Dura-Europos: A Study of Religious Interaction in Roman Syria* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 8–11 for culture at Dura-Europos. The *Europaioi* were the resident Greek citizens of *Europos* under the Parthians, whereas the terms Dura and *Douranoi*, of apparent Aramaic origin, were more widely used after Rome gave the settlement the rank of colony under these names. Michael Sommer, *Roms orientalische Steppengrenze: Palmyra, Edessa, Dura-Europos, Hatra: Eine Kulturgeschichte von Pompeius bis Diocletian*, Oriens et Occidens: Studien zu antiken Kulturkontakten und ihrem Nachleben, vol. 9 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), 23–28, 98–108, and 270–354 outlines a model for classifying settlements such as Dura-Europos as sites of "creolisation." Despite this, many *Europaioi* could have framed themselves as Greeks despite the heterogeneity of their cultural forms. Isidore of Charax, who apparently hailed from the region, called the settlement Dura but noted that "it is called Europos by Greeks," thereby indicating that the settlement's Greek citizens called their civic community Europos. *Mansiones Parthicae* 1, ed. Carl Müller in *Geographi Graeci Minores*, vol. 1 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1882).

[36]See Nigel Pollard, "Colonial and Cultural Identities in Parthian and Roman Dura-Europos," in *Aspects of the Roman East: Papers in Honour of Professor Fergus Millar FBA*, ed. Richard Alston and Samuel N.C. Lieu, Aspects of the Roman East, vol. 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 81–102 for how the *Europaioi* of Parthian Dura-Europos constructed their Greek identities (or elite identities through

Greek idioms). See Franz Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos (1922–1923)*, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique, vol. 9 (Paris: Geuthner, 1926), 41–56 and 359–60, no. 5, and Plates 31–42 for the inscriptions and murals depicting Konon with members of his family and priests. Konon, son of Nikostratos lived in either the first or second century CE. Cumont, *Fouilles* 355, no. 1, which dates to 115 CE, contains what may be the names of a son and grandson (Konon, son of Patroklos), as attested in no. 5, but *P. Dura* 17 and 24, which date to c. 180 and 159/160 CE, refer to a *Europaios* with the name of Konon, son of Nikostratos. Although when Konon lived is not certain, all these documents indicate that the names Konon and Nikostratos were replicated from generation to generation by the same family of *Europaioi*, who named at least one of their sons after his paternal grandfather. The *P. Dura* documents are in *The Excavations at Dura Europos*, Final Report V, Part I: *The Parchments and Papyri*, ed. C. Bradford Welles *et al.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).

[37]Cumont, *Fouilles*, 127–28 and 365, no. 9, and Plates 54–58 has the inscriptions and murals.

[38]Cumont, *Fouilles*, 404–9, no. 50.

[39]*P. Euphrat.* 1.4–6, 3.3, 4.3 and 4.20. Previously, Aurelius Abidsautas had been a resident of Beth Phouraia, a village under the jurisdiction of the *metrokōmē* Appadana. Abidsautas became a civic councilor when the Roman administration established Appadana as a Greek *polis* named Neapolis. The *P. Euphrat.* documents are in Denis Feissel and Jean Gascou, "Documents d'archives Romains inédits du Moyen Euphrate (III s. après J. C.)," *Journal des savants* (1995), 65–119, with Javier Teixidor (1997), 3–57, and (2000), 157–208. For contemporary municipal documents issued in Syriac at Edessa and its environs, see *Syriac Documents* A-C in *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene: Texts, Translations, and Commentary*, ed. Han J. W. Drijvers and John Healey (Leiden: Brill, 1999), Appendix 1. Also interesting is a mosaic found on the east bank of the Euphrates and made or commissioned in 227/28 by a man who calls himself (in Greek) Eutyches, son of Barnabion. It depicts the personification of the Euphrates between the female figures of Syria and Mesopotamia (or alternatively Atargatis and Fertility). The likeness of "Euphrates, the king" is identified explicitly in both Greek and Syriac. See *Old Syriac Inscriptions*, 200, Bm 1, Pl. 60 and Janine Balty, "Artiste ou commanditaire? La mosaïque de Mas' Udiye," Mas 'Udiye in *Studi di archeologia in onore di Gustavo Traversari*, vol. 1 (Rome: Bretschneider, 2004), 11–15. The mosaic is now destroyed.

[40]Maurice Sartre, "Palmyre: cité grecque," *AAAS* 42 (1996), 385–405 argues that Palmyra was a Greek city-state based on the existence of Greek institutional forms. Ted Kaizer, *The Religious Life of Palmyra: A Study of the Social Patterns of Worship in the Roman Period*, Oriens et Occidens: Studien zu antiken Kulturkontakten und ihrem Nachleben, vol. 4 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), 49–50

and "'Palmyre, cité grecque?' A question of coinage," *Klio* 89.1 (2007), 39–60 and Michael Sommer, "Palmyra and Hatra: 'Civic' and 'Tribal' Institutions at the Near Eastern Steppe Frontier," in *Cultural Borrowings and Ethnic Appropriations in Antiquity*, Oriens et Occidens: Studien zu antiken Kulturkontakten und ihrem Nachleben, vol. 8, ed. Erich S. Gruen (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), 285–96 and *Roms orientalische Steppengrenze*, 170–83 challenge this view because of the extent and complexity of Near Eastern cultural forms, as well as dimorphic social structures, in the settlement.

[41]For important discussion of dedications with the traditional Near Eastern formula *'l hlyy* or ὑπὲρ ὑγείας/ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας (for the life/health of) and honorific inscriptions with the formula *lyqr* or τ(ε)ῖμης χάριν/ἕνεκα, of Greek origin, see Klaas Dijkstra, *Life and Loyalty: A Study in the Socio-Religious Culture of Syria and Mesopotamia in the Graeco-Roman Period Based on Epigraphical Evidence*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, vol. 128 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 154–67, 292–93, and 335–43; Ted Kaizer, "Religious Mentality in Palmyrene Documents," *Klio* 86.2 (2004), 167–68; and Lucinda Dirven, "Aspects of Hatrene Religion: A Note on the Statues of Kings and Nobles from Hatra," in *The Variety of Local Religious Life in the Near East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods*, ed. Ted Kaizer (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 236–46.

[42]Taylor, "Bilingualism and Diglossia," 319–20 indicates that both Greek and Aramaic epigraphic use was significant for Palmyrene identity formation, with Aramaic being used in cultic and funerary contexts and Greek or bilingualism being manifested in more "public" activities. Aramaic writing or speech, as opposed to Greek, did not encapsulate "true" Palmyrene identity.

[43]*PAT* 1406 in *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts*, ed. Delbert Hillers and Eleonora Cussini (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1996). The inscription does not have an internal date, but Sartre, "Palmyre: cité grecque," 392 suggests a second-century date. Only a few letters from the Greek survive.

[44]*PAT* 0907=*CIS* 2.3, no. 4546, with additional bibliography. The direct provenance is unknown, although it is certainly from Palmyra. Unfortunately, it cannot be strictly dated. Likewise, *PAT* 0908=*CIS* 4547 describes a deceased woman as "Egyptian" (*msḏryt*). Although typically regarded as a cognomen, it could be an ethno-cultural label.

[45]Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity*, 7–9 emphasizes that Greek culture could be used to express local identities (7 quoted).

[46]For such themes, see the analysis of J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Ancient City*, 104–36. For the networking of Syrian bishops and episcopates in the works and times of Theodoret of Cyrrhus, with due attention to social and doctrinal interactions, see Adam Schor, "Theodoret on the 'School of Antioch': A Network Approach," *JECS* 15.4 (2007), 534–62.

[47]See the significant arguments of Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, 150–54,

which focus on how the emperor Julian and likeminded contemporaries conceptualized Hellenism. For them, Hellenism and the performance of Greek identification occurred by interweaving cultural, literary, and cultic pursuits that expressed a connection to a definitively Greek past. In this sense, only "pagans" who pursued Greek *paideia* were Greeks, but members of various ethnic or regional groups, whether Thracian, Gallic, or Syrian, could express their Hellenic qualities through training in the Greek classics.

[48]As emphasized by Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 15–16.

[49]Rom 1:14 and 16 and 2:9–10. See Sebastian Brock, "From Antagonism to Assimilation: Syriac Attitudes to Greek Learning," in East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period, ed. Nina Garsoïan (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1982), 19.

[50]In some instances, references to a Syrian *genos* may have delineated a Syrian ethnic genealogy, but in others it simply denoted that someone had been born a member of the regional Syrian *ethnos*. The explicit meaning of the term is not always clear. See for instance the funeral inscription of Thalasios, "Syrian by birth" (*geni Suros*), who was buried at Rome. Denis Feissel, "Contributions à l'épigraphie grecque chrétienne de Rome," *RAC* 57 (1982), 363–65. The Chi-Rho on the gravestone indicates a late antique dating.

[51]See Feissel, "Contributions," 363–65 for one such ambiguous usage.

[52]Fergus Millar, "Il ruolo delle lingue semitiche nel vicino oriente tardoromano (V-VI secolo)," *Mediterraneo antico* 1 (1998), 81–82 stresses that no epigraphic evidence exists for a non-Jewish Aramaic dialect west of the Euphrates until the fifth century (except for Palmyrenean). Still, the sermons of Balai of Qenneshrin/Chalcis suggest the existence of a Syriac-speaking community in the region by the early fifth century. See Robert Phenix, *The Sermons of Joseph of Balai of Qenneshrin: Rhetoric and Interpretation in Fifth-Century Syriac Literature*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum, vol. 50 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 56–57.

[53]For Christian Palestinian Aramaic and its prominence within Palestine, see Sidney Griffith, "From Aramaic to Arabic: The Languages of the Monasteries of Palestine in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997), 16–24.

[54]As Isabella Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews, and Christians in Late Antique Antioch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 92–93 and 178–79 stresses.

[55]Libanius associates Hellenism, whether manifested within a cultic or cultural context, with the study of Greek letters. See *Or.* 1.234, 12.27–33, 13.1, 8, and 13, 18.157 and 161, and 62.8 for cultic associations and *Ep.* 347.2, 357.1, 411.4 and 1544.1 for Hellenism. Libanius' notion of Hellenism was more "diffuse" than Julian's and could be inclusive of Christians trained in *paideia*. See Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, 71 (quoted) and Sandwell, *Religious Identity*, 176–80.

[56]It is worth noting that when Libanius refers to "the cities of the Greeks," he is referring to the cities of Greece and Asia Minor, not those of Syria. For this observation, see Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, 114.

[57]Libanius, *Or.* 11.63, 67, and 164–73. Libanius could conceive of Antiochenes as being of the *Hellēnikon* or Ionian *genos*. See *Or.* 11.57 and 119 and *Ep.* 1231.1. Otherwise, Libanius typically refers to the term *genos* when he discusses the residents of Greece or Asia Minor, such as in *Ep.* 203.1, but on occasion, he uses it to refer to sophists who cultivate Greek *paideia*. See *Ep.* 312.1 and 981.1 and the explanation of B. Schouler, "Hellénisme et humanisme chez Libanios," *Ἑλληνισμός: quelques jalons pour une histoire de l'identité grecque, Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg 25–27 octobre 1989*, ed. S. Said (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 268–69. Sometimes, Libanius also refers to the "Ionian" origins of Antioch or other Syrian cities that claimed to be descended from the bovine maiden Io, like Gaza, but their Greek descent did not mean that he categorized them as Greek in cultural or civic terms in the present time. See *Or.* 11.51, 63, 68, and 91 (Antioch), *Or.* 55.33 (Gaza), and *Ep.* 223.2 and 1231.1 (Antioch).

[58]Libanius, *Or.* 11.184, echoing the famous statement of Isocrates, *Pan.* 50.

[59]Libanius, *Or.* 11.270.

[60]Libanius, *Or.* 48.2–3.

[61]For these issues, see Liebeschuetz, *Antioch*, 102–3 and 167–74.

[62]Libanius, *Or.* 49.32–3.

[63]See Libanius, *Or.* 1.16, 18.242, and 64.9 for self-reference as a Syrian. By contrast, Millar, "Libanius," 180 claims that Libanius uses the term "Suros" to describe a Hellene from Syria. For the significance of *Or.* 64.9 for Libanius' Greek identity, see Johannes Haubold and Richard Miles, "Community and Theatre in Libanius' Oration LXIV *In Defence of the Pantomimes*," in *Culture and Society in Late Roman Antioch*, ed. I. Sandwell and J. Huskinson (Oxford: Oxbow, 2004), 28.

[64]Libanius, *Ep.* 1519.6–7.

[65]Libanius, *Ep.* 1296.1 and 3.

[66]Libanius, *Ep.* 1399.5, 1459.1, and 1520.1.

[67]Libanius, *Ep.* 523. For a different interpretation, see Millar, "Libanius," 175, who sees this passage as positing no distinction between Greeks and Syrians. According to this logic, all Libanius' "Syrians" are Greeks of Syria.

[68]Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, 166.

[69]See Theodoret, *Quaest. in Judic. Cap.* 19.6–9, which states, "For just as the Osrhoenians, Syrians, Euphratesians, Palestinians, and Phoenicians use the language of Syrians, but their dialects nonetheless have many points of difference, so were the Hebrews . . . " In *HE* 2.25.1, Theodoret describes Germanicia, a city in Euphratensis, as a city lying at the border of the Cilicians, Syrians, and Cap-

padocians. That is, it was in Syria, at the border of Cilicia and Cappadocia. These descriptions indicates that Theodoret conceived of the *ethnos* of the Syrians as the inhabitants of the several provinces called Syria, Palestina, and Phoenice as well as Euphratensis and Osrhoene.

[70]Theodoret, *HE* 2.30.11, 3.24.1, 4.10.1 and 4.29.1. These statements show that Theodoret recognized that members of the Syrian *ethnos* could be distinctive because they had "Syrian" genealogies or linguistic patterns, but they nonetheless belonged to an *ethnos* that included Greek speakers while being distinct from the *ethnos* of the Greeks or other similar groups.

[71]Theodoret, *HE* 1.7.4 and 2.30.2. Sozomen, who originated from the vicinity of Gaza, conventionally uses "Nisibis" as opposed to Antioch (*HE* 3.16.1, 5.3.1, and 6.33.1). For Theodoret's knowledge of Syriac and its relevance to his hagiographies, see Theresa Urbainczyk, "The Devil Spoke Syriac to Me: Theodoret in Syria," in *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*, ed. Stephen Mitchell and Geoffrey Greatrex (London: Duckworth, 2000), 253–62 and *Theodoret of Cyrrhus: The Bishop and the Holy Man* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2002), 72–79. Likewise, Damascius (or Photius, who recorded the fragment), *Philosophical History: Text with Translation and Notes*, ed. and trans. Polymnia Athanassiadi (Athens: Apamea Cultural Association, 1999), 57a has the female sophist Aedesia calling her child, a future philosopher, *babion*, a word of Aramaic origin.

[72]Theodoret, *Ep.* 146 (3.190). See Brock, "Syriac Culture," 717 for Ephrem in Greek during the fourth and fifth centuries. Sozomen, who was from the vicinity of Gaza, claims that many of Ephrem's hymns had been translated into Greek by his time and were admired by those who "spoke the language of Syrians" and Greek speakers (*HE* 3.16 generally).

[73]John Chrysostom, *de sanctis martyribus* 1 (PG 50, col. 646) and *de statuis hom.*19.1 (PG 49, col. 188). John goes on to stress that city-dwellers should not heed perceived differences between themselves and villagers. Similarly, see Libanius, *Or.* 42.31 for Libanius' only direct reference to Aramaic speech.

[74]Millar, "Theodoret of Cyrrhus," 117–24 discusses Theodoret's connections to Syrian culture and his presentation of how the language of the "Syrians" differed from that of "Greeks."

[75]See for instance Theodoret, *HE* 3.9.1 and 5.21.1. Also, 4.29.1, which specifies the lure and threat of Greek *paideia*.

[76]Theodoret, *HE* 4.29.1 for Ephrem.

[77]Theodoret, *Graecarum affectionum curatio* 12 and 24 (1.106 and 109). Similarly, see Theresa Urbainczyk, *Theodoret of Cyrrhus*, 16–18.

[78]Acts 11:20.

[79]John Chrysostom, *in Acta Apostolorum* 25.1–2 (PG 60, col. 191 and 194).

[80]Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity*, 34 and 38.

[81]Ephrem, *Hymni contra Julianum*, ed. Edmund Beck in *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Paradiso und contra Julianum*, CSCO 174–75, Scriptores Syri 78–79 (Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1957), 1.17–18,. For recent work emphasizing Ephrem's engagement of the broader cultural and religious trends of the Roman empire and relevant bibliography, see Christine Shepardson, *Anti-Judaism and Christian Orthodoxy: Ephrem's Hymns in Fourth-Century Syria*, North American Patristic Society, Patristic Monograph Series, vol. 20 (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 2008), 21–22 and 157–61 and "Syria, Syriac, Syrian: Negotiating East and West in Late Antiquity," in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, ed. Philip Rousseau (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2009), 459–62.

[82]Ephrem, *Hymni de fide*, ed. Edmund Beck in *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Fide*, CSCO 154–55, Scriptores Syri 73–74 (Louvain: Durbecq, 1955), 2.24 and *Hymni contra haereses* 3.7, ed. Edmund Beck in *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen contra Haereses*, CSCO 169–70, Scriptores Syri 76–77 (Louvain: Durbecq, 1957), 3.7. Brock, "From Antagonism to Assimilation," 19 indicates that Ephrem had some awareness of Greek learning, like many other Greek- or Syriac-speaking Christians.

[83]Jacob of Sarug, *Homilies on the Spectacles of the Theate*s 3 and 5 in C. Moss, "Jacob of Serugh's Homilies on the Spectacles of the Theatre," *Le Muséon* 48 (1935), 96 and 101.

[84]Jacob of Sarug, *on the Idols* 245 in P. Martin, "Discours de Jacques de Saroug sur la chute des idoles," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 29 (1875), 117.

[85]See *The Chronicle of Zuqnin* in *Chronicon anonymum pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum*, vol. 1, ed. J.B. Chabot, CSCO, Scriptores Syri 43 and 53 (III 1–2) (Paris: E Typographeo Reipublicae, 1927), 272. The quoted line is now attributed to the chronicle of Ps.- Joshua the Stylite, which has been translated by Frank R. Trombley and John W. Watt, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, TTH 32 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000).

[86]Because recognition as a Greek was intimately tied to classical *paideia* in this period, it should be noted that "Greeks" could worship non-Greek divinities and integrate such worship into their erudition, while those who worshipped Greek divinities could still be classified as simply pagan. The Syriac translation of Zachariah, *Vie de Sévère*, ed. M.A. Kugener, *PO* 2 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1907), 34–35 treats as pagans, but not specifically as Greeks, those who worship either Greek or Egyptian divinities. This work is a Syriac translation of a Greek original, and unfortunately it is not clear how Zachariah referred to these pagans in Greek. Likewise, Damascius, *Philosophical History*, 142B-C describes how the philosopher Isidore valued the "sacred myths" of Asclepius of Berytus, a god who was "neither Greek nor Egyptian but an indigenous Phoenician." Greeks could worship foreign gods, and non-Greeks could worship Greek ones.

[87]A key example is Severus of Antioch, *Homiliae cathedrales* LXXII, ed. and trans. Maurice Brière in *Les homélies cathédrales de Sévère d'Antioche*, *PO* 12 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1919), 72–73 [354–55]. Severus criticizes Greek philosophers who defend polytheistic religion by arguing that Christianity, which espoused the worship of angels, too had polytheistic tendencies.

[88]Jacob of Sarug, *A Metrical Homily on Holy Mar Ephrem*, ed. and trans. Joseph P. Amar, *PO* 47, no. 209. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), 32 and 155–56.

[89]See Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Asceticism and Society in Crisis: John of Ephesus and the Lives of the Eastern Saints* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 28–42 for John's background and activity.

[90]John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 50 (*Lives of James and Theodore*), *PO* 19, 157 [503]. *Lives* 25 (*Life of John of Hephaestopolis*), *PO* 18, 527–9 [325–27] stresses that John of Hephaestopolis was by *genos* (*gensā*) a "Syrian, that is, a Palestinian from the city of Gaza" while one of his mentors Z'ura, from Sophanene along the Roman-Persian frontier, was also Syrian by *genos*. John rarely referred to pagans as Greeks, but in one specific instance he described a young demon-possessed woman as a Greek. He did so perhaps to frame her as a Greek speaker, but he may have been commenting on her literary, cultural, or religious preferences. John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 15 *(Lives of Two Monks) PO* 17 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1923), 227 [227].

[91]John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 49 (*Life of James*), *PO* 18, 695 [493].

[92]John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 50 (*Lives of James and Theodore*), *PO* 19, 154–55 [500–1].

[93]John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 58 (*History of the Convent of John Urtaya*), *PO* 19, 207–8 [553–54].

[94]See Philoxenus, *Lettre aux moines de Senoun*, ed. A. de Halleux, CSCO 231–32, Scriptores Syri 98–99 (Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1963), 51–55 and a gloss of Jacob of Edessa in *Homiliae cathedrales* LXXVI in *Homélie de Sévere d'Antioche: versions de Paul de Callinice et de Jacques d'Édesse*, ed. M.A. Kugener and E. Triffaux, *PO* 16 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1922), 860–62 [100–2].

[95]Theodoret, *HR* 5.5.6. For bilingualism or diglossia in the Middle-Euphrates, see the important evidence presented by Millar, "Community," 86–90. Likewise, *Vie d'Alexandre l'acémete* indicates that Alexander established along the Euphrates a monastery that included people who were "Roman, Greek, Syrian, and Egyptian" by "tongue" (678 [38]). The text is clear in distinguishing such monks as speakers of Latin, Greek, Aramaic, and presumably Coptic, but while it divides them into language groupings, it does not necessarily define them as belonging to different ethnicities, as Millar, "Community," 70–72 posits. *Vie d'Alexandre l'acémete*, 792 [52] mentions another monastery consisting of "Romans, Greeks, and Syrians" in Constantinople, and in this instance it uses the term *genos*, which could have

stronger regional or ethnic connotations. For the potential date, original language, and various hands that contributed to this biography, see Daniel Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 249–50.

[96]Mark the Deacon, *Vita Porphyrii Episcopi Gazensis*, ed. Societatis Philologae Bonnensis Sodales (Leipzig: Teubner, 1895), 68–69.

[97]*Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae rhetori vulgo adscripta*, 7.12, vol. 2, ed. E.W. Brooks, CSCO, Scriptores Syri III 5–6 (38–39) (Paris: E Typographeo Reipublicae, 1919–21), 54–56.

[98]John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 44 (*Life of Tribunus*), *PO* 18, 661–63 [459–61].

[99]Taylor, "Bilingualism and Diglossia," 306–17 provides a thorough discussion of epigraphic evidence for bilingualism in Syria.

[100]For various readings, see M.A. Kugener, "Note sur l'inscription trilingue de Zébed," *Journal asiatique* ser. 10, vol. 9 (1907), 509–24 and "Nouvelle note sur l'inscription trilingue de Zébed," *Rivista degli studi orientali* 1 (1907), 577–86; Enno Littmann, "Osservazioni sulle iscrizioni di Harran e di Zebed," *Rivista degli studi orientali* (1911/12), 193–98; and *IGLS* 2.310. Similar examples of Greek and Syriac or Greek and Christian Palestinian Aramaic bilingual inscriptions from the fifth and sixth centuries can be found, among other places, in the monastery at Tall Bi'a and a church at Evron. See Eva Strommenger, "Ausgrabungen in Tall Bi'a 1990," *Mitteilungen der deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 123 (1991), 7–34; Gábor Kalla, "Das ältere Mosaik des byzantinischen Klosters in Tall Bi'a," *Mitteilungen der deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 123 (1991), 35–40 and "Christentum am oberen Euphrat: Das byzantinische Kloster von Tall Bi'a," *Antike Welt: Zeitschrift für Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte* 30.2 (1999), 131–42; Manfred Krebernik, "Schriftfunde aus Tall Bi'a 1990," *Mitteilungen der deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 123 (1991), 41–70; V. Tzaferis, "The Early Christian Church and Greek Inscriptions from Evron," *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies* 19 (1986), 36–53; A. Jacques, "A Palestinian Syriac Inscription in the Mosaics at Evron," *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies* 19 (1986), 54–56; and P. Donceel-Voûte, *Les pavements des églises Byzantines de Syrie et du Liban*, Publications d'histoire de l'art et d'archéologie de l'Université catholique de Louvain, vol. 69 (Louvain: Collège Erasme, 1988), 145–50. For more on Syriac inscriptions, see Sebastian Brock, "Syriac Inscriptions: A Preliminary Check List of European Publications," *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli* 38 (1978), 255–71 and *Old Syriac Inscriptions*.

[101]For instance, Βερε(χ) δουχραναν (blessed be our memory) is juxtaposed with the Syriac formula from which it had been transliterated. Enno Littmann, *Semitic Inscriptions* (New York: The Century Co., 1904), no. 23 and *IGLS* 2.314. See Taylor, "Bilingualism and Diglossia," 313–14 for analysis.

[102]Littman, *Semitic Inscriptions*, no. 24 and *IGLS* 2.312. Also, Taylor, "Bilingualism and Diglossia," 313.

[103]See *Vita Rabulae*, ed. J.J. Overbeck in *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni, Balaei aliorumque opera selecta* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1865, repr. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007), 160–62 for Rabbula's background and his growing doubts about paganism and the gods of the Greeks. Rabbula's father may have been a Neoplatonist, a *Hellēn* through both his cultic preferences and his mastery of Greek letters, as Glen Bowersock, "The Syriac Life of Rabbula and Syrian Hellenism," in *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, ed. Tomas Hägg and Philip Rousseau (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 261–62 suggests. According to *Vie d'Alexandre l'acémete*, Rabbula bolstered pre-existing schools which provided an education in Syriac letters (674 [34]).

[104]*Vita Iohannis Episcopi Tellae*, ed. and trans. by E.W. Brooks in *Vitae virorum apud Monophysitas*, CSCO, Scriptores Syri III 25 (7–8) (Paris: E Typographeo Reipublicae, 1907), 39 and 43.

[105]Similarly, Adam H. Becker, *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom: The School of Nisibis and Christian Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 35–36 and 38 deems John's conversion to Christian asceticism and his recital of the Syriac psalms to constitute a challenge to norms of Greek *paideia* and an alignment with Scripture and Christian works.

[106]John Chrysostom, *de statuis hom.* 19.1 (PG 49, col. 188) and *de sanctis martyribus* 1 (PG 50, col. 646).

[107]See, for instance, Isho'yahb III, *Letters* 2.7, ed. and trans. R. Duval in *Iso'yahb III patriarcha, liber epistularum*, CSCO, Scriptores Syri 11–12 (II 64 T and V) (Paris: E Typographeo Reipublicae, 1905), 134, who distinguishes Syrians from "Arameans." Also, the *History of Mar Qardagh*, ed. Paul Bedjan, *AMS* 2, 443 describes Mar Qardagh as being descended from Assyrians. It therefore affirms that persons living in Abiabene still called themselves Assyrians. Joel Walker, *The Legend of Mar Qardagh: Narrative and Christian Heroism in Late Antique Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006) contains an English translation of this text, and 249–54 explores the survival of Assyrian traditions and identities in late antique Adiabene. Also see Adam Becker, "The Ancient Near East in the Late Antique Near East: Syriac Christian Appropriation of the Biblical East," in *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. Gregg Gardner and Kevin L. Osterloh (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 394–415 for Assyrians as constructing, as opposed to transmitting accurately, historical links to biblical Assyrians. Likewise, Theodoret, *HR* 2.1 indicates that Nisibis and the region east of it were called both Adiabene and Assyria, and *HE* 1.7.4 claims that it was populated by Assyrians. The *History of the Martyrs of Karka de Beth Slōk*, ed. Paul Bedjan, *AMS* 2, 510 distinguishes between the Seleucid foundations of Syria and

those of territory inhabited by "Arameans." In a similar way, *Les actes de Mār Māri, l'apôtre de la Mésopotamie*, ed. and trans. Christelle and Florence Jullien, CSCO 602–3, Scriptores Syri 234–35 (Louvain: Peeters, 2003), 18 differentiates the "lands of the Syrians" from that of Arameans and other regions beyond Roman imperial frontiers. For discussion of the inter-related meanings of the terms Aramean and Assyrian throughout the centuries, see J.M. Fiey, "'Assyriens' ou 'Araméens?'" *L'Orient Syrien* 10 (1965), 144–60 and John Joseph, *The Modern Assyrians of the Middle East: Encounters with the Western Christian Missions, Archaeologists, and Colonial Powers* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 1–32.

[108]See Volker Menze, *Justinian and the Making of the Syrian Orthodox Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 145–93 for a thorough exploration of this process.

[109]*Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae rhetori vulgo adscripta* 8.5, vol. 2, 82. Also, John of Ephesus relates that the "*politeia* of the faithful faction" lacked priests after John's death. John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 49 (*Life of James*), *PO* 18, 490 [692].

[110]*Vita Iohannis Episcopi Tellae* 72.

[111]See generally John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 49 (*Life of James*) and 50 (*Lives of James and Theodore*), *PO* 18, 690–97 [488–95] and 19, 153–58 [499–504]. For the activity of Ahoudemmeh and Marutha of Takrit in converting Arabs and establishing monasteries that regulated their Christian practices, see Elizabeth Key Fowden, *The Barbarian Plain: Saint Sergius between Rome and Iran* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 120–29 and *Histoires d'Ahoudemmeh et de Marouta, métropolitains Jacobites de Tagrit et de l'Orient*, ed. F. Nau, *PO* 3 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1909), 1–96.

[112]See *The Chronicle of Zuqnin* in *Chronicon anonymum pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum*, vol. 2, CSCO, Scriptores Syri 43 and 53 (III 1–2) (Paris: E Typographeo Reipublicae, 1933), 154 and 256. Jacob of Edessa uses a variety of terms to describe his language and the people who speak it, namely Aramean, Syrian, Mesopotamian, and Edessene. Jacob normally differentiates between the various provinces of "Syria" and "Mesopotamia," but when he refers to "Mesopotamia," he is typically describing the former Roman province located in greater Syria (the lands/provinces of Syria) and not to the general region between the Tigris and Euphrates (he distinguishes between Mesopotamia and Assyria, for instance). See *Hexaemeron* 2 (76 and 83), 3, (114–16), 5 (207 and 235), and 7 (324–25), *Homiliae cathedrales* CXXIII, 197 [701], and Letter 13 (21). Equally as important, in a letter that he wrote on Syriac orthography, Jacob referred to Syriac as the "the Mesopotamian language, that is, Edessene or, to speak more clearly, Syrian." See *A Letter by Mar Jacob, Bishop of Edessa, on Syriac Orthography*, ed. George Phillips (London: Williams and Norgate, 1869), 11. I will therefore suggest that Jacob's usage of Aramean refers to all speakers of Aramaic, Syrian to all Aramaic speakers

of the (former) provinces of the Roman "lands of Syria" (including Mesopotamia), and Mesopotamian or Edessene explicitly for speakers of Syriac living in the former province of Mesopotamia. Similarly, see Jaako Hämeen-Anttila, *The Last Pagans of Iraq: Ibn Wahʃshiyya and his Nabatean Agriculture*, Islamic History and Civilizations: Studies and Texts, vol. 63, ed. Wadad Kadi and Rotraud Wielandt (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 33–45 on references to Syrians and "Nabateans," who were the Aramaic-speaking populations of modern day Iraq and Syria in early Islamic Arabic sources.

[113]Michael the Syrian, *Chronique* 12.16, 522–24.

[114]Greek speech and writing nonetheless persisted into the eighth century. For the uses of various languages among the so-called "Melkites," see Sidney Griffith, "From Aramaic to Arabic," 11–31; "'Melkites', 'Jacobites' and the Christological Controversies in Arabic in the Third/Ninth Centuries," in *Syrian Christians under Islam*, ed. David Thomas (Brill: Leiden, 2001), 9–56; and "John of Damascus and the Church in Syria in the Umayyad Era: The Intellectual and Cultural Milieu of Orthodox Christians in the World of Islam," *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 11.2 (2008), pars. 1–32. For Greek, Aramaic, and Arabic after the Arab invasions, see also Robert Hoyland, "Language and Identity: The Twin Histories of Arabic and Aramaic (and: Why did Aramaic Succeed where Greek Failed?)," *SCI* 23 (2004), 190–99.

Hellenism, Islam, and Exoticism in French Medieval Romance

Megan Moore

The romances I study are of the west, and though the west is not usually at the centre of discussions about Hellenism and Islam, it shapes our views of both. In fact, the west forcibly associates Hellenism with Byzantium (despite Byzantine disagreements) and thus forces an examination of what it conceives to be Hellenic culture next to Islam. In the romances I study, the west names both Byzantium and Islam as pagans, thus creating a level of affinity that forces us to consider the significance of the relationship between the two.

Lesser-known texts springing from an unexpected perspective (in this case, French medieval romances) often provide an ideal staging ground for thinking outside the critical and textual box in which eastern and western medieval studies have been distinctly separated, their concerns and complications rendered distinct and irreconcilable. One such text, *Floire et Blancheflor*, is the mid-twelfth century Old French story of two children (one a Christian, one a pagan) who fall in love and eventually marry, the husband converting to Christianity out of love for his wife. *Floire et Blancheflor* begins with a knight and his recently-widowed but pregnant daughter, who are en-route on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella. In a particularly bloody frame narrative about crusade and conversion, the pilgrims are attacked and the knight is slaughtered