

Christianity in Fifteenth-Century Iraq

Thomas A. Carlson



Christianity in Fifteenth-Century Iraq

Christians in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra were socially and culturally at home in the Middle East, practicing their distinctive religion despite political instability. This insightful book challenges the normative Eurocentrism of scholarship on Christianity and the Islamic exceptionalism of much Middle Eastern history to reveal the often unexpected ways in which interreligious interactions were peaceful or violent in this region. The multifaceted communal self-concept of the “Church of the East” (so-called “Nestorians”) reveals cultural integration, with certain distinctive features. The process of patriarchal succession clearly borrowed ideas from surrounding Christian and Muslim groups, while public rituals and communal history reveal specifically Christian responses to concerns shared with Muslim neighbors. Drawing on sources from various languages, including Arabic, Armenian, Persian, and Syriac sources, this book opens new possibilities for understanding the rich, diverse, and fascinating society and culture that existed in Iraq during this time.

Thomas A. Carlson is an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Oklahoma State University. He holds a PhD in History from Princeton University, and is the coeditor of an online geographic reference tool for Syriac culture, *The Syriac Gazetteer*.

Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization

Editorial Board

Chase F. Robinson, *The Graduate Center, The City University of New York*
(general editor)

Michael Cook, *Princeton University*

Maribel Fierro, *Spanish National Research Council*

Alan Mikhail, *Yale University*

David O. Morgan, Professor Emeritus, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Intisar Rabb, *Harvard University*

Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton University*

Other titles in the series are listed at the back of the book.

Christianity in Fifteenth-Century Iraq

THOMAS A. CARLSON
Oklahoma State University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025,
India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107186279

DOI: 10.1017/9781316888919

© Thomas A. Carlson 2018

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2018

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Carlson, Thomas A., author.

Title: Christianity in fifteenth-century Iraq / Thomas A. Carlson.

Description: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2018. | Includes
bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2017061434 | ISBN 9781107186279 (alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Church of the East – Iraq – History. | Church of the East – History. |
Christianity – Iraq. | Islam – Iraq. | Iraq – History – 634-1534.

Classification: LCC BX154.I72 C375 2018 | DDC 275.67/05–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2017061434>

ISBN 978-1-107-18627-9 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy
of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication
and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain,
accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>List of Maps</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>Notes on Transliteration, Names, and Dates</i>	xi
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xiii
<i>Maps</i>	xv
Introduction	1
1 Coming into Focus: The World of Fifteenth Century Iraq and al-Jazīra	13
2 Muslim Lords and Their Christian Flocks	41
3 Living with Suspicious Neighbors in a Violent World	71
4 Interlude: Concepts of Communities	90
5 Bridges and Barriers of Doctrine	113
6 Practical Theology in a Dangerous Time	143
7 Rituals: The Texture of Belonging	161
8 Desperate Measures: The Changing Ecclesiastical Hierarchy	195
9 The Power of the Past: Communal History for Present Needs	222
Conclusion	252
<i>Appendix A Glossary</i>	260
<i>Appendix B Lists of Rulers and Patriarchs</i>	263

<i>Appendix C</i>	<i>The Patriarchal Succession of the Church of the East</i>	269
<i>Appendix D</i>	<i>Dating the Ritual for Reception of Heretics</i>	272
	<i>Bibliography</i>	275
	<i>Index</i>	291

Figures

2.1	A fifteenth-century Persian manuscript illustration of a monastery	<i>page</i> 64
2.2	Detail of figure 2.1, bells ringing	64
7.1	Fiey’s conception of a “typical” East Syrian church floor-plan	189
7.2	The twentieth-century plan of the medieval Mārt Meskīntā church in Mosul	190

Maps

1	Imperial and regional capitals	<i>page</i> xvi
2	Cities and patriarchates	xvii
3	Diyār Bakr and Eastern Anatolia	xviii
4	Mosul Plain and Ṭūr ʿAbdīn	xix
5	Lake Van and Armenian Highlands	xx

Acknowledgements

This book was first imagined at Oxford, developed at Princeton, and completed at Oklahoma State, and I have incurred many individual and institutional debts, at all three institutions and beyond. I am grateful to David Taylor and Alison Salvesen, under whose tutelage I first explored Syriac Christianity, and to Peter Brown, Michael Cook, Bill Jordan, John Haldon, Anthony Grafton, and Helmut Reimitz who tempted, coached, and compelled me to locate my studies in wider worlds of history and of scholarship. Peter Brown and Michael Cook, in particular, have both continued to provide encouragement even after my dissertation defense absolved them of further responsibility, and I am very grateful for their correspondence and conversation. At Oklahoma State, I find myself in a very collegial department, of which I must particularly thank Laura Arata, Yongtao Du, Emily Graham, Jim Huston, Lesley Rimmel, Richard Rohrs, Mike Thompson, Stephanie Wheatley, and Anna Zeide for prompting me to rethink aspects of my arguments, as well as Laura Belmonte, David D'Andrea, John Kinder, and Jason Lavery for their wisdom regarding publication processes. Tuna Artun, Sebastian Brock, the late Patricia Crone, Stephen Humphreys, George Kiraz, Nick Marinides, Adam McCollum, David Michelson, Heleen Murre-van den Berg, Hidemi Takahashi, Deborah Tor, Joel Walker, and David Wilmschurst have each provided important insights and encouragement along the way. I am very grateful to Chase Robinson, Maria Marsh, and Cambridge University Press for their sustained interest in this book project and their guidance for a novice author through the ups and downs of the peer review and revision processes. Christian Sahner, Jack Tannous, Lev Weitz, Luke Yarbrough, and the anonymous readers for Cambridge University Press have done

It is impossible to choose politically neutral and linguistically defensible spellings for all proper names from fifteenth-century al-Jazīra. For places and people with sufficiently widely known modern English spellings, I have typically followed that usage; otherwise I have transliterated them precisely from whichever language seemed appropriate. Some Christian names appear as their English cognates (e.g. Timothy instead of Ṭīmāthē'ōs), while others have retained their Semitic form (e.g. Yōḥannān instead of John). In any case, I have attempted to spell each person's or place's name consistently throughout the text (except when quoting from other scholarship). I have similarly used the modern "Bey" in place of the various spellings in fifteenth-century sources.

A plethora of calendars marked time in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra. For consistency, I have used Common Era dates throughout, yet when a primary source records a date, that is inserted before the Common Era equivalent. An abbreviation identifies the Middle Eastern calendar used in each case.

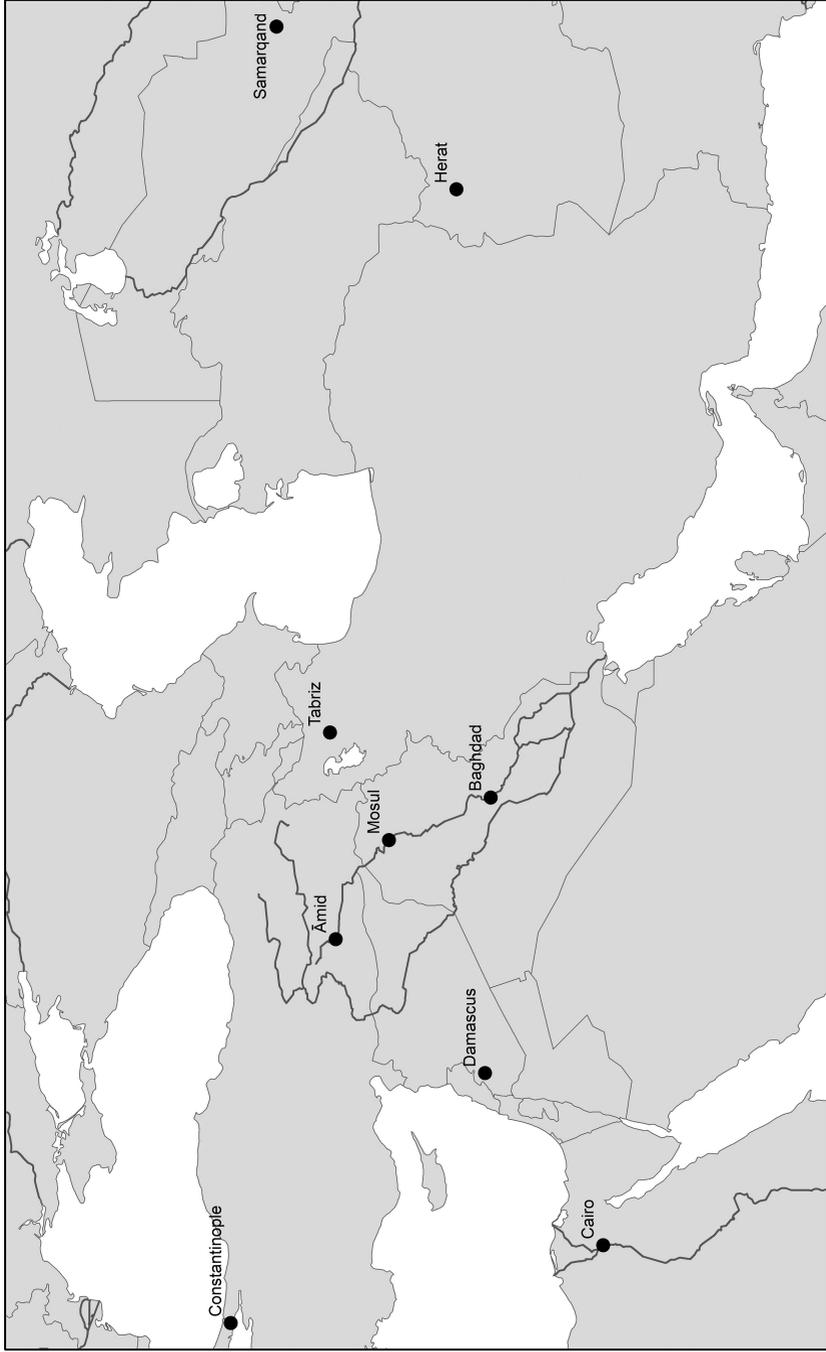
Abbreviations

AA	Armenian calendar
Add.	Additional Manuscript
AG	Seleucid calendar (“Year of the Greeks”)
AH	Islamic (<i>hijrī</i>) calendar
Ar.	Arabic
b.	bin (Arabic) or bar (Syriac)
Berlin	Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin
BL	British Library
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford University
Cambridge	Cambridge University Library
<i>EI2</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition</i>
f./ff.	folio(s)
fn./fnn.	footnote(s)
fol.	folio manuscript
<i>GEDSH</i>	<i>Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage</i>
HMML CCM	Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, Chaldean Cathedral of Mosul collection
l./ll.	line(s)
ms./mss.	manuscript(s)
Or.	oriental
orient.	oriental
p./pp.	page(s)
Pers.	Persian
Princeton	Princeton University Firestone Library
quart.	quarto manuscript

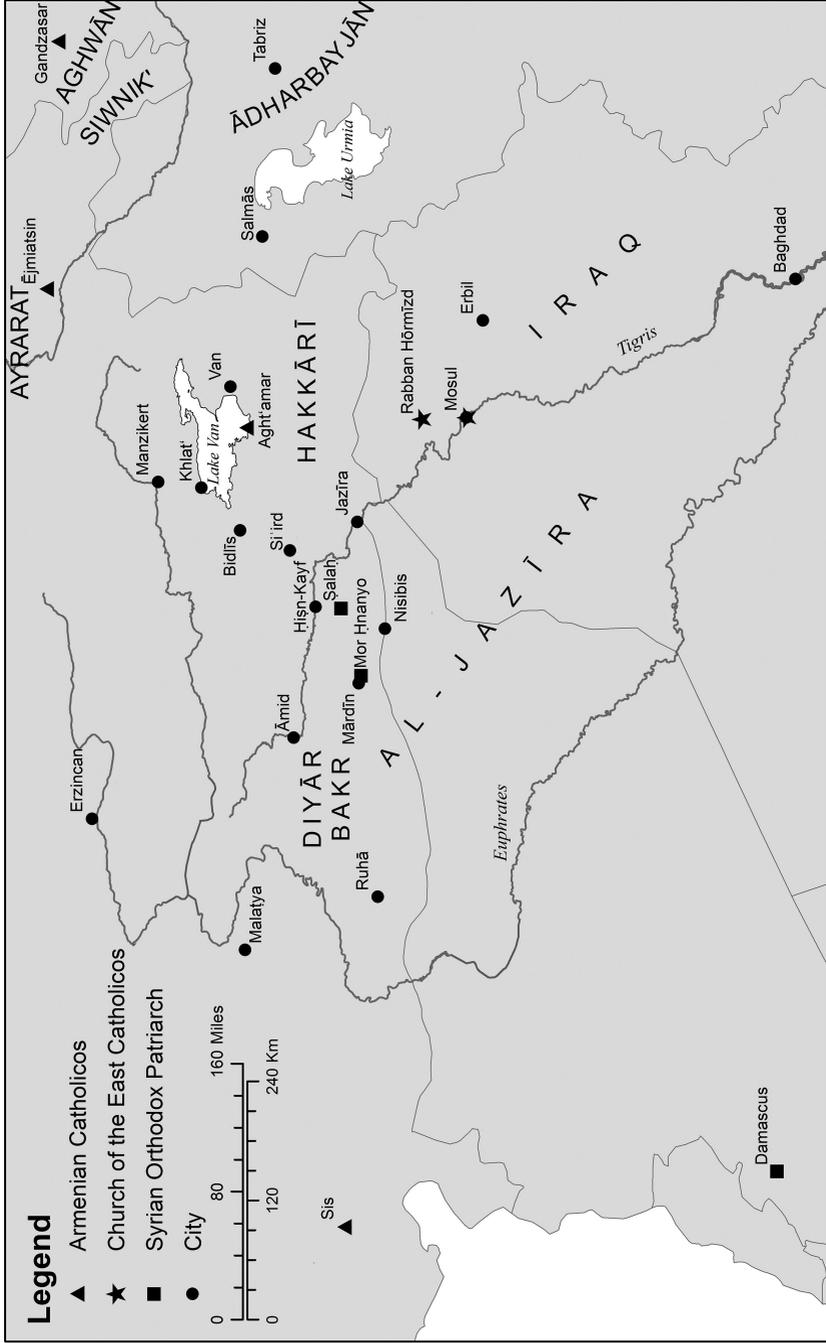
xiv List of Abbreviations

sir.	siriaco
Syr.	Syriac
Trichur	Church of the East Metropolitan's Library, Trichur, Kerala, India
Vatican	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

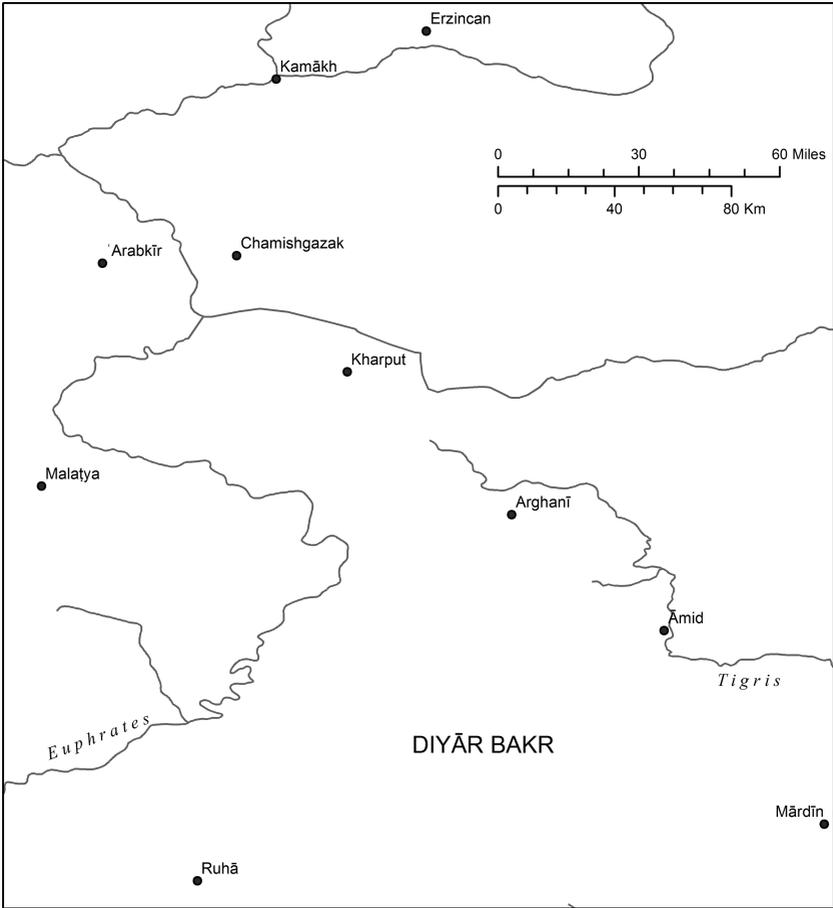
Maps



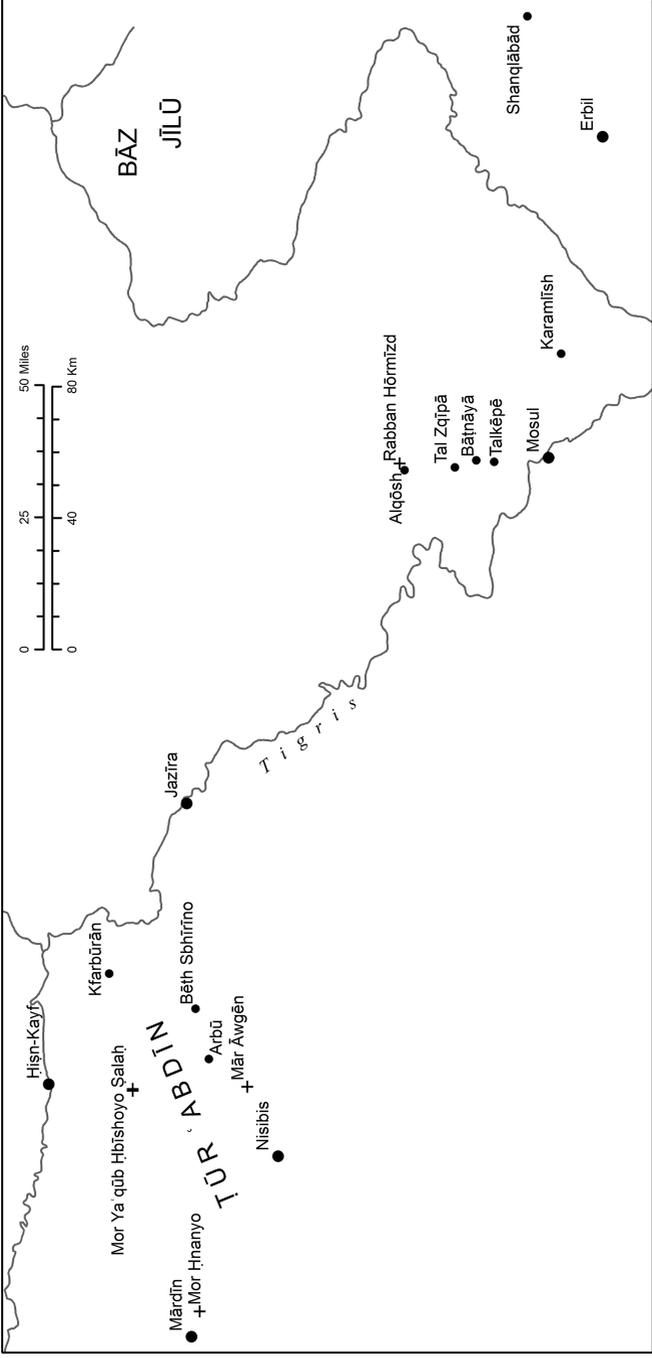
1 Imperial and regional capitals



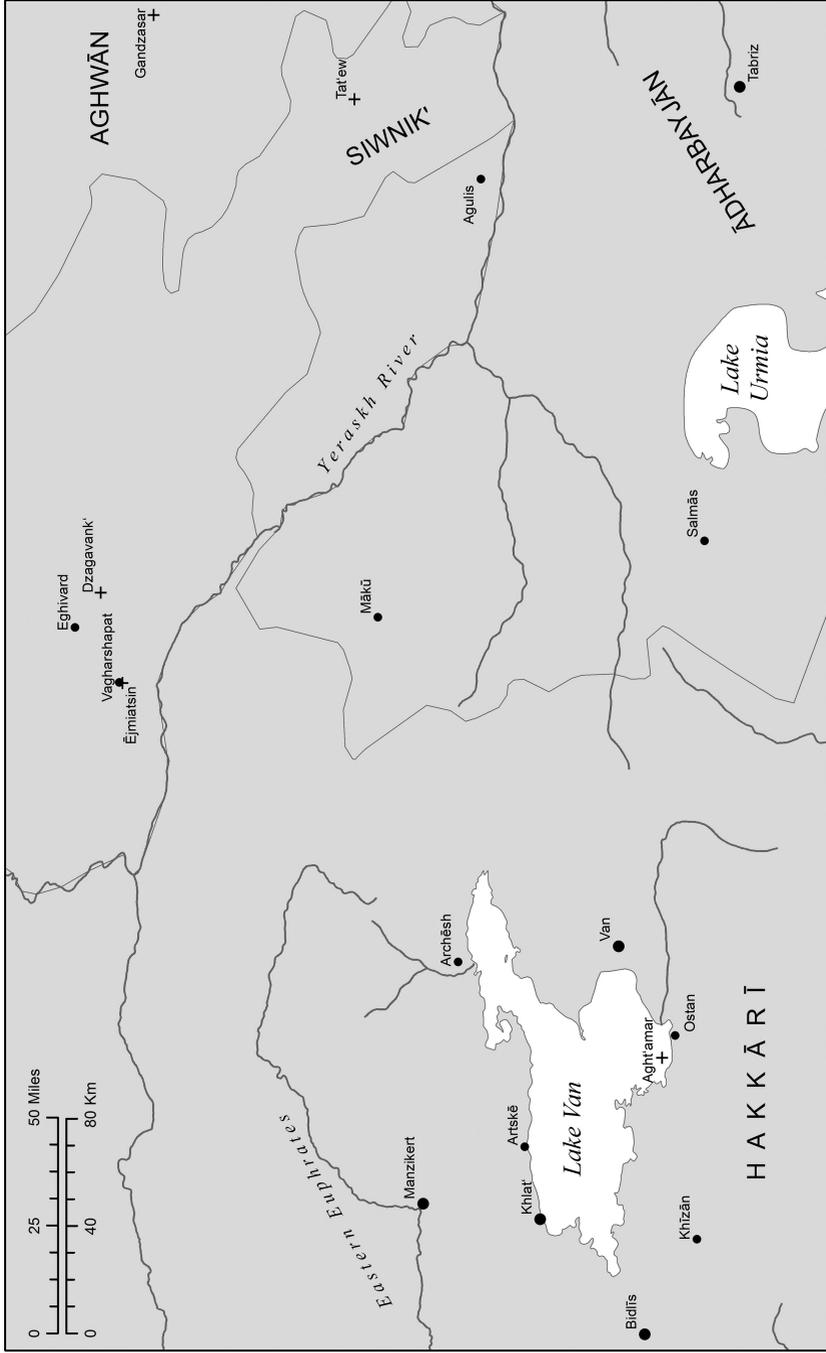
2 Cities and patriarchates



3 Diyar Bakr and Eastern Anatolia



4 Mosul Plain and Tūr 'Abdīn



5 Lake Van and Armenian Highlands

Introduction

On a hill overlooking the city of Mosul from across the Tigris River, in what is today northern Iraq, there stood a building with a very long history. At the time of the Arab Islamic conquests in the seventh century, and for centuries thereafter, it was a Christian monastery dedicated to the prophet Jonah, visited by Muslims as well as Christians.¹ A mosque built adjoining the monastery eventually co-opted the original structure, and when Tīmūr Lang conquered the city at the end of the fourteenth century, he visited the tomb shrine dedicated to Nabī Yūnus, as the prophet came to be known in Arabic.² Despite its conversion, the shrine remained accessible to Christians as well as Muslims, until it was detonated in the summer of 2014 by militants of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. In their quest to eliminate what they believe to be tantamount to polytheism, ISIS has also erased the long history of religious diversity in Iraq's northern metropolis.³

Before 2014, Mosul always had been a multireligious city. A Christian priest who took refuge in the city in 1918 recorded a list of fifty-five mosques out of “many without number,” as well as seventeen churches (one of which was abandoned) and four monasteries.⁴

¹ ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Shābūshtī, *Kitāb al-Diyārāt*, ed. Kūrīs ‘Awwād, al-Tab‘ah 2 (Baghdād: Maktabat al-Muthannā, 1966), 181; Jean M. Fiey, *Assyrie chrétienne, contribution à l'étude de l'histoire et de la géographie ecclésiastiques et monastiques du nord de l'Iraq* (Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1965), vol. II: 500.

² Fiey, *Assyrie chrétienne*, II: 501–10.

³ Dana Ford and Mohammed Tawfeeq, “Jonah’s Tomb Destroyed, Officials Say,” *CNN*, July 25, 2014, www.cnn.com/2014/07/24/world/iraq-violence/index.html.

⁴ Vatican sir. 592, ff. 93a–94a.

In 1743, according to an earlier priest seeking the city's refuge during wartime, the Ottoman governor commanded Muslims, Christians, and Jews to prepare the city's defense against the siege of the Persian ruler Nādir Shāh, and when the siege was lifted, the Ottoman sultan permitted the Christians to rebuild their churches, eight within Mosul itself.⁵ Two centuries earlier, Mosul was where Christians had gathered from various cities in the region to send an unexpected letter to the pope in Rome complaining about their patriarch.⁶ In the last years of the fifteenth century, Mosul had been both the patriarchal residence for one Syriac Christian denomination and the headquarters for the second-highest-ranking ecclesiastical official in a rival Syriac hierarchy, making it not only a major Islamic city, but also the Christian capital of post-Mongol Iraq.⁷

The significance of the city of Mosul to Christians as well as Muslims is not unusual for the late medieval Middle East, where Muslim rulers still governed substantial non-Muslim populations.⁸ The Cairo Geniza provides the most spectacular, but not the only, demonstration of non-Muslim diffusion across the medieval Middle East.⁹ The fourteenth-century Moroccan traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa noted the large number of Christians in Anatolia, and on his travels he benefited from the hospitality of a Syrian monastery.¹⁰ Nor were Jews and Christians the only non-Muslims in the region: a fifteenth-century Christian author from Erbil in northern Iraq referred to the Yezidi followers of Shaykh 'Adī.¹¹ The pilgrimage guide of the twelfth-century traveler 'Alī al-Harawī gave numerous examples of

⁵ H. Pognon, "Chronique syriaque relative au siège de Mossoul par les Persans en 1743," in *Florilegium; ou, Recueil de travaux d'érudition dédiés à Monsieur le marquis Melchior de Vogüé à l'occasion du quatre-vingtième anniversaire de sa naissance. 18 octobre 1909* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1909), 493, 495, 500, 502–3.

⁶ The letter is preserved in a sixteenth-century Latin translation in Giuseppe Simone Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana* (Rome: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1719), vol. I: 526.

⁷ BL Add. 7177, f. 321a; Vatican sir. 97, f. 142a.

⁸ Daniella Talmon-Heller, "Graves, Relics and Sanctuaries: The Evolution of Syrian Sacred Topography (Eleventh–Thirteenth Centuries)," *ARAM* 18–19 (2006–2007): 601–20.

⁹ S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 6 vols. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967).

¹⁰ Muḥammad Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭa al-musammāh Tuḥfat al-nuẓẓār fī gharā'ib al-amṣār wa-'ajā'ib al-asfār* (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya al-Kubrā, 1958), vol. I: 49, 179; Muḥammad Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, AD 1325–1354*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb and C. F. Beckingham (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1958–1962), vol. I: 115; vol. II: 415.

¹¹ Berlin orient. fol. 619, f. 104a.

sacred places shared among Muslims, Christians, and Jews, for example a stone outside the “Jewish Gate” at Aleppo.¹² The late medieval Middle East was diverse but not ghettoized or balkanized, a world in which people of different religions rubbed shoulders on a daily basis.

At the crossroads of Eurasia, the Middle East may well have housed the most diverse society in the premodern world. Indeed, the presence of non-Muslims was so pervasive in much of the medieval Middle East that it “went without saying.” Even as prominent an achievement of Islamic culture as the fifteenth-century astronomical manual (*zīj*) of Ulugh Bey b. Shāhrukh, the Timurid ruler of Samarqand, silently drew information from an Iraqi Christian source. The work’s discussion of the Seleucid (“Rūmī”) calendar included common Christian holidays such as Nativity, Epiphany, Annunciation, and the “Feast of the Cross” (*ʿīd-i šalīb*).¹³ The distinctive dates given to those holidays unmistakably point to an informant from the Church of the East, with its hierarchy centered in northern Iraq.¹⁴ Yet the *zīj* not only failed to mention the “Nestorian” source: it nowhere explicitly mentioned Christianity. It did not need to, because even in Samarqand, non-Muslim ways of keeping time were presumed to be recognizable.

The range of ethnicities, languages, and religions of the medieval Middle East also reminds modern observers that diversity is not a product of European globalization. Middle Eastern society before 1500 gives scholars an opportunity to analyze the dynamics of diversity before nationalism, liberalism, secularism, global capitalism, or the other -isms that constitute the particularly Europeanized modern world order. Thus

¹² ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Harawī, *A Lonely Wayfarer’s Guide to Pilgrimage: ‘Alī ibn Abī Bakr al-Harawī’s Kitāb al-Ishārāt ilā Ma’rifat al-Ziyārāt*, trans. Josef W. Meri (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 2004), 12–13.

¹³ Ulug Beigus, *Epochæ Celebriores Astronomis, Historicis, Chronologis, Chataiorum, Syro-Græcorum, Arabum, Persarum, Chorasmiorum, Usitatæ Ex traditione Ulug Beigi, Indiæ citra extraque Gangem Principis*, ed. Johannes Gravius (London: Jacob Flesher, 1650), 99, 101. This calendar should not be confused with the Rūmī calendar adopted by the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire.

¹⁴ Only this denomination commemorated the finding of the true cross by Constantine’s mother Helena on 13 (not 14) September, and the same group uniquely celebrated Annunciation on the four Sundays leading up to Christmas, rather than 25 March. For a discussion of the inaccuracy of the older adjective “Nestorian,” which was nevertheless employed by Muslims and other Christian groups, see Sebastian P. Brock, “The ‘Nestorian’ Church: A Lamentable Misnomer,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 78 (Autumn 1996): 23–35. The phrase “Church of the East,” although more accurate, lacks a corresponding adjectival form, for which I have used the approximate adjective “East Syrian.”

the study of medieval Middle Eastern diversity may provide a counterbalance to the alternately comforting or cautionary tales we modern people tell ourselves about the diverse world in which we live today.

DIVERSITY VIEWED FROM WITHIN

Unlike most premodern societies, which supported only a single or a few social groups with the ability to compose texts, the medieval Middle East's social diversity was expressed by a large number of literate classes whose works allow scholars to approach the dynamics of diversity from multiple angles. The Islamic learned elite (*'ulamā'*) represent only one class of authors, alongside Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian religious leaders, and exceptional members of the ruling, mercantile, and professional classes (especially physicians). Indeed, for questions of diversity, the works of the *'ulamā'* often give a clearer picture of how they thought society ought to function than how in fact difference worked in practice.¹⁵ Histories and chronicles authored by *'ulamā'* evinced decreasing levels of interest in non-Muslims.¹⁶ Sporadic exceptions are found in travel accounts by such authors as Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, yet his choice of details was haphazard and colored by his own normative interests. The literati of less privileged groups, such as Christians and Jews, recorded in much greater detail how religious difference was lived out in the medieval Middle East.¹⁷ To learn about religious diversity, scholars must attend to non-Muslim voices directly.¹⁸

Nevertheless, the non-Muslims of the late medieval Middle East rarely inform modern historical scholarship. By convention, Islamic historians

¹⁵ Luke Yarbrough, "Islamizing the Islamic State: The Formulation and Assertion of Religious Criteria for State Employment in the First Millennium AH" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2012), 224–25, 236–37, 257.

¹⁶ For Ottoman Syria, the point was made by Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 28. For the paucity of references to non-Muslims in fifteenth-century sources from al-Jazīra and Iraq, see Chapter 3, fnn. 9–11.

¹⁷ Even synthetic works on earlier periods are often forced to rely almost exclusively on non-Muslim sources. Such are Sidney H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton University Press, 2008); Franklin, *This Noble House: Jewish Descendants of King David in the Medieval Islamic East* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, 2013).

¹⁸ A comparable point was made by Jamsheed K. Choksy, *Conflict and Cooperation: Zoroastrian Subalterns and Muslim Elites in Medieval Iranian Society* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1997), 11.

briefly acknowledge the existence of non-Muslims under Islamic rule, at least for the first millennium CE, while ascribing no historical significance to their continued presence.¹⁹ Almost forty years after his death, Marshall Hodgson's work is still characteristic of most of the field: after conceding that "of course, non-Muslims have always formed an integral, if subordinate element" of "Islamicate" society, he proceeded to tell a story of Muslim rulers and Muslim intellectuals.²⁰ Jonathan Berkey's *The Formation of Islam* gives much greater attention to non-Muslims than most scholars, yet even his treatment segregates them into chapters apart from his main story, and only discusses them before the year 1000 CE.²¹ The result is that the study of the Middle East after 1000 CE often becomes almost exclusively the history of Islam and of Muslims, while silently excluding the many others who were in fact present.²²

¹⁹ Studies of Middle Eastern Jews, by contrast, not uncommonly move into the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries: for example, Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn. (Princeton University Press, 2008); Moshe Gil, *Jews in Islamic Countries in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Marina Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community: The Jews of the Fatimid Caliphate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008); Franklin, *This Noble House*. Such studies increasingly draw connections with "Islamic society," yet are often not consulted by Islamic historians.

²⁰ Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization* (University of Chicago Press, 1974), vol. I: 58.

²¹ Jonathan Porter Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600–1800* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 91–101, 159–75.

²² In addition to the studies mentioned in fnn. 8–9 above, a few exceptional studies of "Islamic society" during the "Middle Periods" (c. 950–c. 1500) integrate non-Muslim populations, such as John E. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire*, rev. edn. (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1999). See also Christopher MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East: Rough Tolerance* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Seta B. Dadoyan, *The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World: Paradigms of Interaction: Seventh to Fourteenth Centuries*, 3 vols. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2011–2014). On this last, however, see Sergio La Porta, review of *The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World: Paradigms of Interaction, Seventh to Fourteenth Centuries*, vol. III: *Medieval Cosmopolitanism and the Images of Islam, Thirteenth to Fourteenth Centuries*, by Seta B. Dadoyan, *American Historical Review* 120 (2015): 1144–45. In addition, a few unpublished PhD dissertations have situated Christians and Jews within "Islamic society": Tamer el-Leithy, "Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo, 1293–1524 AD" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2005); Yarbrough, "Islamizing the Islamic State"; Oded Zinger, "Women, Gender and Law: Marital Disputes According to Documents of the Cairo Geniza" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2014). Compare the remarks on the earlier period in Jack B. V. Tannous, "Syria between Byzantium and Islam: Making Incommensurables Speak" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2010), 2–3, 8–12. Non-Muslims in the early Islamic period have been more integrated into social history; in addition to the works by Berkey and Tannous, see the works cited in Christian C. Sahner, "Christian Martyrs and the Making of an Islamic Society in the Post-Conquest Period" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2015), 16–17.

Yet this confessional definition of the field is unwarranted: at no point before 1461 were all Middle Eastern rulers Muslims, and we do not know when Islam became the religion of a demographic majority even in lands under “Islamic rule.”²³ The only significant study of demographic Islamization remains Richard Bulliet’s *Conversion to Islam*, which attempts to extrapolate demography from the “Who’s Who” of Muslim ‘*ulamā*’, somewhat akin to trying to determine American population dynamics based on professors at Christian seminaries.²⁴ As Tamer el-Leithy points out, our ignorance regarding the process of Islamization largely stems from the fact that medieval authors saw no political relevance in the relative demography of religious groups.²⁵ In fact, such indications as do exist suggest that non-Muslims were almost as numerous as Muslims in portions of eastern Anatolia and northern Iraq into the fifteenth century.²⁶ The confessional demarcation of Middle Eastern history as “Islamic” misrepresents the experience of ethnic and religious diversity in the medieval world between the Nile and the Oxus Rivers.

When historians do consider Middle Eastern Christian populations, they often privilege the more familiar European forms of the religion.²⁷ Studies comparing Islam and Christianity often take a narrowly European definition of the latter.²⁸ Islamicists continue to deploy categories of Christian “orthodoxy” (and, by implication, “heresy”) to Middle Eastern Christians from the normative perspective of European Christendom, which only slowly became the dominant form of Christianity in Eurasia over the course of the Middle Ages.²⁹ Thus Middle Eastern Christians

²³ The Christian empire of Trebizond continued until 1461.

²⁴ Richard W. Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

²⁵ El-Leithy, “Coptic Culture,” 27, especially fn. 71. Although the use of the term “minorities” and its political implications date from modern liberal politics, el-Leithy acknowledges a descriptive use of the term, and it is in this sense that the word is employed in this book.

²⁶ See below, fnn. 35–36.

²⁷ Murre-van den Berg likewise challenges what she identifies as the tendency to present post-‘Abbasid Middle Eastern Christianity “as uninformed and out-of-place variations of Western Catholicism and Protestantism”: Heleen Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures: The Church of the East in the Eastern Ottoman Provinces (1550–1850)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 13.

²⁸ Most recently, see David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today* (University of Chicago Press, 2014).

²⁹ Vernon Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405: The Making of a Civilization* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 9–10, 13, 30, 38; Berkey, *The Formation of Islam*, 20, 23, 63, 74, 93, 168. Berkey critiqued the terms as applied to Islam: *ibid.*, 83, 147. Most recently, a comparative analysis of notions of “heresy” among medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims considers only Greek and Latin varieties of Christianity: Christine Caldwell Ames, *Medieval Heresies: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 15, 23, 192–93.

often find themselves in a “catch-22” of scholarly expectations. To the degree that their society and culture agreed with that of their Muslim neighbors, they are regarded as “authentically” Middle Eastern, but also as adulterating their (Western) religion.³⁰ To the degree that their theology and religious practice agreed with those of European coreligionists, they are regarded as “authentically” Christian, but also as foreigners in their native lands. The discourse of authenticity is a dangerous yardstick for judging social and cultural integration, precisely because of the canonical status conferred upon Middle Eastern Arab Muslims and European Christians. To the Muslim inhabitants of medieval Iraq and Syria, however, European Christianity was bizarre compared with Middle Eastern forms of the religion.³¹ The study of the late medieval Church of the East, probably the largest non-Muslim population in Iraq, challenges Eurocentric definitions of Christianity and suggests the possibility of framing the late medieval Middle East as a diverse society mostly ruled by Muslims.

EAST SYRIAN CHRISTIANITY AND THE WIDER WORLD

The breadth of terrain inhabited by the Church of the East is not readily designated by regional or national boundaries, whether medieval or modern. Mosul, the geographical center of this regional study, is now part of Iraq. Medieval Arabic geographers divided regions differently: to the south of Mosul along the Tigris River was the smaller region of Iraq, while to its west and northwest, as far as the headwaters of the Tigris, lay the region of al-Jazīra, as Mesopotamia was then known.³² Further east and northeast of the Mosul plain lay the region of Ādharbayjān, and due

³⁰ For an alternative explanation of Middle Eastern historians’ neglect of non-Muslims, see Heleen Murre-van den Berg, “The Unexpected Popularity of the Study of Middle Eastern Christianity,” in *Christsein in der islamischen Welt: Festschrift für Martin Tamcke zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Sidney H. Griffith and Sven Grebenstein (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015), 8–9.

³¹ For an example in the domain of medicine, included by a twelfth-century Muslim author on the authority of a Middle Eastern Christian physician, see Usāma Ibn Munqidh, *The Book of Contemplation: Islam and the Crusades*, trans. Paul M. Cobb (London: Penguin, 2008), 145–46.

³² For example, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī Ṭālib al-Dimashqī, *Cosmographie de Chems-ed-Din Abou Abdallah Mohammed ed-Dimichqui*, ed. C. M. Fraehn and A. F. Mehren (Saint-Petersburg: Académie impériale des sciences, 1866), 185, 190; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī Ṭālib al-Dimashqī, *Manuel de la cosmographie du Moyen Âge*, trans. A. F. Mehren (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel, 1874), 251, 257. The late medieval region of al-Jazīra transgresses the modern national boundaries of Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, and hence the name sees little use today.

north lay the mountains of Armīniya.³³ The late medieval region of Syria, which ended at the Euphrates, was at that time across an imperial boundary, under the control of Egypt's Mamlūk Empire. This study ranges from Baghdad in the south to the Kurdish and Armenian mountains in the north, and from Āmid (modern Diyarbakır in Turkey) in the west as far as Tabriz (today in northwest Iran) in the east.³⁴

The Christian minorities of these regions were not negligible, although they have been neglected. John Woods cites European travelers' accounts demonstrating "[t]he large number of Christians relative to Muslims in the urban centers of Arminiya and Diyar Bakr" in the fifteenth century, a phenomenon also visible in early Ottoman defters.³⁵ In the following century, Ottoman records indicate that the population of Mosul and its hinterland was around one-third Christian.³⁶ Although no systematic information about the proportion of the region's population that belonged to Christianity or other religions is available from the fifteenth century, these limited data indicate that in certain areas the Christian population was substantial, to say the least. Despite this fact, the literary histories produced for Muslim rulers very rarely mention these subject populations. The modern historical narrative of this period, basing itself on these literary histories, has told the story of two nomadic Türkmen confederations: the Qarāqūyunlū, or "Black Sheep Türkmen," ruling Iraq from bases in Mosul, Tabriz, and Baghdad, and the Āqqūyunlū, or "White Sheep Türkmen," ruling what is now eastern Turkey from the area around Āmid and later Tabriz, after the Āqqūyunlū defeated the Qarāqūyunlū.³⁷ The

³³ For example, al-Dimashqī, *Cosmographie*, 187–90; al-Dimashqī, *Manuel*, 254–57. The southernmost mountains north of Mosul are also labeled the Hakkārī mountains.

³⁴ I follow fifteenth-century usage by terming the city Āmid and the region Diyar Bakr, although today both are named Diyarbakır.

³⁵ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 246 n. 156; Ahmet Özkılınç et al., eds., *998 numaralı muhâsebe-i Vilâyet-i Diyâr-i Bekir ve 'Arab ve Zü'l-Kâdiriyye defteri (937/1530)* (Ankara: T. C. Başbakanlık, Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, 1998), 15, 20, 22–25, 30.

³⁶ Slightly different assumptions lead to different calculations based on the same sources. Gündüz reported non-Muslim totals (both in the city and the villages) slightly below one-third in 1523 and slightly above one-third in 1540, but only around a quarter of the whole province's population if one includes nomadic tribes: Ahmet Gündüz, *Osmanlı idaresinde Musul (1523–1639)* (Elazığ: Fırat Üniversitesi Basımevi, 2003), 238–39. Khoury calculated a percentage of 37 percent Christian among the rural population in 1541: Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540–1834* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 29.

³⁷ Faruk Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular: Başlangıçtan Cihan-Şah'a kadar* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1967); İsmail Aka, *Iran'da Türkmen Hakimiyeti: Kara Koyunlular Devri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2001); Woods, *Aqquyunlu*. There is no synthetic treatment of Qarāqūyunlū rule in the English language.

scholarly account of Muslim rulers and Islamic religious leaders ignores the large non-Muslim population, and thus misses the social and cultural dynamics of what was in fact a very diverse society.

It is probable that the largest non-Muslim population of Iraq and southern al-Jazīra was the Church of the East, a Christian denomination whose patriarchs lived in Mosul or the surrounding plain at the end of the fifteenth century.³⁸ Before the rise of Islam, this group had been the most prominent branch of Christianity in the Sasanian Persian Empire.³⁹ It claimed a first-century foundation by the saints Addai and Mārī, disciples of the apostle Thomas, although evidence for the existence of the church in the first three centuries of the Common Era is very sparse. In the Christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries, the Church of the East gained a reputation for “Nestorianism” by virtue of its refusal to condemn Patriarch Nestorius of Constantinople as a heretic, although in fact their theology was influenced less by the ideas of Nestorius himself than by those of his teacher, Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428). Under the early ‘Abbasid caliphate, the patriarchal residence of the Church of the East moved from Seleucia-Ctesiphon, the capital of the defunct Persian Empire, to Baghdad, and this community contributed to the intellectual culture of the caliph’s capital with translations of Greek philosophical and medical works into Arabic. From the seventh century they sent missionaries to Central Asia and China, expanding so significantly among the steppe nomads that when Hülegü, the grandson of Genghis Khan, conquered Baghdad and destroyed the ‘Abbasid caliphate in 1258, his chief queen Doquz Khātūn was a member of the Church of the East. She persuaded the Mongol commander to spare the Christians of the city. Under Mongol rule, Middle Eastern Christians of all varieties enjoyed royal patronage again, and the Mongol rulers of Persia sometimes sent them as ambassadors to the Latin states of Europe.⁴⁰

The Church of the East was socially and culturally at home in the Middle East, even as it confronted the chronic political instability of the

³⁸ See Chapter 1, fnn. 93–96.

³⁹ For overview histories of the Church of the East, see David Wilmshurst, *The Martyred Church: A History of the Church of the East* (London: East & West, 2011); Christoph Baumer, *The Church of the East: An Illustrated History of Assyrian Christianity* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006); Wilhelm Baum and Dietmar W. Winkler, *The Church of the East: A Concise History* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

⁴⁰ The basic evidence for the Mongol period was assembled by Frédéric Luisetto, *Arméniens et autres Chrétiens d’Orient sous la domination Mongole: l’Ilkhanat de Ghâzân, 1295–1304* (Paris: Geuthner, 2007); J. M. Fiey, *Chrétiens syriaques sous les Mongols (Il-Khanat de Perse, XIIIe–XIVe s.)* (Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1975).

fifteenth century under Türkmen rule. Seemingly incessant wars were punctuated by bandit raids, mob violence, and insatiable tax-collectors, the symptoms of a society under stress. In this context, the Church of the East saw itself primarily as a Christian community, but it defined that in a Middle Eastern (and specifically Iraqi) manner rather than based on Western assumptions. They defined their Christianity by theology and ritual, through prayers to Christ as God, as well as socially and historically through their ecclesiastical hierarchy and their saints. Their understandings of Christianity reveal complex dimensions of diversity in the late medieval Middle East.

THE DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

This study examines multiple social and cultural dimensions to religious diversity in al-Jazīra and Iraq under Türkmen rule, from the conquests of Tīmūr Lang (d. 1405) to those of the Safavid Shāh Ismā‘īl starting in 1501. To understand how social diversity functioned, it is necessary to understand the varieties of diversity present. Since the fifteenth-century history of these regions is unfamiliar to most scholars, Chapter 1 sketches the independence of local Türkmen and Kurdish rulers, lays out the different Christian groups present, and documents the social structure within the Church of the East itself. The next two chapters explore how social relations functioned across religious boundaries, first between Muslim rulers and their Christian subjects, and secondly among subjects both Muslim and non-Muslim. While scholars have typically studied the “status” of Christians in Islamic society through the framework of the Pact of ‘Umar’s regulations on *dhimmī* (non-Muslim) populations, Chapter 2 suggests that there was no overarching framework structuring rulers’ relations with their subjects in late medieval al-Jazīra and Iraq. This lack of a shared script led to both unexpected opportunities for and extreme violence against fifteenth-century Christians. Chapter 3 includes the discourse of *dhimmī* status within the broad range of ways in which Muslim subjects (including *ulamā’*) and Christian subjects interacted, relations which were occasionally violent and occasionally friendly but more often distrustful.

The cultural dimensions of this diversity include the ways in which different groups shared – or alternatively diverged in – ideas and values, as well as the broad-based concepts used by the people of the past to understand the diversity of the society in which they lived. To access these

ideas and values requires interpreting sources which historians typically ignore, such as poetry, theology, ritual, and even manuscript colophons.⁴¹ A priest from northern Iraq named ʾIshāq Shbadnāyā (fl. 1751 AG / 1440) composed the largest original fifteenth-century Syriac work, a long theological survey in verse, as well as several shorter poems for liturgical celebrations.⁴² Other liturgical poems were composed by his contemporary ʾIshōʿyahb b. Mqaddam, the metropolitan of Erbil in northern Iraq, as well as four poems for funerals.⁴³ These sources reveal these authors' ideas not only about their indicated subjects, but about a range of other topics as well. In addition to such works, a nearly complete set of service books from the fifteenth-century Church of the East permits the use of ritual action as a historical source, although one with unique challenges. Communal liturgies not only influenced East Syrian clergy, including authors and scribes, through their familiar words, but the accompanying actions also communicated and emphasized certain concepts about the community to all present. Finally, there are nearly three dozen surviving colophons, notes at the end of manuscripts, which provide evidence for scribes' systems of values, beliefs, and concepts.⁴⁴ In their plurality, colophons provide a large range of viewpoints on cultural and intellectual developments, if only very partially represented, to balance the more complete pictures given by the few named literary authors of the fifteenth century.

For the cultural historian these texts are veritable gold mines of meanings, understandings, frameworks, and concepts that were significant enough to this Christian minority in the fifteenth century to find expression in written texts. Chapters 5–9 examine in turn the widespread concepts of God, Christ, ritual, hierarchy, and history held by the fifteenth-century Church of the East. Cultural continuity or discontinuity, comparable ideas

⁴¹ The degree to which sources by clergy can be extrapolated to lay Christians is discussed in Chapter 5, fnn. 16–22. This does not create a double-standard, accepting sources by “Christian *ʾulamā*” (i.e. clergy) while rejecting those by Muslim *ʾulamā*, because the former, unlike the latter in the fifteenth-century, are primary informants about Christian ideas and culture.

⁴² For a summary of what is known about Shbadnāyā's life and works, see Thomas A. Carlson, “A Light From ‘the Dark Centuries’: ʾIshāq Shbadnāyā's Life and Works,” *Hugoye* 14 (2011): 191–214.

⁴³ The works of ʾIshōʿyahb b. Mqaddam are listed in Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur, mit Ausschluss der christlich-palästinensischen Texte* (Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Weber, 1922), 329–30.

⁴⁴ Thomas A. Carlson, “Formulaic Prose? Rhetoric and Meaning in Late Medieval Syriac Manuscript Colophons,” *Hugoye* 18 (2015): 379–98.

held by other Middle Eastern groups, as well as this religious minority's distinctive ideas and how they changed in the fifteenth-century, are legitimate questions for scholarly analysis. But more important than either continuity or difference is the question, difficult to answer definitively, how such concepts functioned socially. The topics of Chapters 5–9 are not haphazard, but are core concepts in how fifteenth-century Iraqi Christians defined their Christianity, not only theologically but also practically, socially, and historically. For this reason, cultural sources such as these texts likewise reveal how this group understood their communal existence and lived in a more diverse society. This approach generalizes the work of Benedict Anderson on “imagined communities,” while critiquing the assumptions and limitations of his framework, as outlined in Chapter 4.

The study of social and cultural diversity in late medieval al-Jazīra and Iraq reveals a society that, despite the conflicting claims of apologists and polemicists, was neither ceaselessly persecuting minorities nor a utopian *convivencia*.⁴⁵ It was instead a hierarchical and partially divided society, with mechanisms for living with difference and sometimes shared cultural values across social boundaries. To understand how this society functioned, and indeed how diversity works in any society, scholars need to identify the significant structures and divisions, the shared or divergent cultural values, and the manners in which these differences were lived out in practice. This book is offered as a first exploration of what might be found by striking off into the late medieval Middle East's *terra incognita*, with diversity as a compass.

⁴⁵ See Chapter 2, fn. 11.

Coming into Focus: The World of Fifteenth Century Iraq and al-Jazīra

The last great Central Asian conqueror, Tīmūr Lang, subdued Iraq not once, but twice. Mosul's ruler submitted after Baghdad was captured in 795 AH / 1393, yet both were stormed again in 803 AH / 1401.¹ After the second conquest of Iraq, Tīmūr did not return home before he defeated the Ottoman sultan Bāyazīd I Yıldırım at Ankara in 1402. The Turkic conqueror from Samarqand then pillaged Ottoman territory to the shores of the Bosphorus, yet the house of 'Osman did recover, and somewhat over a century later the Ottoman dynasty conquered all of al-Jazīra and Iraq. Mosul came under Ottoman rule in 1519, and Suleiman "the Magnificent" conquered Baghdad in 1534.²

The history of Iraq and eastern Anatolia in the interval between Tīmūr and the Ottomans is unfamiliar territory to almost all historians. The fifteenth-century inhabitants of al-Jazīra and Iraq, regardless of their social affiliations, have received scant attention from modern scholars. Historians have preferred to attend to their more imperial contemporaries in Mamlūk Egypt, Timurid Central Asia, or Ottoman western Anatolia. To understand Christianity in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra requires coming to terms with an unfamiliar world. It was a world where the local and regional rulers were individual and largely independent from the imperial sovereigns in distant capitals such as Cairo, Samarqand, and Constantinople (see Map 1). Middle Eastern history is often told as a succession of great empires, but during the fifteenth century no great empire

¹ Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, *The Zafarnāmah*, ed. Muḥammad Ilahdād (Calcutta: Thomas, 1887–1888), vol. I: 632–34, 646–47, 661–62; vol. II: 359–69; Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn 'Arabshāh, *'Ajā'ib al-maqdūr fī nawā'ib Tīmūr*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Anjlū al-Miṣriyya, 1979), 181–82.

² Nabil Al-Tikriti, "Ottoman Iraq," *Journal of the Historical Society* 7 (2007): 201–2.

ruled Iraq and al-Jazīra. This chapter argues for the independence of this region's rulers from distant imperial policies, sketches the religious diversity of the Christian populations, and outlines the social structure within the Church of the East itself in the fifteenth century.

THE RULE OF THE TÜRKMEN

After Mongol rule disintegrated in Persia with the death of the last widely recognized Ilkhan, Abū Sa'īd, in 1335, power rapidly decentralized,³ and despite Tīmūr's extensive conquests at the end of the fourteenth century, his sons and grandsons were unable to hold the western portions of his empire for more than five years after his death.⁴ Ruling from Herat in modern Afghanistan, Tīmūr's son Shāhrukh repeatedly invaded Ādharbayjān in 1420, in 1429, and in 1435, but never achieved enduring control.⁵ Armies from Mamlūk Egypt occasionally moved north from Aleppo in the same period and repeatedly asserted control of southeastern Anatolia west of the Euphrates.⁶ Over the course of the century, the Ottoman rulers of western Anatolia recovered from their defeat by Tīmūr at Ankara in 1402 and progressively subdued and incorporated the other rulers of Anatolia.⁷ With the start of the sixteenth century, Shāh Ismā'īl founded the Safavid dynastic rule of Persia with his capital at Tabriz and conquered Iraq and al-Jazīra, until the Ottoman Sultan Selim I defeated him at Chaldiran in 1514. By defeating the Mamlūks in Egypt in 1517, Selim partitioned the Middle East between the Ottoman and Safavid empires.⁸ But in the fifteenth century, Iraq and al-Jazīra were at the borders of empires and largely outside their control.

³ Patrick Wing, *The Jalayirids: Dynastic State Formation in the Mongol Middle East* (Edinburgh University Press, 2016).

⁴ Beatrice Forbes Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 141–44.

⁵ Timurid sources of course emphasize Shāhrukh's successful conquests: Beatrice Forbes Manz, *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 34–35, 42–43, 45. For the brevity of his appointments, see fnn. 19–22 below.

⁶ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 50–52, 68. For fifteenth-century Mamlūk political history, see Jean-Claude Garcin, "The Regime of the Circassian Mamlūks," in *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 290–317.

⁷ For recent overviews of Ottoman political history, see Rudi Paul Lindner, "Anatolia, 1300–1451," in *Byzantium to Turkey, 1071–1453*, ed. Kate Fleet (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 129–37; Ebru Boyar, "Ottoman Expansion in the East," in *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Kate Fleet (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 74–113.

⁸ Andrew J. Newman, *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 13–25.

The local dynasties that governed individual cities or areas within Iraq and al-Jazīra sometimes claimed to do so in the name of imperial superpowers, and diplomatic correspondence between regional rulers and Cairo, Herat, or Istanbul forms a large part of the source material for political developments in the region.⁹ But the political landscape within fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra was a complicated hodge-podge of urban and nomadic rulers. The Turkic Artuqid dynasty and the Kurdish Ayyubid dynasty ruled the cities of Mārdīn and Ḥiṣn-Kayf, respectively,¹⁰ and Tīmūr's conquests had rendered the Jalayirid state in Iraq of more symbolic than effective significance.¹¹ Two confederations of Türkmén increasingly competed for dominance of the region as a whole. The Āqqūyunlū ruled eastern Anatolia from bases around Āmid (modern Diyarbakır), and their rivals the Qarāqūyunlū ruled Iraq and Iran from bases in Tabriz, Mosul, and Baghdad.¹² The rulers of both confederations were in frequent contact with distant sultans, and played diplomacy to secure troops and aid against their rivals. The Qarāqūyunlū ended the Artuqid and Jalayirid dynasties, early in the century, while the Āqqūyunlū later subdued Ḥiṣn-Kayf, and in 1467 they were able to crush the Qarāqūyunlū decisively and incorporate their lands as well. The continual wars between the two confederations were punctuated only by civil wars following the death of a Türkmén ruler, as his brothers and sons decided, on the field of battle, who would succeed to power.¹³

The political and military history of fifteenth-century al-Jazīra and Iraq divides roughly into four phases. The first phase, beginning with Tīmūr's final departure from the region after the battle of Ankara and ending with his son Shāhrukh's final invasion in 1435, was characterized by battles between the Āqqūyunlū under Qarā 'Uthmān and the Qarāqūyunlū under Qarā Yūsuf and then his son Iskandar, combined with occasional invasions by Timurid or Mamlūk armies.¹⁴ The second phase, from Qarā 'Uthmān's death in 1435 until his grandson Uzun Ḥasan's final victory

⁹ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 215–17.

¹⁰ On the Artuqids, see Ludger Ilisch, "Geschichte der Artuqidherrschaft von Mardin zwischen Mamluken und Mongolen, 1260–1410 AD" (PhD diss., Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, 1984). On the Artuqid and Ayyubid dynasties in the preceding century, see Claude Cahen, "Contribution à l'histoire du Diyār Bakr au quatorzième siècle," *Journal Asiatique* 243 (1955): 65–100.

¹¹ Wing, *Jalayirids*, 159–73.

¹² See Introduction, fn. 37.

¹³ On corporate sovereignty and civil wars resulting from it, see Maria Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 36.

¹⁴ For lists of rulers and dynastic charts, see Appendix B.

over the Qarāqūyūnlū in 1469, began with infighting within each confederation but witnessed Qarāqūyūnlū ascendancy as Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf subdued rivals within his confederation, conquered western Iran from the Timurids, and temporarily subjugated the Āqqūyūnlū. Once Uzun Ḥasan achieved undisputed mastery of the Āqqūyūnlū in 1457, he pursued an aggressive policy of expansion which led him to incorporate the last Ayyubid outpost in Ḥiṣn-Kayf and the entirety of the Qarāqūyūnlū territory. The third phase, from 1469 until the death of Uzun Ḥasan's son and successor Ya'qūb in 1490, was a period of relative peace within Iraq and al-Jazīra as Uzun Ḥasan dispatched his armies as far east as Herat and as far west as Konya, although a defeat by the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II checked his westward expansion in 1473. After a brief contest for the throne following Uzun Ḥasan's death, the reign of his son Ya'qūb was also relatively peaceful, apart from his occasional raids into the kingdom of Georgia. The final decade of the fifteenth century was again a period of intense upheaval within the region as the remaining Āqqūyūnlū princes contended for rule of the confederation, until the Safavid ruler Shāh Ismā'īl put an end to the last Āqqūyūnlū civil war through his conquests in the first decade of the sixteenth century.¹⁵

Jürgen Paul has noted that regional and local power-holders can be significant forces when empires break down,¹⁶ and a similar dynamic may be observed in regions far from the imperial centers. The political dynamics in eastern Anatolia and northern Iraq were not merely local manifestations of Mamlūk, Timurid, and Ottoman imperial machinations.¹⁷ There are several reasons to emphasize the independence of local rulers from the oversight of imperial powers. Although the sultans could and did enter al-Jazīra and Iraq at the head of large armies, for the most

¹⁵ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 53, 84, 98, 145.

¹⁶ Paul defines "local" rulers as ruling a single city or castle and its surrounding fields, while "regional" rulers rule a province: Jürgen Paul, "Zerfall und Bestehen: Die Ğaun-i Qurban im 14. Jahrhundert," *Asiatische Studien* 65 (2011): 696. I have followed Paul's usage, though taking the distinction between "local" and "regional" as a continuum. In the absence of an imperial framework, provincial boundaries are not natural. Paul also emphasized that Weber's notion of a state monopoly of violence applies only to the modern period: *ibid.*, 724. Cf. Manz, *Power, Politics and Religion*, 6, 274–75.

¹⁷ John Woods offhandedly remarks concerning Āqqūyūnlū campaigns against the Dhu al-Qadr, "While resulting in three major Mamlūk expeditions against the Āqqūyūnlū in 1429/832, 1433/836, and 1438/841–842, these frontier skirmishes may be considered local manifestations of the larger conflict between [the Mamlūk sultan] al-Ashraf Barsbay and [the Timurid] Shahrukh over Indian Ocean–Mediterranean trade": Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 50.

part the imperial sovereigns were distant and their power rapidly waned during their prolonged absences. Woods noted the ineffectual Mamlūk campaigns against the Āqqūyunlū, which drove certain princes out of their cities and appointed others as governors, only to have the former princes retake the cities they had temporarily lost.¹⁸ Even as powerful a ruler as Shāhrukh b. Tīmūr was unable to impose the governor of his choice upon the former imperial capital of Tabriz. In 1421 he offered the governorship to ‘Alī b. Qarā ‘Uthmān, but evidently the Āqqūyunlū prince never took up residence, and the Qarāqūyunlū returned later that year.¹⁹ After Shāhrukh’s second campaign he installed a rival Qarāqūyunlū prince in Tabriz, Abū Sa‘īd b. Qarā Yūsuf, in place of the latter’s ousted brother Iskandar. But Iskandar killed Abū Sa‘īd upon his return two years later.²⁰ The third campaign again drove Iskandar out of Tabriz to be replaced by his brother Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf as Shāhrukh’s governor of Ādharbayjān.²¹ Yet Jahānshāh was driven out of Tabriz in turn by his returning brother Iskandar in 1438, even if in this instance he soon returned to defeat Iskandar and retook the city himself, evidently without the Timurid sultan’s support.²² In these cases, imperial power only temporarily put off regional power, which soon successfully reasserted itself.

The independence of local rulers is also seen in their ability to determine their imperial loyalties to serve their own interests most effectively. The Āqqūyunlū emir Qarā ‘Uthmān entered Tīmūr’s service in 1399 and thereby weathered the conqueror’s last invasion of Anatolia, but by 1409 he was rewarded by the Mamlūk sultan with the city of Ruhā in return for sending the head of a rebel anti-sultan to Cairo.²³ His son ‘Alī appealed to the Timurid general Muḥammad Jūkī b. Shāhrukh to secure designation as governor of Diyār Bakr in 1436, but the following year he bargained with the sultan in Cairo for appointment as Mamlūk governor of Āmid.²⁴

¹⁸ Ibid., 68.

¹⁹ Stephen Album, “A Hoard of Silver Coins from the Time of Iskandar Qarā-Qoyūnlū,” *Numismatic Chronicle* 136 (1976): 139–40. Woods suggests that ‘Alī did reign briefly from Tabriz, though without citing the contrary statement in a contemporary Armenian source: Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 49.

²⁰ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 52, 53.

²¹ Woods gives the date of Jahānshāh’s appointment as 1436: *ibid.*, 248 n. 16. However, an Armenian colophon from 1435 already names Jahānshāh as the governor of Tabriz: Avedis K. Sanjian, trans., *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1301–1480* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), 183.

²² Sanjian, *Colophons*, 189–91.

²³ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 40–41, 46.

²⁴ Ibid., 63–64, 66.

Sultān Ḥamza b. Qarā ʿUthmān was simultaneously recognized as the Mamlūk, Ottoman, and perhaps Timurid governor of Diyār Bakr.²⁵ Presumably these distant sultans were unaware of Sultān Ḥamza’s multiple appointments; it is not clear that this lord of Āmid forwarded tax or tribute money to any of them. Earlier, in 1420, Qarā ʿUthmān had urged Shāhrukh to invade Qarāqūyunlū-held Ādharbayjān with Āqqūyunlū support, while at the same time sending the head of the captured Qarāqūyunlū governor of Erzincan to Cairo.²⁶ He was simultaneously serving two imperial masters, or rather serving his own interests with clever diplomacy.

The power of the regional ruler in this period is perhaps nowhere more clearly shown than when the imperial sovereigns were constrained to recognize as governors those who in fact already controlled the territory. Following the death of al-Ashraf Barsbāy, the Mamlūk regency government recognized Sultān Ḥamza b. Qarā ʿUthmān as governor of Āmid in 1438, acknowledging his effective control of Diyār Bakr and the failure of Barsbāy’s campaign to support Jahāngīr b. ʿAlī as a rival contender.²⁷ Similarly, after Uzun Ḥasan secretly took Āmid in 1452, he sought and obtained Mamlūk recognition as governor of the region.²⁸ The local and regional rulers were more effective than distant sultans at determining who would in fact govern the different areas of this imperial borderland.

The independence of local power from distant imperial power is reflected in the primary sources. In fact, although minting coins in the name of a sovereign was the generally recognized method of asserting vassal status, the local and regional rulers within al-Jazīra and Iraq typically minted coins in their own names. Dozens of different types of Jalayirid, Artuqid, Ayyubid, Qarāqūyunlū, and Āqqūyunlū coins exist from the fifteenth century. Even the Kurdish emirs of Bidlīs, Jazīra, and Siʿird struck several coins in their own names for part of the fifteenth century, or in the name of Qarāqūyunlū, and Āqqūyunlū lords,²⁹ while a governor of Erzincan declared his independence from the Qarāqūyunlū in 822 AH / 1419–1420 by putting his countermark on coins.³⁰ Stephen Album has demonstrated that Qarā Yūsuf was reluctant to adopt the title “sultan” on his coins.³¹ But he was unique in this

²⁵ Ibid., 70.

²⁶ Ibid., 47–48.

²⁷ Ibid., 68–69.

²⁸ Ibid., 80.

²⁹ Ömer Diler, *Islamic Mints*, ed. Emine Nur Diler, J. C. Hinrichs, and Garo Kürkman (Istanbul: Spink, 2009), vol. I: 256, 440; vol. II: 685; Stephen Album, *Marsden’s Numismata Orientalia Illustrata* (New York, NY: Attic Books, 1977), 174.

³⁰ Album, “Silver Coins,” 146.

³¹ Ibid., 131.

scruple, as almost all other Artuqid, Ayyubid, Qarāqūyūnlū, and Āqqūyūnlū rulers claimed that title on their coins.

On the other hand, few fifteenth-century coins from this region were struck in the names of distant sultans. However much local pretenders may have courted Ottoman support, no coins of that dynasty were minted in this region before the campaigns of Selim I (1512–1520).³² Only five specimens of Mamlūk coins minted in this region during the fifteenth century are known.³³ One from an unusual mint may indicate that the small town of Chamishgazak, on the edge of Āqqūyūnlū interests, remained under a governor appointed from Cairo ten years after al-Ashraf Barsbāy wrested the settlement back from Qarā ʿUthmān (see Map 3).³⁴ The three coins minted at Āmid, and one at Erzincan, in the name of Khushqadam (r. 1461–1467) may have been a limited issue for an Egyptian audience during a particular political crisis, intended to forestall a Mamlūk invasion.³⁵ In this latter case, minting imperial coins may have been a diplomatic maneuver rather than a sign of loyal subservience.

Timurid coins from this region are nearly as rare, with one notable exception. The only regional ruler who regularly minted coins in the name of an imperial overlord was Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf, whose early issues name Shāhrukh b. Tīmūr until a few years after the latter's death in 1447.³⁶ In this he differed from his predecessor and brother Iskandar,

³² Pamuk lists Ottoman mints in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, none of which were in al-Jazīra or Iraq: Şevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 34, 38.

³³ Stephen Album informed me of these in the Tübingen collection. Ilisch also lists Mamlūk coins of Barqūq (d. 1399) minted by the Artuqids of Mārdīn: Ilisch, "Artuqidherrschaft," 221. These coins were not known to Paul Balog, who asserted that the Mamlūks only used six mints, all of them within Egypt and Syria: Paul Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamlūk Sultans of Egypt and Syria* (New York, NY: American Numismatic Society, 1964), 50.

³⁴ Tübingen CI5 F2, dated 852 /1448–1449. On the other hand, Mamlūk historians' claim that Sulṭān Ḥamza b. Qarā ʿUthmān struck coins in the name of Barsbāy's successor has not been confirmed by numismatic evidence: Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 68–69.

³⁵ Tübingen CI9 A2–A4 and 96–46–10. For the crisis of Mamlūk diplomacy, see Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 92–95.

³⁶ Stephen Album, *Iran after the Mongol Invasion* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2001), xvi. There are rumors of earlier coins in the name of Jahānshāh, but they are uncertain. Burn reported two such coins from Tabrīz, one dated 848 AH / 1444–1445 and another perhaps 841 AH / 1437–1438: Richard Burn, "Coins of Jahān Shāh Kārā Qoyūnlū and Some Contemporary Rulers," *Numismatic Chronicle* 5th series, 18 (1938): 180. Stephen Album informs me that he believes they are misread. Ahmet Ziya reported a coin of Jahānshāh from Āmid dated 847 AH / 1443–1444, but it more likely comes from the Qarāqūyūnlū period in the city a decade later, rather than from the current capital of Jahānshāh's rival: Ahmet Ziya, *Meskukat-i İslâmiye takvimi* (Istanbul: Matbaa-yi Amire, 1910), 146; Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 78. Diler reported simultaneous Timurid, Qarāqūyūnlū,

as well as all other rulers within this region. Tīmūr's coins at mints in al-Jazīra and Iraq all ended shortly after his return to Samarqand. Apart from Jahānshāh's early reign, coins naming Shāhrukh are not plentiful. An undated issue from Erbil may have been struck by the Timurid ruler himself on campaign.³⁷ The Āqqūyunlū, allegedly Shāhrukh's vassals, evidently minted his coins only twice, once in Mārdīn and once in Āmid.³⁸ A coin of Ulugh Bey b. Shāhrukh minted in Āmid, if read correctly, may indicate an attempt by Jahāngīr b. 'Alī b. Qarā 'Uthmān to secure Timurid support in the brewing conflict with Jahānshāh Qarāqūyunlū.³⁹ The overwhelming number of coins minted within this region, with the exception of Jahānshāh's coins before 1450, were the coins of local rulers. Whatever claims of subservience the lords of fifteenth-century al-Jazīra and Iraq may have presented to the distant sultans of Herat, Cairo, or Constantinople, to their subject populations they advertised their own sovereignty.

The local populations within eastern Anatolia and Iraq understood these realities. While historians in distant imperial capitals of course ascribed primary agency to their sultan and his designated generals,⁴⁰ the Armenian colophons produced in this region tell a different story. Many Armenian colophons, in addition to providing the date of the manuscript in the Armenian era, also supply the name of the current political ruler in the formula, "in the year X, during the reign of ..."⁴¹ As Woods discovered, these colophons are very useful for establishing the geographical extent of rival

and Injuīd (!) issues from Sulṭāniyya in the 840s AH: Diler, *Islamic Mints*, II: 691. The Injuīds reflect a mistaken index of the British Museum catalogue, and the Türkmen coins are based on von Zambaur's misreading of Burn's article: Stanley Lane-Poole, *Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum*, ed. Reginald Stuart Poole (London: British Museum, 1875), vol. VII: 29–31; vol. X: cl; Eduard Karl Max von Zambaur, *Die Münzprägungen des Islams: Zeitlich und örtlich geordnet*, ed. Peter Jaekel (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1968), 146; Burn, "Jahān Shāh," 174–75. Only Shāhrukh's coins were minted in Sulṭāniyya at that time.

³⁷ Diler, *Islamic Mints*, I: 78.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, I: 24; II: 1095.

³⁹ Wā'il al-Rubay'ī, "Dāqūq: tārikhhā, al-tanqīb wa-l-ṣiyāna fihā," *Sūmir* 12 (1956): 82; Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 74. Later Timurid coins allegedly from Van are more likely misread issues of Sabzawār: al-Rubay'ī, "Dāqūq," 86; İskender Targaç and Şevket Dönmez, "Duribe Van," *Türk Nümismatik Derneği Bülteni* 37–38 (2002): 21.

⁴⁰ Jürgen Paul notes that most sources take an imperial perspective: Paul, "Zerfall," 696. This is to be expected, given the greater imperial patronage for textual production in the premodern world.

⁴¹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 8.

rulers,⁴² but the absence of rulers from the date formulae also indicates their irrelevance in the perspective of the colophons' authors. Thus, although several colophons in Sanjian's collection acknowledge Tīmūr's reign, twice in company with his son Mīrānshāh,⁴³ no subsequent Timurid is named as an acknowledged ruler within this collection. Shāhrukh b. Tīmūr appears as a foreign invader rather than an imperial ruler, and Abū Sa'īd is only mentioned as a foreign king killed by Uzun Ḥasan Āqqūyunlū.⁴⁴ Only two date formulae from Sanjian's collection name Ottoman sultans, both from manuscripts written in Constantinople rather than further east.⁴⁵

Mamlūk sultans appear in the date formulae of only four colophons translated by Sanjian, but most of these manuscripts may come from Jerusalem, which was firmly held by the Mamlūks, rather than from the contested border zone.⁴⁶ The most explicit reference to Mamlūk suzerainty occurs in an Armenian colophon from Kharput completed in 1453, "during the rule of the Egyptians [Egiptats'wots'] and the reign of Sulēyman Pak [Sulaymān Bey], who is a Dulghatarts'i [Dhu 'l-Qadrid] by race. This is the third year that our citadel and city [Kharput] have been in the hands of the Dulgharats'i [Dhu 'l-Qadrid], who is under the suzerainty of the sultans of Egiptos [Egypt]."⁴⁷ Although the scribe explicitly mentioned Egyptian hegemony, he provided the name of the local ruler but not of the Mamlūk sultan. Evidently the name of the governor Sulaymān Bey was better known in this area than that of his suzerain.

By contrast to these few and isolated references to distant sultans, Armenian colophons consistently refer to rulers from within this region. The Qarāqūyunlū and Āqqūyunlū rulers are named in dozens of date formulae. Emirs of smaller districts or individual cities appear more frequently than distant imperial dynasties. The names of 'Izz al-Dīn Shīr and his son Malik Muḥammad, who ruled the city of Ostan south of Lake

⁴² Woods cites the Armenian colophons to indicate which Āqqūyunlū contenders were recognized where during the Great Civil War, for example: Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 61, 63–64, 70, 247, nn. 1–4, and 248 n. 29.

⁴³ Tīmūr and Mīrānshāh: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 120, 123. Tīmūr alone: *ibid.*, 122–27.

⁴⁴ Examples of Shāhrukh's portrayal as a foreign ruler or invader are given at Sanjian, *Colophons*, 147–48, 159, 174, 177–78. Abū Sa'īd is only mentioned in the period 1469–72: *ibid.*, 295, 298–99, 302, 304.

⁴⁵ Both manuscripts, one from 1459 and one from 1480, name Mehmed II: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 263, 326.

⁴⁶ Al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh is cited in 1419 in a manuscript from Jerusalem, while al-Malik al-Zāhir Jaqmaq is cited in two manuscripts from 1441, one of unknown provenance and one from Jerusalem, as well as one 1446 manuscript from 'Arabkīr north of Malatya: *ibid.*, 144, 195–96, 208.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 224. I have altered Sanjian's transliterations.

Van, occur in the date formulae of ten manuscripts from the period 1405–1421, more than the Ottomans and Mamlūks combined.⁴⁸ The most common references to “imperial” rule in the colophons harkened back to the Mongol Ilkhanate with a consistent concern for who controlled the “throne of Tabriz.” References to rulers occupying the imperial *takht* (Pers. “throne”) span the fifteenth century in numerous manuscripts.⁴⁹ Other colophons present Tabriz as the specific location of the sovereign, although the word *takht* is not used.⁵⁰ T’ovma Metsop’ets’i also presented the region around Tabriz as the *shāhastān*, the region of the *shāh* (Pers. “king”).⁵¹ One scribe described Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf as holding the imperial throne even during his first appointment to Tabriz as the governor under Shāhrukh, before his brother Iskandar drove him away and “occupied the *t’axt*” [i.e. *takht*].⁵² Despite Jahānshāh’s numismatic protestations of subservience, his Armenian subjects consistently regarded him as the relevant ruler, not Shāhrukh. The result is a persistent emphasis on local and regional rulers as the point of reference, only casting distant sultans in the role of foreign invaders who sometimes arrived at the head of armies.

The conflict between local and imperial perspectives on the political situation in this region explains the two divergent reasons given for the conflict between the Āqqūyunlū and the Qarāqūyunlū in 1450. According to a history produced for the later Āqqūyunlū ruler Uzun Ḥasan, the cause was his brother Jahāngīr’s refusal to extradite a rival Qarāqūyunlū pretender, in other words, an intraregional affair.⁵³ The Qarāqūyunlū ruler Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf, however, presented the issue in a letter to the Mamlūk Sultan al-Zāhir Jaqmaq as Jahāngīr’s “oppression” and “enmity to the Mamlūk sultan,” who had appointed Jahāngīr as governor of Ruhā with the charge to capture Āmid.⁵⁴ The explanation of this discrepancy is

⁴⁸ In half of these manuscripts they are mentioned with other rulers: *ibid.*, 133, 137, 142, 144. But in the other five manuscripts the ruler of Ostan is the only secular ruler mentioned: *ibid.*, 128, 137, 144, 145, 149.

⁴⁹ Nine Armenian colophons refer explicitly to the *takht* at Tabriz: *ibid.*, 141, 156–57, 159, 174, 176, 189, 217, 272, 285, and 301. Wing indicates a legal-hereditary importance of the Jalayirid dynasty for linking the Qarāqūyunlū to the Ilkhanate legacy, omitted by Armenian scribes: Wing, *Jalayirids*, 147–48, 169–75.

⁵⁰ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 166, 169, 193, 205, 217, 225, 259, 292, 294, and 312.

⁵¹ T’ovma Metsop’ets’i, *Patmagrut’yun*, ed. Levon Khach’ikyan (Yerevan: Magaghat, 1999), 16.

⁵² Sanjian, *Colophons*, 189.

⁵³ Abū Bakr Tīhrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, ed. N. Lugal and F. Sümer (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1962), 178; Woods, *Aqqyunlu*, 74.

⁵⁴ Woods, *Aqqyunlu*, 250 n. 47.

most likely that the local issues were the driving forces in the conflict, but the Qarāqūyunlū prince knew that he must appeal to Mamlūk concepts of their government as sovereign and righteous in order to motivate military intervention from Cairo. This example demonstrates the ease with which local rulers ignored (in the case of the Āqqūyunlū) or manipulated (in Jahānshāh's case) the sovereign claims of the distant sultans, in both cases demonstrating that the real decisions were taken by local rulers.

At times, indeed, power was divided even more locally than the level of the regional Türkmén confederations. Woods structures his history of the Āqqūyunlū on the assumption that there was only one legitimate Āqqūyunlū ruler at a time.⁵⁵ The leader of the Mawsillu clan who was captured by Uzun Ḥasan in the defeat of his uncle Shaykh Ḥasan is called "traitorous."⁵⁶ Such a perspective accurately reflects the teleological Uzun-Ḥasanid bias of the Āqqūyunlū narrative histories, which Woods is very aware of in other places.⁵⁷ On the other hand, Paul's study of an earlier regional power in Khurāsān points to the occasional ability of local power-holders to determine which pretender came to rule.⁵⁸ Instead of presenting one legitimate ruler against various "pretenders," historians can refrain from adjudicating succession disputes, seeing instead that multiple princes simultaneously claimed Āqqūyunlū leadership and commanded the loyalty of different components of the confederation.⁵⁹ The "traitorous" crime of the Mawsillu bey had simply been his loyal support for a defeated claimant to Āqqūyunlū rule.⁶⁰ When multiple princes claimed Āqqūyunlū leadership, lower-level rulers gained the opportunity to exercise power by determining which of the rival claimants to support.

On some occasions, the territory officially ruled by the Āqqūyunlū was geographically partitioned, with the effective rule being exercised at a more local level. In the late 1430s, the Āqqūyunlū princes were divided between one group around Erzincan and another based in Āmid.⁶¹ At the end of the century, the much larger Āqqūyunlū empire was partitioned into three areas, the old heartland around Āmid governed by Qāsim b. Jahāngīr, Ādharbayjān ruled by Alvand b. Yūsuf b. Uzun Ḥasan, and Iraq

⁵⁵ Woods uses the term "pretender" on two occasions: *ibid.*, 75, 81.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 38, 63.

⁵⁸ Paul, "Zerfall," 709–11.

⁵⁹ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 69, 75–77.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 69.

and southern Iran under Sulṭān Murād b. Ya‘qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan.⁶² Even when the empire was not divided, the power of local rulers and populations sometimes trumped the power of later Āqqūyunlū sultans. Walter Hinz notes that the tax system ascribed to Uzun Ḥasan actually reflected the varied local tax systems over which he ruled, and he did not succeed in making those local systems consistent.⁶³ Vladimir Minorsky recounts how emirs under the Āqqūyunlū successfully thwarted attempts by Uzun Ḥasan and his son Ya‘qūb to replace the type of taxes collected.⁶⁴ Political power in these regions in the fifteenth century was not simply exercised from the top downward; rather, effective power was wielded by varying strata of local or regional government.⁶⁵ But in the fifteenth century, the local and regional power-holders were largely independent of distant imperial powers, except during the brief intervals when the latter showed up with armies.⁶⁶

CHRISTIAN DIVERSITY

Diversity in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra consisted of more than the Sunni–Shiite divide in Islam and the “ethnic” distinctions among Türkmēn, Kurds, Arabs, and Persians. Alongside smaller non-Muslim populations such as Jews and Yezidis, there were several Christian populations, divided linguistically and doctrinally into distinct groups. Linguistically, Christians used either Armenian or Syriac as the primary language in their church services, although it is likely that they spoke a wider range of languages for nonecclesiastical purposes. Doctrinally, diverging theories explaining the relationship between Jesus Christ’s humanity and divinity led to three main positions that had largely calcified by the time of the

⁶² Ibid., 161–62.

⁶³ Walther Hinz, “Das Steuerwesen Ostanatoliens im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 100 (1950): 179.

⁶⁴ Uzun Ḥasan’s alleged attempt is mentioned only in a vague and perhaps unreliable report, while that of his son Ya‘qūb is better documented: Vladimir Minorsky, “The Aq-Qoyunlu and Land Reforms,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17, 3 (1955): 450, 454, 457; ‘Abd Allah b. Faṭḥ Allah al-Ghīyāth, *al-Tārīkh al-Ghīyāthī: al-faṣl al-khāmis min sanat 656 ilā 891 H./1258–1486 M.*, ed. Ṭāriq Nāfi‘ al-Ḥamdāni (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at As‘ad, 1975), 391.

⁶⁵ Paul, “Zerfall,” 720–21.

⁶⁶ Becker similarly suggests that local Kurdish politics were more relevant for Christians living in early nineteenth-century Hakkārī than the Ottoman state: Adam H. Becker, *Revival and Awakening: American Evangelical Missionaries in Iran and the Origins of Assyrian Nationalism* (University of Chicago, 2015), 51.

first Islamic conquests eight centuries earlier.⁶⁷ These divisions gave rise to multiple ecclesiastical hierarchies, each with its own development and set of source documents.

The Church of the East was the dominant Christian population of Iraq in the medieval period. Using Syriac in its liturgy, it had adopted a dyophysite theology that emphasized the distinction without separation of Christ's humanity and divinity. During the Mongol period, it benefited more than any other ecclesiastical hierarchy from Ilkhanate patronage, and the catholicos (the title for their patriarch) moved his residence from Baghdad, where it had been since the eighth century, to Marāgha, to be closer to the Mongol rulers.⁶⁸ The upheavals following the collapse of the Ilkhanate affected Iraq more than other regions and thus may have damaged this denomination more than other Christian populations. The patriarchal residence repeatedly moved in the post-Mongol period, from the village of Karamlīsh southeast of Mosul, to Mosul itself, to the Hakkārī mountains in the Ottoman period. The geographical spread of the Church of the East in the fifteenth century extended from Āmid and Nisibis in the west to Tabriz in the east, and from Salmās and Si'ird in the north to Baghdad in the south, although this was a much smaller range than in earlier centuries (see Map 2).

The Syriac Orthodox churches used Syriac as their liturgical language, but preferred a miaphysite Christology that emphasized the union between Christ's divinity and humanity.⁶⁹ Shortly after 1292 the patriarchate split into three rival lines, two of which continued into the fifteenth century, one based in Damascus under Mamlūk rule and one based in Mārdīn under Türkmen rule. In the middle of the fourteenth century, an additional patriarchate was established in Tūr 'Abdīn in protest against the patriarchs in Mārdīn and their adoption of hereditary succession.⁷⁰ The

⁶⁷ For greater detail on the three main Christological positions, see Chapter 5. For the earlier stages of this divergence in the early Islamic period, see Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque*, 128–40.

⁶⁸ See Introduction, fn. 39.

⁶⁹ The main resources for Syriac Orthodox history in general are found in Ighnātyūs Afrām Baršawm, *al-Lu'lu' al-manthūr fī tārikh al-'ulūm w-al-ādāb al-Suryāniyya*, al-Ṭab'ah 3 (Baghdad: Majma' al-Lughā al-Suryāniyya, 1976); Sebastian P. Brock and David G. K. Taylor, eds., *The Hidden Pearl: The Syrian Orthodox Church and Its Ancient Aramaic Heritage* (Rome: Trans World Film Italia, 2001). The history of this denomination in this period is clearest in the anonymous continuation of Bar 'Ebroyo's *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*: Bar Hebraeus, *The Ecclesiastical Chronicle: An English Translation*, trans. David Wilmshurst (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2016), 282–309, 474–505.

⁷⁰ For a discussion of patriarchal inheritance, see Chapter 3.

Mārdīn patriarchate suppressed the patriarchal line based in Damascus in 1445. Most Syriac Orthodox churches in the fifteenth century were located between Ṭūr ‘Abdīn and what is today northern Syria, although significant outposts were found in the Mosul plain as well.

The Syriac-speaking denomination that is most obscure in the fifteenth century is the one known as Rūm Orthodox today and as “Melkites” (*malkāyē*) to other denominations. Their doctrine followed the Roman Imperial Church in accepting the council of Chalcedon in 451. Although no historical narrative refers to their presence in Iraq or al-Jazīra in the fifteenth century, an East Syrian manuscript from the middle of the sixteenth century preserves a ritual of uncertain date for welcoming into the Church of the East “Jacobites and Melkites when they become Christian,” ascribed to a Catholicos Ēlīyā.⁷¹ If the ritual derived from one of the three East Syrian catholicoi of that name in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, it would indicate the continued presence of Chalcedonian churches in part of the territory inhabited by the Church of the East in the fifteenth century. Little else can be said of this confession of Christianity in fifteenth-century Iraq or al-Jazīra.

Armenian-speaking Christianity in the fifteenth century included both anti-Chalcedonian and Roman Catholic branches, although there was fluidity between these two groups.⁷² One line of catholicoi, the title for Armenian patriarchs, was located in Sis near the Mediterranean coast and had come under the rule of Mamlūk Egypt with the final defeat of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia in 1375. Another patriarchal line had started in the twelfth century on the island of Aght‘amar in Lake Van; it operated under Türkmen rule. Partly in protest against the pro-Latin leanings of the Sis catholicoi,⁷³ a group of conservative mountain bishops started a

⁷¹ Cambridge Add. 1988, f. 142a. For the date of this text, see Appendix D.

⁷² The best treatment of fifteenth-century Armenian Christianity in English is Dickran Kouymjian, “Armenia from the Fall of the Cilician Kingdom (1375) to the Forced Emigration under Shah Abbas (1604),” in *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, ed. Richard G. Hovannissian, vol. II (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 1–50. The most detailed treatments of fifteenth-century Armenian Catholicism are M. A. van den Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Arménie. 1. L’Union de Qrnan 1330,” *Oriens Christianus* 40 (1956): 94–112; M. A. van den Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Arménie. 2. Le nouvel athénée,” *Oriens Christianus* 42 (1958): 110–33; M. A. van den Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Arménie. 3. La congrégation des Uniteurs,” *Oriens Christianus* 43 (1959): 110–19; M. A. van den Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Arménie. 4. Les adversaires de l’union,” *Oriens Christianus* 45 (1961): 95–108; M. A. van den Oudenrijn, “Uniteurs et Dominicains d’Arménie. 5. Les Dominicains de Naxijewan,” *Oriens Christianus* 46 (1962): 99–116.

⁷³ Metsop‘ets‘i, *Patmagrut‘yun*, 224.

rival patriarchate in 1443 in Ējmiatsin Cathedral at Vagharshapat, the patriarchal residence of Gregory the Illuminator and his immediate successors a millennium earlier. But even in the Armenian highlands, there were outposts of Armenian Catholicism, such as in the city of Mākū south of Mount Ararat.⁷⁴

Other Christian groups were known in fifteenth-century al-Jazīra and Iraq, or were known to people who lived in these regions. Georgian Christians were frequently brought into the region as captives from Āqqūyunlū raids later in the century, while Latin missionaries likely entered the region on occasion. Türkmen rulers of both the Āqqūyunlū and the Qarāqūyunlū confederations occasionally married Greek princesses from Trebizond on the Black Sea coast, who may have brought a retinue of Greek Christians with them.⁷⁵ Syriac Orthodox Christians were certainly aware of competition in Syria with the Maronites based in Mount Lebanon, who used Syriac in their church services and were in communion with the papacy. But within the regions of Iraq and al-Jazīra, these other Christian groups were present only in small numbers. This is the religious and linguistic diversity, then, in which the social structure of the Church of the East functioned.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH OF THE EAST

The internal social structure of the Church of the East is as unfamiliar to most scholars as fifteenth-century politics in this region. Several different varieties of sources allow us to reconstruct the structures of this society. The burial practices of the Church of the East indicate its social structure by providing different instructions for different social statuses. A gospel lectionary from the fifteenth century specifies readings for the funerals of different ranks,⁷⁶ and a funerary manual from 1774 AG / 1463 lists poems for funerals of different classes of people.⁷⁷ But the most reliable, and yet least systematic, set of sources is the genre of colophon that follows almost all dated East Syrian manuscripts of this period.⁷⁸ These long

⁷⁴ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 171–72.

⁷⁵ See appendix II of Anthony Bryer, “Greeks and Türkmens: The Pontic Exception,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 29 (1975): 113–48.

⁷⁶ BL Add 7174, f. 212b–213a.

⁷⁷ Mārdīn (Macomber) 35,16 [HMML CCM 221], ff. 90b–107b.

⁷⁸ This section is dependent upon the work of David Wilmshurst: David Wilmshurst, *The Ecclesiastical Organisation of the Church of the East, 1318–1913* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000). My work would have been incomparably more difficult without his painstaking precedent.

notes frequently name the scribe, the scribe's father and grandfather, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and any patrons. The scribes of such colophons were almost always priests or deacons,⁷⁹ and the ritual texts were likewise controlled by clergy. Yet the division between clerical and lay society should not be overstated. Murre-van den Berg argued that in the Ottoman period, even under greater influence from Roman Catholic practices, the division between secular and sacred among East Syrian Christians was more fluid than Westerners expect, and she quotes a seventeenth-century European visitor who noted that no dress code distinguished clergy from laity.⁸⁰ The clerical origin of all Syriac sources must be kept in mind, but should not disqualify the available evidence.

The society reflected in these sources was very hierarchical. The manuscript colophons typically mention the catholicos-patriarch of the East, as well as less frequent references to metropolitans,⁸¹ a bishop,⁸² monks,⁸³ “scholars” (perhaps priests in training),⁸⁴ an archdeacon,⁸⁵ and “chiefs” of various villages.⁸⁶ The gospel readings for funerals differentiate among “catholicoi, metropolitans, and bishops,” “teachers and interpreters,” priests, deacons, monks, nuns, and “everyone.”⁸⁷ The funerary manual divides this list even further into catholicoi, “bishops and metropolitans,” monks, “laboring monks” (*ʿihīdhāyē mīlē*), “virtuous monks” (*ʿihīdhāyē myattrē*), priests, teachers, deacons, physicians, elders (*sābhē*), “everyone”

⁷⁹ Only four out of twenty-four East Syrian scribes named in fifteenth-century manuscript colophons or notes do not indicate an ecclesiastical rank: Mārḏīn (Macomber) 35,16 [HMML CCM 221]; Jean Baptiste Chabot, “Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques conservés dans la bibliothèque du patriarcat grec orthodoxe de Jérusalem,” *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1894): 106; Giuseppe Simone Assemani and Stefano Evodio Assemani, *Bibliotheca apostolica vaticanae codicum manuscriptorum catalogus in tres partes distributus in quarum prima orientales, in altera Graeci, in tertia Latini, Italici aliorumque Europaeorum idiomatum* (Paris: Maissonneuve frères, 1926), vol. I, part 3: 401–4; Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 393–97. Two scribes were metropolitans: Paris BN Syr. 369, and note in Jerusalem Greek Patriarchate Syr. 12. The remaining eighteen scribes were priests, deacons, or monks.

⁸⁰ Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 15, 95.

⁸¹ Paris BN Syr. 184, f. 125b; Paris BN Syr. 369, ff. 106b, 114b; Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 41, 50, 55, 72, 84–85, 87, 101, 193.

⁸² Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 85.

⁸³ Cambridge BFBS 446, f. 255a; Berlin orient. quart. 845, f. 180a; Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 46.

⁸⁴ Mārḏīn (Scher) 43 [HMML CCM 406], f. 132a; Diyarbakır (Scher) 73 [HMML CCM 427], f. 187b. For the meaning of this term, see fn. 145 below.

⁸⁵ BL Add 7177, f. 321a.

⁸⁶ Berlin orient. quart. 801, f. 48b; BL Or. 4399, f. 579b; Cambridge Add. 1965, f. 257b; Mārḏīn (Scher) 13 [HMML CCM 72], f. 189b; and BL Add. 7174, f. 206a.

⁸⁷ BL Add 7174, ff. 212b–213a. In this context, “interpreters” refers to biblical exposition.

(*kulnāsh*), “sons of the Church,” murdered people (*qīlē*), refugees (*ʾaksenāyē*), women, young women (*neshē laymāthā*), brides (*kallāthā*), and nuns (*bnāth qyāmā*).⁸⁸ The gendered division of both lists of funeral instructions is striking, as is the inclusion of certain circumstantial categories (such as homicide victims) in the latter list. Yet the clerical nature of these sources most likely flattened secular hierarchies that existed among laypeople: the relatively few categories of the laity given here probably do not tell a complete story. The limitations of the sources only permit the reconstruction of part of the East Syrian social structure, with special emphasis on the clerical and monastic ranks.

While the disproportionate representation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the sources is partly due to slanted reporting from clerical sources, the clergy also played a leading role in fifteenth-century society within the Church of the East. This is especially clear by contrast with the Armenians and the Georgians to the north. The Georgians had their own king throughout the fifteenth century, and members of the Orbelian family were mentioned as Armenian rulers with regional significance in Siwnikʿ in eastern Armenia and in Georgia during the first half of the fifteenth century. Both the Georgian king and the Armenian nobles often appear in the date formulae of Armenian colophons, indicating their regional prominence.⁸⁹ One Armenian prince is even mentioned in a Qarāqūyunlū firman dated 4 Ramaḍān 872 AH / 28 March 1468.⁹⁰ By contrast, the *rēshānē* (“chiefs”) of the Church of the East, like their Syriac Orthodox counterparts, seem to have possessed merely local significance. These secular East Syrian leaders are never cited in a date formula, but only in patronage formulas or with reference to particular cities or towns.⁹¹ In light of this contrast, the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Church of the East holds greater regional significance than secular East Syrian leaders for our understanding of East Syrian society.

⁸⁸ Mārdīn (Macomber) 35,16 [HMML CCM 221], ff. 90b–107b.

⁸⁹ Sanjian includes twenty-five manuscripts between 1399 and 1477 that include kings of Georgia in their date formulae: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 117, 135, 143, 145, 166, 184, 186, 188, 190–91, 197, 199–200, 209, 220, 265, 271, 280, 289, 301, 310–11, 320. Princes of the Orbelian family are used in the date formulae in Armenian manuscripts from 1401, 1406, 1412, 1419, 1428, 1437, and 1438: *ibid.*, 121, 128, 135, 143–44, 177, 186, 190.

⁹⁰ Ḥusayn Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *Farmānhā-yi Turkumānān-i Qarā Qūyūnlū va Aq Qūyūnlū* (Qum: Chāpkhānah-i Ḥikmat, 1973), 57.

⁹¹ BL Or. 4399, ff. 579a–b; BL Add. 7174, f. 206a; Berlin orient. quart. 801; Cambridge Add. 1965; St. Petersburg Syr. 33 according to Ishoʿdad of Merv, *The Commentaries of Ishoʿdad of Merv, Bishop of Ḥadatha (c. 850 AD) in Syriac and English*, ed. Margaret Dunlop Smith Gibson (Cambridge University Press, 1911), vol. V, part 1: 180.

The head of the hierarchy of the Church of the East was the catholicos-patriarch of the East, who consecrated the metropolitans and bishops for the respective districts. Despite the fame of this office under the ‘Abbasid caliphs, the precise enumeration of its incumbents in the fifteenth century remains unclear, and there were likely large gaps without a reigning patriarch.⁹² After Catholicos Denḥā died in 1382, patriarchs of the Church of the East are attested only between 1430 and 1444, in the year 1463, and from 1477 into the sixteenth century. The half-century from 1382 to 1430 may also have contained a catholicos or two. On the other hand, several manuscript colophons between 1448 and 1476 name no patriarch, an oddity for East Syrian manuscripts; likely for much of this interval the highest office of the Church of the East was vacant. Only for the end of the century do we have evidence about the patriarch’s residence. A manuscript dated November 1789 AG / 1477 was copied “under the shadow of [Catholicos Shem‘ōn’s] kindness in the flock blessed with the faith of Simon, Mosul,”⁹³ while a manuscript copied in 1795 AG / 1484 by a “disciple of the patriarchal cell” in Mosul may likewise indicate that the catholicos-patriarch was resident in that city.⁹⁴ His epitaph records that he was buried in the monastery of Rabban Hōrmīzd, outside the village of Alqōsh 35 miles north of Mosul, in 1808 AG / 1497,⁹⁵ which probably implies that he was there when he died. His successor, also named Shem‘ōn, was residing in the city of Jazīra (modern Cizre) in 1811 AG / 1500, and he was buried in the monastery of Mār Āwgēn outside Nisibis in 1813 AG / 1502.⁹⁶ At the end of the fifteenth century, the catholicos-patriarchs of the Church of the East seem not to have had a fixed abode.

One of the few facts to enter general scholarship on the Church of the East in the fifteenth century is that during this period the patriarchate became hereditary.⁹⁷ More precisely, Catholicos Shem‘ōn IV began

⁹² See Appendix C for the evidence for the patriarchal succession.

⁹³ ܩܘܠܘܡܢܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ: Vatican sir. 186, f. 241a.

⁹⁴ BL Add. 7177, f. 321a.

⁹⁵ Jacques Vosté, “Les Inscriptions de Rabban Hormizd et de N.-D. des Semences près d’Alqoš (Iraq),” *Le Muséon* 43 (1930): 283–85. On the monastery’s history, see H. L. Murre-van den Berg, “Hormizd, Monastery of Rabban,” *GEDSH*.

⁹⁶ Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, 1: 590–91. I follow Murre-van den Berg’s suggestion to emend the date of the initial arrival of the Indian Christians from 1801 AG / 1489–1490, as given by Assemani, to 1811 AG / 1499–1500: Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg, “The Patriarchs of the Church of the East from the Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries,” *Hugoye* 2, 2 (1999): 241.

⁹⁷ Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 19; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 105; Baumer, *The Church of the East*, 233.

East Syrian population shifted.¹⁰³ One result of this redistribution was a certain amount of flexibility in the location of bishops and the creation of new dioceses, indicating geographical centers of the Church of the East. Metropolitans are attested during the fifteenth century in Erbil, Mosul, Nisibis, Ḥiṣn-Kayf, and Āthēl on the western side of the Hakkārī mountains.¹⁰⁴ Of these, the last two appear for the first time as the sees of metropolitan archbishops in the fifteenth century, indicating a recognition that the East Syrian population was increasing on the upper Tigris.¹⁰⁵ Wilmshurst suggests that Salmās and Ūrmī may also have had continuous successions of bishops, although none is attested in the fifteenth century specifically.¹⁰⁶ This distribution of dioceses suggests a geographical spread of the Church of the East from Nisibis in al-Jazīra and Ḥiṣn-Kayf on the Tigris eastward across the Hakkārī mountains and the Mosul plain to Lake Ūrmī in the east, leaving off the distant branches in Cyprus and Kerala.

The dioceses of the metropolitans were flexible in the fifteenth century, however, and sometimes multiple metropolitan sees might belong to a single church leader. Thus a colophon dated 26 March 1741 AG /

¹⁰³ David Wilmshurst makes this point in his detailed study of the larger period 1318–1913: Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 343–46.

¹⁰⁴ Ḥiṣn-Kayf: Paris BN Syr. 369, f. 106b, 114b. Mosul: BL Or. 4399, f. 579a; Cambridge Add. 1965, f. 257b; St. Petersburg Syr. 33, f. 316a according to Isho'dad of Merv, *Commentaries*, V, 1: 179; Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 193. Nisibis: Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 41, 55. Āthēl: *ibid.*, 85. Wilmshurst interprets colophons from 1488 and 1502 as indicating the presence of a metropolitan in the city of Jazīra, but they might alternatively refer to the designated patriarchal heir: *ibid.*, 101. Jazīra was included in the title of a metropolitan cited in a colophon from 1504, who was not the *nāṭar kūrsyā*: *ibid.*, 101, 398. Ishō'yahb b. Mqaddam is also attested as metropolitan of Erbil in 1444 according to Paris BN Syr. 369, f. 105b.

¹⁰⁵ Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 84–85. At the very end of the century, bishops and shortly thereafter a metropolitan were consecrated for the Christian community in India, but this reflects the reestablishment of older ecclesiastical contacts after what was presumably a prolonged lack of contact: Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, 1: 590–92.

¹⁰⁶ Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 346. The Hakkārī mountains, home to substantial East Syrian communities in later centuries, are almost entirely absent from fifteenth-century sources. Wilmshurst demonstrated the medieval presence of Christians there, but indicated that their history is almost unknown until the seventeenth century: *ibid.*, 286. The tribal social organization described for the nineteenth century is not reflected in any fifteenth-century source: Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 28–29; Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 285. It is not clear on what basis Murre-van den Berg concludes that in the late fifteenth century the majority of East Syrian Christians lived in the Hakkārī mountains rather than the agricultural plains: Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 31. See also J. F. Coakley, “Hakkari,” *GEDSH*.

1430 names Metropolitan Timothy “of Ḥiṣn-Kayf and Nisibis.”¹⁰⁷ In the most extreme case, Wilmshurst cites three colophons dated 1788–1794 AG / 1477–1483 that mention Ēlīyā as metropolitan of Nisibis, Armenia, Mārdīn, Āmid, Si‘ird, and Ḥiṣn-Kayf.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, a certain Metropolitan ‘Abdīshō‘ of Nisibis added a note to a manuscript in May 1769 AG / 1458 that does not mention Ḥiṣn-Kayf as part of his diocese,¹⁰⁹ while at the end of the fifteenth century Metropolitan Sabrīshō‘ of Ḥiṣn-Kayf does not claim Nisibis as part of his diocese in the colophon that he authored.¹¹⁰ This indicates that Ḥiṣn-Kayf could be a separate diocese when useful and combined with other dioceses as necessary. It is not clear whether these metropolitans had suffragan bishops, as they had earlier in the history of the Church of the East, or whether the hierarchy had simplified to the point that all bishops were directly subject to the catholicos-patriarch. In any event, the presence of a bishop or metropolitan indicates a geographical center for the Church of the East.

Although the evidence is slight, it seems that bishops and metropolitans typically resided within the city, or one of the cities, over which they were appointed. A manuscript note by Metropolitan ‘Abdīshō‘ of Nisibis dated May 1769 AG / 1458 indicates that he donated this manuscript to the church of Mār Pethyōn within the city of Āmid.¹¹¹ The metropolitan does not specify where he wrote the note, but it probably indicates the metropolitan’s presence in Uzun Ḥasan’s capital city shortly after the Āqqūyunlū ruler secured undisputed control of his confederation.¹¹² The “disciple of the patriarchal cell” who copied a manuscript in Mosul in 1484 may indicate not only the catholicos-patriarch’s residence in that city, but also that of his nephew and designated successor Metropolitan Ēlīyā as part of the patriarchal household.¹¹³ Metropolitan Sabrīshō‘ of Ḥiṣn-Kayf copied a manuscript, as he specifies, at the church dedicated to St. George in the city.¹¹⁴ In addition to these specific examples, a gospel lectionary dated 2 October 1810 AG / 1498 specifies the reading for

¹⁰⁷ Paris BN Syr. 184, f. 125b.

¹⁰⁸ Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 41, 50, 84, 87, 395. The three manuscripts are Kirkuk (Vosté) 39, Diyarbakır (Scher) 73, and Mārdīn (Scher) 43.

¹⁰⁹ Chabot, “Jérusalem,” 107. This is not the famous fourteenth-century author ‘Abdīshō‘ b. Brīkhā of Nisibis, of course.

¹¹⁰ Paris BN Syr. 369, f. 106b, dated 12 April 1808 AG / 1497.

¹¹¹ Jerusalem Greek Patriarchate Syr. 12, f. 1a.

¹¹² Woods, *Aqqūyunlu*, 88.

¹¹³ BL Add. 7177, f. 321a.

¹¹⁴ Paris BN Syr. 369, ff. 106a–b.

Mār Āwgēn, in which scribes copied two surviving manuscripts, dated 1759 AG / 1448 and 1797 AG / 1486.¹²² Mār Āwgēn monastery also provided the monks whom Catholicos Shem‘ōn consecrated as bishops for India in 1811 AG / 1499–1500.¹²³ A life of Mār ‘Azzīzā seems to indicate a monastery dedicated to this saint in the village of Zarnī in the Jīlū district of the Hakkārī mountains in 1760 AG / 1449, although it might have been merely the village church with a residence attached.¹²⁴ Manuscript colophons mention the monasteries of Mār Sargīs and of Mār Gabriel outside Mosul, of Mār Qūryāqōs by the village of Bātnāyā north of Mosul, and of Mār Sabrīshō‘ outside Erbil.¹²⁵ The anonymous continuator of Bar ‘Ebroyo’s world chronicle mentions an East Syrian monastery dedicated to Mār Dādā in the village of Sīdōs, near Tabriz.¹²⁶ Although funeral instructions are given for nuns in fifteenth-century manuscripts, no fifteenth-century nuns are attested, although it is not clear whether this is due to a lack of evidence or a lack of convents.

Some monasteries that later achieved greater prominence already existed in the fifteenth century. One monastery, dedicated to Rabban Hōrmīzd, overlooked Alqōsh, 35 miles north of Mosul; inscriptions record the restoration of its entrance in the fifteenth century, as well as the burial of Catholicos Shem‘ōn there in 1497.¹²⁷ The Rabban Hōrmīzd monastery was a frequent patriarchal residence during the next three centuries.¹²⁸ Four more monasteries are attested in the first decade of the sixteenth century, all in the western regions of the geographical distribution of the Church of the East: Mār Khūdhāhwī and Mār Yōhannān outside Nisibis, Mār Yōhannān the Egyptian outside the city Jazīra, and Mār

¹²² Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 46.

¹²³ Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, 1: 590–91.

¹²⁴ Jean M. Fiey, “Saint ‘Azzīza et son village de Zérīni,” *Le Muséon* 79 (1966): 431. Murrevan den Berg noted that village churches could serve as monasteries: Murrevan den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 91.

¹²⁵ Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 170, 204, 232, 394; Addai Scher, *Catalogue des manuscrits syriaques et arabes conservés dans la bibliothèque épiscopale de Séert* (Mosul: Imprimerie des pères dominicains, 1905), 61. It is unclear whether the monastery of Mār Qūryāqōs mentioned in BL Or. 4399, f. 579a, is the same Mār Qūryāqōs located in Bātnāyā or whether it is located in the nearby village of Talkēpē, where the patron’s father was chief. The name of the village was originally contained in BL Or. 4399, but is now lost.

¹²⁶ Gregory Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abū’l Faraj, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, Commonly Known as Bar Hebraeus*, trans. E. A. Wallis Budge (London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1932), vol. II: xlvi; Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 323.

¹²⁷ Vosté, “Rabban Hormizd,” 274, 283–84.

¹²⁸ Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 259.

Ya'qōbh the Recluse outside Si'ird.¹²⁹ Some of these were likely already functioning in the later fifteenth century.

Monasteries also served as nodes to connect distant regions of the Church of the East, through the monks and scribes who passed through or came to reside in them. A priest named Nīsān of Erbil copied a manuscript in the monastery of Mār Āwgēn outside Nisibis in 1759 AG / 1448,¹³⁰ while in 1785 AG / 1474 the priest Īshō' of Hakkārī had come down from the mountains to copy a manuscript in the "monastery" (really a village church) of Mār Qūryāqōs in Bāṭnāyā north of Mosul.¹³¹ The monastery of Rabban Hōrmīzd in the Mosul plain attracted a monk named Rabban David from Salmās, northwest of Lake Ūrmī, as well as a group of builders from a village in the Hakkārī mountains for some construction work in 1796 AG / 1485.¹³² In 1785 AG / 1474 a Syriac Orthodox monk even used this East Syrian monastic network to infiltrate the monastery of Mār Dādā in Sīdōs, a village near Tabriz, by posing as a monk from the city of Nisibis, which indicates that one could rely upon a certain amount of exchange between monasteries.¹³³ Other scribal relocations did not involve monasteries: as indicated above, Metropolitan 'Abdīshō' of Nisibis was probably present in Āmid in 1458, while the deacon Ḥabīb of Āmid copied a manuscript in Si'ird in 1788 AG / 1477.¹³⁴

Nonecclesiastical leaders of the Church of the East are only infrequently attested in the fifteenth century, and mostly in village contexts. The wealthiest urban laypeople within the Church of the East probably exercised some local influence, of which perhaps the Baghdad physician 'Abd al-Masīh employed by the Qarāqūyunlū ruler Shāh Muḥammad

¹²⁹ Ibid., 43, 84; Addai Scher, "Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques et arabes conservés dans la bibliothèque de l'évêché chaldéen de Mardin," *Revue des Bibliothèques* 18 (1908): 73; Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, 1: 592. The monastery of Mār Āḥā the Egyptian outside the city Jazīra is attested after 1528 in a number of manuscripts: Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 102, 115–16.

¹³⁰ Diyarbakır (Scher) 54 [HMML CCM 308], ff. 220a–b.

¹³¹ Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 232.

¹³² Vosté, "Rabban Hormizd," 274–75. Vosté assumes the mention of builders predates the reconstruction of the entrance by Rabban David of Salmās in 1485, but the verb used "to build" (*bnā*) can equally mean "to rebuild." Instead, the two inscriptions flank the entrance, one giving the date and the other naming the current catholicos-patriarch, and they should be probably read as a coordinated pair. Wilmshurst implicitly interprets the inscriptions in this manner: Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 259.

¹³³ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xlvi.

¹³⁴ Kirkuk (Vosté) 39; Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 55, 93.

was one.¹³⁵ An account of the life of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh (d. 1493) mentions the “great men” (*rawrbhānē*) of the “cursed house of Nestorius” in Nisibis.¹³⁶ Half a century later, a group of seven East Syrian urban nobles in the city of Āmid joined with eight priests to purchase a manuscript for the church of Mār Pethyōn.¹³⁷ Throughout the fifteenth century, every city with a substantial East Syrian population would likely have had lay leaders who exercised a certain influence on the running of the churches in the cities.

The leaders of East Syrian village society were the “chiefs” (*rēshānē*).¹³⁸ It is likely that the status of “chief” was hereditary within certain families, although direct confirmation is lacking for East Syrian nobles of the fifteenth century. The anonymous scribe who continued Bar ‘Ebroyo’s world chronicle mentions a (Syriac Orthodox) Chief ‘Īsā, the son of Chief Malko of Bēth Sbhīrīno in Tūr ‘Abdīn, in the early fifteenth century, which demonstrates a hereditary chieftainship in a neighboring Christian minority.¹³⁹ Within the Church of the East itself in the following century, a Chief Salmō, son of Chief Abrāhām, named in an East Syrian manuscript dated 1856 AG / 1545, also gives an indication that the status of chief was hereditary.¹⁴⁰

The noble families were sources of patronage at this period.¹⁴¹ All six manuscripts from the fifteenth century whose colophons mention

¹³⁵ Abū al-Maḥāsīn Yūsuf Ibn Taghribirdī, *al-Manḥal al-ṣāfi wa-al-mustawfā ba’d al-wāfi*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn (Cairo: al-Hay’a al-Miṣriyya al-‘Āmma lil-Kitāb, 1984), 11: 183; al-Ghīyāth, *al-Tārīkh al-Ghīyāthī*, 252. Dā’ūd b. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī also mentioned two contemporary Christian physicians, Metropolitan Yaḥyā b. Bu’ūnā (d. 821 AH / 1418–1419) and his brother Ibrāhīm b. Bu’ūnā (d. 835 AH / 1431–1432): Berlin orient. quart. 1068, f. 111a. The sources do not specify the denominational affiliation of these physicians.

¹³⁶ Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, f. 85a.

¹³⁷ Diyarbakır (Scher) 38 [HMML CCM 139], f. 496b.

¹³⁸ In the fifteenth century itself, only three chiefs are named with villages: Chief Mattā of Talkēpē and Chief Ḥasan of Tal Zqīpā, both villages outside Mosul, and Chief Denḥā of Ṭālnā in the Hakkārī mountains: Berlin orient. quart. 801, f. 48b; BL Or. 4399, f. 579b; BL Add. 7174, f. 95a, 206a; Isho’dad of Merv, *Commentaries*, V, 1: 180. Two additional chiefs, Shem’ōn and Gewargīs, are named without places of residence: Cambridge Add. 1965, f. 257b; Mārdīn (Scher) 13 [HMML CCM 72], f. 189b.

¹³⁹ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, xxxviii, f. 195a.

¹⁴⁰ Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 118–19.

¹⁴¹ The colophons do not speak of the functions of chiefs apart from this patronage, but they may be presumed to have functioned much as the town and village *ru’asā* studied in Jürgen Paul, “Local Lords or Rural Notables? Some Remarks on the Ra’īs in Twelfth Century Eastern Iran,” in *Medieval Central Asia and the Persianate World: Iranian Tradition and Islamic Civilisation*, ed. A. C. S. Peacock and D. G. Tor (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 174–209. Conversely, patronage should perhaps be added to the functions that Paul discusses for the earlier period.

this period: “from the endemic warfare and constantly switching alliances within a tribal confederation, to the personal and unstructured rule of a nomad sovereign. This seems to be a government of overlapping structures and undefined institutions, in which personality and opportunity are the determining factors.”¹⁵¹ Even within al-Jazīra and Iraq, the population was partitioned among different linguistic and religious groups, and even Christians within a single linguistic category were further divided over which religious hierarchies they would acknowledge. But this landscape of local power and demographic diversity was the familiar world of the fifteenth-century Church of the East, with its ecclesiastical hierarchy, lay elites, and monastic networks. To further understand how this particular minority functioned in “Islamic society,” we must turn to how the various Christian subject populations related both with their Muslim rulers and with their neighbors of different religious groups.

¹⁵¹ Manz emphasizes that “highly personal” government does not preclude system: Manz, *Rule of Tamerlane*, 19.

Muslim Lords and Their Christian Flocks

In the spring of 1486, Sultan Ya‘qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan faced a difficult situation in Tabriz.¹ A Muslim soldier named Maḥdī had confronted Khōja Mirak‘, an Armenian merchant, and demanded that he convert to Islam. When the Armenian refused, the soldier killed and beheaded him. Thereupon the murdered merchant’s relatives demanded the soldier’s death in retribution, prompting Sultan Ya‘qūb not only to execute the killer but also to hand over his severed head for them to kick around the streets of Tabriz. This action shocked the urban Muslim elites, some of whom no doubt knew the *ḥadīth* prohibiting the execution of a Muslim for killing a non-Muslim, and they turned the soldier’s funeral into a protest.² After the Āqqūyunlū ruler executed the protest’s spiritual leader that evening, the following day he faced a riot. He commanded his troops to plunder the city in retribution, but thereafter he left Tabriz and spent little time within the city. The Türkmen ruler and the Muslim citizens of Tabriz evidently held different views of the place of Armenians in society, expressed here in the penalties expected to follow a fatal altercation between a Christian and a Muslim.³

This surprising story of a Muslim ruler avenging a Christian subject against the wishes of the urban Muslim elites reveals the need for

¹ This narrative is given briefly in Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 141. To the sources that he cites may be added a few Armenian colophons: L. S. Khach‘ikyan, *Tasnhingerord dari hay-eren dzeragreri hishatakaranner* (Yerevan: Haykakan S. S. R. Gitut‘yunneri Akademiayi Hratarakzut‘yun, 1955), vol. III: 80–82, 109.

² Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *The Translation of the Meanings of Sahīb Al-Bukhārī: Arabic–English* (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 1997), vol. IV: 177; vol. IX: 35–36, 40–41.

³ The difference may also align with a difference in *madhhab* between the ruler and the citizens of Tabriz, since only the Ḥanafī *madhhab* executes Muslims who murder *dhimmīs*: Antoine Fattal, *Le Statut légal des non-musulmans en pays d’Islam* (Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1958), 114–16.

a nuanced analysis of the place of Christian populations in “Islamic” societies, based on documentary evidence as much as theoretical norms. Scholarship on Christians in medieval Islamic society has focused on the so-called “Pact of ‘Umar” and other discriminatory regulations, which were developed primarily by *‘ulamā* and a few early caliphs.⁴ The ‘Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil (d. 247 AH / 861) was regarded by Tritton, and more recently by Levy-Rubin, as the last figure to develop new discriminatory prescriptions against non-Muslims.⁵ Scholars such as Tritton, Fattal, and Levy-Rubin disagree as to how much the Pact of ‘Umar was enforced in the period after al-Mutawakkil, but their studies agree that late medieval social practices are relevant solely for the purpose of evaluating the enforcement of what they regard as a sufficiently stable and known body of “law,” expounded in juristic treatises.⁶

In fact, however, the Pact of ‘Umar does not provide a helpful framework for understanding either the usual status or the conflicts in fifteenth-century Christians’ relationships with their Muslim rulers in al-Jazīra and Iraq. A few examples may make this point. All versions of the document prohibit church construction and repair, yet the frequency of construction projects increased within al-Jazīra and Iraq over the course of the fifteenth century.⁷ The Christians were to be distinct in clothing,

⁴ This historiographical point is also made by Sahner, “Christian Martyrs,” 16. For an alternative approach, though no less literary, see Charles L. Tieszen, *Cross Veneration in the Medieval Islamic World: Christian Identity and Practice under Muslim Rule* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2017).

⁵ A. S. Tritton, *The Caliphs and Their Non-Muslim Subjects* (London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1930), 4; Milka Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: From Surrender to Coexistence* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 100–4.

⁶ Although primarily concerned with culture and texts, Griffith’s summary of social development follows similar lines: Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque*, 15–17. More extensive work has been done on Jews under Islamic rule, although much of it still presumes the objectivity and stability of Pact of the ‘Umar from al-Mutawakkil’s time onward: Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton University Press, 1984), 24–51; Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634–1099* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), 139–63; Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, 52–74. Amnon Cohen, in a richly detailed study of a later period, does not discuss the Pact explicitly, but he refers occasionally to stable legal restrictions upon non-Muslims (*ahl al-dhimma*): Amnon Cohen, *Jewish Life under Islam: Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 1–2, 72–73, 82, 121–22, 138–39, 221, 223. By contrast, Yarbrough historicizes how the discourse of one discriminatory regulation developed: Yarbrough, “Islamizing the Islamic State.”

⁷ There are variations in versions of the Pact of ‘Umar, but these citations are from al-Ṭurṭūshī’s version translated by Mark R. Cohen, “What Was the Pact of ‘Umar? A Literary-Historical Study,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 23 (1999): 106–8. For the increasing frequency of church construction, see below.

yet different fifteenth-century rulers introduced or removed the distinctive blue turban.⁸ The Pact of ‘Umar forbade bells and “clappers” (Ar. *nāqūs*, pl. *nawāqīs*), yet in certain locales, including the imperial capital at Tabriz, monasteries were understood and perhaps allowed to have bells until after 1470. In al-Ṭurṭūshī’s version, ‘Umar prohibited redeeming people captured by the Muslims, yet in fifteenth-century Mesopotamia, this very practice generated revenue for the Muslim armies.⁹ There does not seem to have been any fifteenth-century ruler of al-Jazīra or Iraq who consistently enforced what scholars regard as the standard *dhimmī* regulations. The Āqqūyunlū sultan Uzun Ḥasan (d. 1477) enforced more of the Pact of ‘Umar than other fifteenth-century rulers, yet even during his reign church construction increased. As Becker wrote of a nineteenth-century Iran, “It is important to emphasize the social historical complexity of life in Urmia (and in many premodern Islamic empires): a strictly legal perspective alone misconstrues how Christians fit into Islamic society, because law was not as powerful in the past as it is for us today.”¹⁰

The lack of a consistent “dhimmitude” does not imply that society enjoyed a harmonious interreligious *convivencia*.¹¹ Far from it: the fifteenth century was exceptionally violent in this region, and other discriminatory regulations, not taken from the Pact of ‘Umar, were enforced. In theory, the Pact protected *dhimmīs*’ persons and possessions, yet passing armies repeatedly captured and plundered the sedentary population, with the threat of enslavement for any captives who were not redeemed.¹² While church buildings were not to be constructed, in theory they were also not to be demolished, yet destruction of churches was common in the fifteenth century. Three texts attest to a requirement that non-Muslims should drag their dead to burial, a regulation not included in the various

⁸ In earlier periods yellow or black were the colors assigned to Christians’ distinctive clothes. The use of different colors for Middle Eastern Christians’ distinctive clothing is noted by Tritton, *Non-Muslim Subjects*, 120–23; Ilse Lichtenstadter, “The Distinctive Dress of Non-Muslims in Islamic Countries,” *Historia Judaica* 5 (1943): 49.

⁹ See Chapter 3.

¹⁰ Becker, *Revival and Awakening*, 50.

¹¹ “Dhimmitude” is a neologism denoting legally mandated pervasive systemic discrimination against non-Muslims, popularized by Bat Ye’or (pseudonym) in several works, including Bat Ye’or, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude: Seventh–Twentieth Century* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996). For the historiography of both the “myth of an interfaith utopia” under Islamic rule and the “countermyth” of “the neo-lachrymose conception of Jewish-Arab history,” see Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, 3–8, 11–12.

¹² This is discussed in Chapter 3.

versions of the Pact of ‘Umar.¹³ Finally, Muslim jurists understood the *jizya*, the head-tax on non-Muslim subjects, to be the price of toleration,¹⁴ yet the actual tax structure of fifteenth-century al-Jazīra included discriminatory taxes in addition to the *jizya*. The Pact of ‘Umar cannot explain the actual discriminatory practices of the period, and the lack of an agreed-upon framework does not imply peaceful coexistence, but merely the absence of a script, which led more often to specific violence than systemic discrimination.

This chapter argues that, instead of the Pact of ‘Umar or any other set of discriminatory practices putatively shared across “the Islamic world,” it was local rulers who determined the government’s treatment of Christians in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra, whether in the form of policy or as arbiters of disputes involving ecclesiastical hierarchies.¹⁵ This accords with the relative efficacy of local lords rather than distant sultans, as discussed in Chapter 1. In many cases the personal relationships between Christian leaders and Muslim sultans shaped the government’s decrees, and the fragmentation of political rule led to a parallel division of ecclesiastical hierarchies. Local and regional rulers took an active interest in the patriarchal

¹³ See fnn. 108, 111–12.

¹⁴ Thus, for example, Ibn Malak (d. 801 / 1398–1399), an Anatolian Ḥanafī *faqīh*, explained the exclusion of certain categories of people from *jizya* assessment, “because it is a substitute for fighting but [such individuals] are not part of the people [of fighting]” (لأنها خلف عن القتال وهم ليسوا من أهله): Princeton Garrett Islamic 3673Y, f. 275a. The notion of “tolerance,” and whether *dhimmī* regulations embody it, is discussed in greatest detail by Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 2003). Scholars have pointed out that, for medieval Muslims and Christians alike, tolerance in a modern sense was not valued: Lewis, *Jews of Islam*, 3–4; Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, xxii–xxiii, 3–8. Berend, studying religious diversity in medieval Hungary, indicated the analytical weakness of “tolerance” as a notion; she proposed considering instead strategies of inclusion and exclusion: Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims, and “Pagans” in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000–c. 1300* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 272.

¹⁵ A promising study of rulers’ role in Islamic law restricts its scope to how sultans’ adjudications affected the textual tradition of *fiqh*, primarily in the resolution of *ikhtilāf*: Miriam Hoexter, “Qāḍī, Muftī, and Ruler: Their Roles in the Development of Islamic Law,” in *Law, Custom, and Statute in the Muslim World: Studies in Honor of Aharon Layish*, ed. Ron Shaham (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 67–85. More broadly, Burak argues that post-Mongol dynasties developed “dynastic law” in the form of royal guidance for the development of a particular *madhhab*, emphasizing the interdependence of royal decrees (*qānūn*) and *sharī‘a*: Guy Burak, *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafī School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015). He also, however, cited evidence for late medieval perceptions of conflict between *qānūn* and *sharī‘a*, and he concluded that Ottoman imperial support is what made Muslim jurists’ prescriptions functional: *ibid.*, 18, 64, 218–20.

successions and jurisdictional boundaries of the different Christian populations under their authority, and provided a court of appeals for disputes involving the ecclesiastical hierarchies. Some rulers, especially early in the fifteenth century, even bestowed their patronage upon Christian officials, churches, or monasteries. The most consistent Muslim governmental policy with regard to the non-Muslim populations in the fifteenth century was taxation, but the tax systems employed were many and various: in addition to the *jizya* tax on non-Muslims, Christians were liable to additional taxes on priests and on church buildings. The discriminatory regulations on non-Muslims were applied only inconsistently for most of the fifteenth century, although they were to some degree standardized by Uzun Hasan after his conquest of the Qarāqūyunlū in the late 1460s. On the other hand, the reduction of intraregional warfare allowed an increase of church construction at the same time, often with the ruler's permission.

READING THE EVIDENCE: THE PERSPECTIVES OF RULERS
AND SUBJECTS

The fact that political power was primarily local or regional in extent in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra,¹⁶ and the frequency with which some cities changed hands, make it unwise to assume that the relations of political rulers with their Christian subjects were consistent or stable. Certain practices, such as additional taxation upon religious minorities, seem to have been very common, even as the specific details varied. Other systems, such as the wearing of distinctive clothing, were evidently not continuous in application. Some studies of "Muslim-Christian relations" are flawed by assuming that all Muslims interact with all Christians in uniform ways,¹⁷ which is demonstrably false. Different rulers have treated their Christian subjects very differently, and Armenian colophons are full of descriptions of this sultan or that emir as "good to Christians" or "persecuting Christians," even if such evaluations are of limited usefulness. These discontinuities force scholars to seek descriptive rather than prescriptive evidence for the highly contingent relations between Muslim rulers and Christian subjects.

¹⁶ See Chapter 1.

¹⁷ For example, Bat Ye'or, *Eastern Christianity Under Islam*. It is curious that Gil inferred from "the conservative character" of society in "those times" that eleventh-century sources could be applied to the entire period beginning with the seventh-century conquests without subsequent qualification: Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634–1099*, 139.

Unfortunately the uneven distribution of evidence means that we know more about certain rulers than others, and more about their interactions with certain Christian minorities than others. For example, the Armenian colophons provide us with the richest evidence about how different governors (but most frequently the Qarāqūyunlū and later Āqqūyunlū rulers of Tabriz) treated Armenians, a degree of detail not paralleled in other bodies of source material. On the other hand, the most explicit accounts of how rulers interacted with Christian patriarchs and church leaders are found in the anonymous continuation of Bar ʿEbroyo’s ecclesiastical chronicle, which pertains exclusively to Syriac Orthodox patriarchs and the Muslim rulers of Āmid, Ḥiṣn-Kayf, and Mārdīn. But there is no reason to assume that the confessional divisions that were very significant to ecclesiastical authors were also relevant to Muslim rulers. If we could demonstrate that most Muslim rulers in this region in the fifteenth century considered Christians as a single subject population,¹⁸ we would have a good case for generalizing the rulers’ interactions with one Christian minority to their treatment of other Christian populations as well. One cannot assume without argument that rulers would consider all Christian churches to be equal, and in certain periods that is demonstrably not the case, but it seems to be so for fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra.

The most direct evidence we have for how Muslim rulers conceptualized Christian subjects is from official documents issued by the rulers’ chanceries. A few dozen official firmans from Qarāqūyunlū and Āqqūyunlū rulers survive, seven of which clearly name Christians as the subjects of the documents. Of these, three are from the Qarāqūyunlū ruler Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf, and one survives from his son Ḥasan ʿAlī. The remaining three are from Āqqūyunlū rulers, one each from Uzun Ḥasan b. ʿAlī, his son Yaʿqūb, and his grandson Rustam b. Maqṣūd. The four edicts from the Qarāqūyunlū rulers refer to the Catholicos Ohanēs of the Caucasian Albanians and an Armenian vardapet, Shēmawon, as luminaries of “the

¹⁸ Amnon Cohen makes the point that sixteenth-century Ottoman authorities treated Jerusalem’s Jews as a single population, even as they were aware of differences between Rabbanites and Karaites, and between Sephardim and Ashkenazim: Amnon Cohen, *Jewish Life under Islam*, 6–8, 36, 54, 58. Cohen contrasts this Jewish unity with the Ottoman state’s distinctions among Christian denominations. But Masters presents “Ottoman official nonchalance” toward Middle Eastern Christian divisions, and points out the distinction between the words *milla*, used for Christians as a whole, and *ṯāʿifa*, used equally for any subdivision of Christians: Masters, *Christians and Jews*, 42, 61–64. Curiously, the mid sixteenth-century Ottoman *shaykh al-Islām*, Ebussuūd Efendi, evidently identified Jews and Armenians by their communal labels, but a Greek or Slavic Christian simply as *kāfir*: *ibid.*, 29. This may indicate not specific sectarian animosity, but a default variety of infidel.

people of the Messiah” (*āl-i Masīh*).¹⁹ The first document also mentions the Armenians of the monastery of Gandzasar, but puts them under the authority of “the exalted one of the people of the Messiah, Ohanēs Catholicos, from the region of Aghwān.”²⁰ On the other hand, the same edict provides a terminology for discussing divisions between varieties of Christian: the monks of Gandzasar are required to obey Catholicos Ohanēs “in the matter of their *madhhab*.”²¹ The use of the Arabic term *madhhab*, which more often denoted socially acceptable disagreements within Sunni Islam but here refers to Christian divisions, seems to downplay the distinctions between denominations. Instead, the firman emphasizes the label “the people of the Messiah.” An awareness of difference need not imply the ascription of significance to that difference.

Curiously, the three Āqqūyunlū firmans do not include any term describing the segment of the population to which the recipients belong, merely identifying the recipients as priests.²² In light of this lack, our evidence for how Āqqūyunlū rulers viewed their Christian subjects is more indirect than that for their Qarāqūyunlū rivals. The clearest evidence is an Armenian colophon from 1449 recounting the wonderful accomplishments of the Armenian bishop of Āmid, Mkrtich‘ Naghash, who among other successes secured from either Qarā ‘Uthmān or his son Sulṭān Ḥamza the right for non-Muslims to lift their dead from the ground instead of dragging them to burial as they had previously been required to do.²³ The colophon author makes the point that this privilege extended not just to the Armenian Christians, but also to the Syriac Orthodox, the “Nestorians,” and the Jews. We might infer that the Āqqūyunlū ruler in question made a consistent policy for all Christians and Jews regardless of confessional affiliation.²⁴ Indeed, the inclusion of Jews suggests that the operative social category was “non-Muslim” rather than “Christian,”

¹⁹ Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Farmānbā*, 36, 53, 56.

²⁰ مفخر آل مسیح اهانیس کتیباکوس از ولایت اغوان: *ibid.*, 36. This Catholicos Ohanēs is named in two Armenian colophons from 1464 and 1466: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 285, 289. The monastery at Gandzasar is the source of an Armenian colophon of 1417, which mentions Ohanēs’ predecessor as the Albanian Catholicos Karapet: *ibid.*, 138.

²¹ در باب مذهب ایشان: Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Farmānbā*, 37.

²² *Ibid.*, 78, 93, 107–8. The firman of Ya‘qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan uses the term “Armenians,” but only to refer to the inhabitants of the monastery of Gandzasar in Caucasian Albania.

²³ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 212–13. See below for a discussion of this discriminatory regulation.

²⁴ The same colophon asserts that Qarā ‘Uthmān gave Mkrtich‘ Naghash jurisdiction over “all his Christian subjects,” but it is not clear if in this context “Christians” is used in the narrower sense of “Armenians,” or whether it would include Syriac Orthodox or even the Church of the East: *ibid.*, 210.

but in either case the divisions between Christian groups were not considered relevant for the framing of this decree. On the rare occasions that Āqqūyunlū court histories refer to Christian subjects, it refers to them as “Christians,” “unbelievers,” or similar terms that do not indicate which denomination is intended.²⁵ Although a historian’s lack of specificity need not imply the monarch’s generalization, the histories were tailored for the rulers as an audience, and this may be the closest we can get to the Āqqūyunlū sultans’ perspectives. It would appear that the Türkmen rulers did not treat Christian subjects differently based on those subjects’ various intra-Christian confessional affiliations.

Can these arguments be generalized to other rulers beyond the Qarāqūyunlū and the Āqqūyunlū Türkmen confederations? The Armenian historian T’ovma Metsop’ets’i reports a similar neglect of Christian differences on the part of the Timurid ruler Ulugh Bey, who decided to eliminate all the Christians of Samarqand as vengeance for the seduction of a Muslim woman by one “Nestorian.”²⁶ Metsop’ets’i repeats this story on the authority of an Armenian bishop, although it is not clear how much this informant knew of developments in far-off Samarqand. On the other hand, the narrative reflects the expectation that Muslim rulers would punish Christians of all ecclesiastical affiliations for the sins of one “heretic.” Although this evidence is slight, there is no evidence from this period and region that any Muslim ruler favored one denomination or treated different Christian minorities differently. One might suggest that an Armenian colophon’s boasting over Iskandar b. Qarā Yūsuf’s destruction of the Armenian Catholic fortress of Mākū in 1426 indicated favoritism of one variety of Christians over another,²⁷ but Iskandar’s motivation for taking the fortress was likely not the dyophysite theology of those who controlled it. Mākū was instead part of his campaign to bring the mountain fortresses under his direct control, also attacking Khlat’, Ostan, Van, and Bidlīs in the 1420s. Christian theology was irrelevant to how most fifteenth-century emirs in al-Jazīra and Iraq conceptually organized society; more relevant were geographical, political, and military considerations.²⁸

²⁵ “Christians” (*naṣārā*): Tīhrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, vol. I: 136. “Unbelievers” (*kuffār*), “opponents of religion” (*mukhālīfān-i dīn*), and “enemies of religion” (*dushmanān-i dīn*): *ibid.*, I: 12, 13. A later Āqqūyunlū history prefers *dhimmī’ān*: Faḍlullāh b. Rūzbihān Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Tārīkh-i ‘Ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, ed. John E. Woods, trans. Vladimir Minorsky (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1992), 281, 286.

²⁶ Metsop’ets’i, *Patmagrut’yun*, 34–36.

²⁷ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 171–72.

²⁸ Masters made a similar point about “official inattention to Christian religious differences” in the early centuries of Ottoman rule: Masters, *Christians and Jews*, 61–65.

If all varieties of Christians were interchangeable in the eyes of their Muslim rulers, our sources make very clear that not all rulers were equal from the perspective of their Christian subjects. The Armenian sources are full of statements about how well or poorly the rulers treated the (Armenian) Christian population, yet these evaluations have limited value for historians. Many rulers receive conflicting reports from different scribes. The Qarāqūyunlū ruler Qarā Yūsuf was praised in a colophon from 1407 for freeing the Armenians “from the iniquitous [tax] collectors, who had subdued and enslaved many nations speaking various languages,” while another Armenian scribe, in a colophon from the same year, called him “the new Antichrist” who “brought death to the Christians.”²⁹ One colophon complains of Qarā Yūsuf’s son Iskandar as “the second Ašrap’ [Čübānid Malik Ashraf] to us Armenians and the destroyer of the churches,” invoking the memory of a persecutor of the previous century, while another colophon praises Iskandar as “beneficent toward our Armenian nation.”³⁰ The Āqqūyunlū ruler Qarā ‘Uthmān was criticized for the fact that his troops “plundered, and they carried off into captivity as many as they could, and they spilled the blood of many in our country,” while a later colophon praised him for having “shown great love for the Christians and the ecclesiastics.”³¹ Clearly these evaluations of Muslim rulers do not reflect consistent region-wide policies, but different local experiences contingent upon time and geography. Negative evaluations typically reflect the experience of being plundered by the ruler’s army, while positive evaluations often stem from local peace or permission to build churches. In other words, these evaluations reflect very local conditions and cannot be generalized.³² Instead, to assess how the Christian minorities of this region generally interacted with their rulers we must examine the more explicit and detailed descriptions of their encounters.

²⁹ The positive evaluation was written in the monastery of Yewstat’ē (Tat’ew) in Siwnik’, while the latter came from the city of Khīzān, south of Lake Van: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 129, 130.

³⁰ Both colophons are from 1425, the complaint from Dzagavank’ in Ayrarat and the praise from the village of Agulis in Siwnik’: *ibid.*, 168–69.

³¹ Both of these colophons come from monasteries in K’ajberunik’, northeast of Lake Van, the complaint from 1425 and the praise from 1435: *ibid.*, 168, 182.

³² John Woods asserts, based on such statements, that Qarā ‘Uthmān and his son Sulṭān Ḥamza treated Christians well, while Qarā ‘Uthmān’s other son Shaykh Ḥasan and his grandson Uzun Ḥasan treated Christians less well: Woods, *Aqqūyunlu*, 57, 106, 249 n. 43. Woods notes the contradictory evaluations of both Qarā ‘Uthmān and Uzun Ḥasan, but he argues that the bulk of evidence argues for Qarā ‘Uthmān’s favorable treatment of Christians and Uzun Ḥasan’s harsher policies: *ibid.*, 247 n. 157, 260 n. 83. I do not think this evidence can be averaged in this manner.

MUSLIM RULERS AND CHRISTIAN SUBJECTS: PERSONAL CONTACTS

One thing the rulers of this region did not do was ignore the Christians or the ecclesiastical hierarchies that governed them. Yet the relationships between Muslim sultans and Christian subjects in the late medieval period were often not a matter of policy but personality. Papademetriou noted that the early Ottomans “did not have a standard or structured way to manage their relationships with the clergy of the Greek Orthodox Church.” Instead, “[t]he nature of the relationship between the Church and the Ottoman state was basically ad hoc, though its financial value was very clear.”³³ Similarly, the Türkmen rulers of fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra interacted with Christian subjects and leaders in a variety of ways, and shaped their policies in light of those personal relationships.

As in earlier periods, Muslim sultans invested Christian patriarchs with authority over their respective churches.³⁴ The firman of Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf on behalf of Catholicos Ohanēs of the Caucasian Albanians in 866 AH / 1462 confirms his authority over the Christians in the region of Aghwān, and shows that issues of ecclesiastical jurisdiction were matters of concern for the Qarāqūyunlū ruler of Tabriz.³⁵ An Armenian colophon of the same year, 911 AA / 1462, reports that Jahānshāh gave Catholicos Zak‘aria III of Aght‘amar a *khil‘a*, a robe given as an honor, as did Jahānshāh’s foster-brother Maḥmūd Bey slightly later, and “they also granted him the [relic of the] right hand of Surb Grigor Lusaworič‘ [St. Gregory the Illuminator], as well as the title of patriarch.”³⁶ In 1462 Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf also deposed Catholicos Grigor X of Ējmiatsin and attempted to unite his patriarchal throne to that of Catholicos Zak‘aria III of Aght‘amar.³⁷ A manuscript dated 28 May 1774 AG / 1463 is the only source to mention Catholicos Ēlīyā of the Church of the East, and the proximity of these dates may suggest that the Qarāqūyunlū ruler was rewriting ecclesiastical jurisdictions at that time.³⁸

³³ Tom Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan: Power, Authority, and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman Centuries* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 66.

³⁴ Tritton, *Non-Muslim Subjects*, 86–88; Fattal, *Le Statut légal*, 214–18. Both Fatimid and ‘Abbasid caliphs likewise invested Jewish religious leaders: Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 67, 88–99.

³⁵ Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Farmānbā*, 36–37. Already in 1456 an Armenian colophon named Ohanēs as catholicos of the Albanians, so this firman did not establish him in office: Khach’ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, II: 66. But catholicoi of the Caucasian Albanians appear so rarely in Armenian colophons that we do not know when Ohanēs began his tenure.

³⁶ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 272, 274–75.

³⁷ See fn. 45 below.

³⁸ Mārḏīn (Macomber) 35,16 [HMML CCM 221], f. 88a.

Jahānshāh was not the only Muslim ruler investing Christian patriarchs, sometimes with divisive results. The anonymous continuation of Bar 'Ebroyo's ecclesiastical chronicle refers on two occasions to the Ayyubid Sultan al-Malik Khalaf of Ḥiṣn-Kayf giving "a robe of honor" to the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Ṭūr 'Abdīn, Iṣhū' 'Inwardoyo, in 1455.³⁹ Nor was this investiture merely *pro forma*: the same anonymous chronicler explicitly stated that in 1412 the Christians offered a ruler of Mārdīn the choice between two possible successors to Patriarch Ignatius Abrohom b. Garībh.⁴⁰ Later Sultan Ibrāhīm Bey⁴¹ of Mārdīn adjudicated the succession of Patriarch Khalaf of Mārdīn in 1484, when two parties formed around different candidates for the patriarchate. One party bribed Ibrāhīm Bey, and the ruler commanded the ordination of their nominee.⁴² Patriarch Nūḥ of Mārdīn sought to preclude competition by being invested as "Patriarch of all Sūryoyē" by two rulers, Qāsim b. Jahāngīr Āqqūyunlū of Mārdīn and the emir of Ḥiṣn-Kayf.⁴³ Both earlier and later, under the 'Abbasid and Ottoman dynasties, political unity limited the number of Muslim rulers to which aspiring Christian patriarchs could appeal for investiture. By contrast, the political fragmentation of the late medieval period facilitated ecclesiastical decentralization and schism, as rival rulers invested competing patriarchs, or bishops exercised autonomy under a different sultan from their patriarch.⁴⁴

In addition to choosing new patriarchs, the rulers sometimes removed an unwanted Christian leader, or even attempted to suppress patriarchates or establish new ones. The most dramatic example of this occurred in 1462, when Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf, the Qarāqūyunlū ruler, intervened forcefully in an Armenian ecclesiastical rivalry. Two Armenian patriarchs

³⁹ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 298–99, 302–3.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 494–95. The "sultan," unnamed in the text, was probably the Qarāqūyunlū ruler Pīr Būdāq b. Qarā Yūsuf, who minted coins in Mārdīn in that year: Ilisch, "der Artuqidenherrschaft," 156 n. 7. His father Qarā Yūsuf retained the effective power, but Stephen Album noted the latter's reluctance to adopt the title "sultan": Album, "Silver Coins," 131, 153. Alternatively, the Syriac chronicler may not have observed strict protocol, and may instead have referred to the governor on behalf of the Qarāqūyunlū, perhaps the Ināq Maḥmūd named by Ṭīhrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, I: 32.

⁴¹ The identity of this ruler of Mārdīn is not fully clear. Two possibilities mentioned by John Woods are Ibrāhīm b. Jahāngīr, the first cousin of Sultan Ya'qūb, or Ibrāhīm b. Dana Khalīl, known as Ayba Sultān, who later put Rustam b. Maqṣūd on the throne: Woods, *Aqqūyunlu*, 208, 210.

⁴² Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 304–5.

⁴³ Ibid., 502–3. On this patriarch, see H. G. B. Teule, "Nuḥ the Lebanese," *GEDSH*.

⁴⁴ Papademetriou noted the same among Greek bishops: Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan*, 76, 101.

ruled simultaneously in the territory under Qarāqūyūnlū rule, one based on the island of Aght'amar in Lake Van and the other further north, at Ējmiatsin near the town of Vagharshapat. Jahānshāh loaned an army to Catholicos Zak'aria III of Aght'amar with which to depose and expel Catholicos Grigor X of Ējmiatsin, attempting to unify the two patriarchates under Zak'aria.⁴⁵ The patriarchates did not remain united, however, for Zak'aria died two years later, and two successors were chosen, one for Aght'amar and one for Ējmiatsin.⁴⁶ Grigor X continued to be regarded as the legitimate catholicos by some scribes as late as 1468.⁴⁷ In spite of the limited lasting effects of Jahānshāh's policy, here we see a Qarāqūyūnlū Türkmen ruler deposing one patriarch and attempting to rewrite ecclesiastical jurisdictions.

Other Muslim rulers were more successful in ridding themselves of unwanted Christian leaders. Sulaymān, the Ayyubid sultan of Ḥiṣn-Kayf, deposed Patriarch Īshū' b. Mūṭo of Tūr 'Abdīn in the late 1410s for failing to protect the vizier's son, who had been left in the patriarch's custody while the vizier went on the Ḥajj to Mecca.⁴⁸ Īshū' b. Mūṭo's successor, Mas'ūd Ṣalaḥoyo, was wounded by Kurdish horse-thieves in 1420, avenged by soldiers sent by the Ayyubid sultan, and then poisoned by Sulaymān himself to respond to complaints that the sultan of Ḥiṣn-Kayf was favoring the Christians, according to the anonymous chronicler.⁴⁹ As the dust was settling after the contested Syriac Orthodox patriarchal

⁴⁵ The Qarāqūyūnlū ruler's role in the matter is narrated in one colophon from 1462 and alluded to in another: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 272, 277. A 1463 note copied into a manuscript from 1635 is the only source that explicitly states that Grigor X was deposed: Khach'ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, III: 440. Sanjian's appendix gives the year of Zak'aria's takeover of Ējmiatsin as 1460: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 376. However, a colophon from 1463 dates itself in the second year of the catholicosate of Zak'aria III, while one from the following year mentions his death after two years as catholicos of Ējmiatsin: *ibid.*, 280, 286. These two colophons specify the date as 1462.

⁴⁶ A 1464 colophon reports both the death of Zak'aria III and the succession of Step'annos IV, although the fact that Step'annos was at Aght'amar is unclear before a colophon from 1466: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 286, 290. But a different 1464 colophon mentions Catholicos Aristakēs at Vagharshapat, i.e. Ējmiatsin: *ibid.*, 284, 288.

⁴⁷ Six colophons from 1463 to 1468 name Grigor as catholicos of Ējmiatsin: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 281, 282, 286, 287, 289, 293. It is unlikely that news of his deposition had not reached Van, where a colophon named him as catholicos in 1463, or even the village of Eghivard, just 10 miles from Ējmiatsin (see Map 5), where a scribe mentioned his pontificate in 1466. Because these places would have heard of such significant nearby events, it is more likely that these scribes rejected Grigor X's dismissal and continued to regard him as the legitimate patriarch even after he was driven from Ējmiatsin.

⁴⁸ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 294–95.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 296–97.

election of 1484, Sultan Ibrāhīm Bey of Mārdīn offered to make the rejected candidate a patriarch as well, as a rival to the sultan's earlier choice for the office.⁵⁰ Although the candidate refused the title in that case, it shows a clear willingness of Muslim rulers to adjudicate ecclesiastical disputes. The rulers may have been more successful in removing a patriarch who had become offensive than at restructuring entire patriarchates, but there was in any case typically less reason to undertake the latter.⁵¹ A Christian leader who wished to remain in office needed to remain in the good graces of the Muslim ruler.

Local rulers and emirs also provided a court of justice for Christian leaders. Studies of non-Muslims using Muslim legal forums have usually emphasized the *qāḍī* courts, and while that is lightly attested in fifteenth-century sources, the evidence speaks more frequently of appeals to Muslim rulers.⁵² When the Arabs living beside a Syriac Orthodox monastery made trouble for the monks, Patriarch Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh appealed to the ruler of Mārdīn.⁵³ Later the same patriarch traveled to Sultan Ya'qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan in Tabriz for vindication against some Kurds who had destroyed a church in Ma'dan.⁵⁴ This practice of patriarchs appealing to the rulers is probably implicit in a Syriac colophon dated 29 November 1789 AG / 1477 that credits Catholicos Shem'ōn with contending on behalf of his flock and emerging victorious, enabling him to reopen some churches that had been closed.⁵⁵ Another colophon from seven years later, which mentions

⁵⁰ Ibid., 306–7.

⁵¹ An Armenian colophon from 1449 asserts that Qarā 'Uthmān Āqqūyunlū put all Christians under the jurisdiction of the Armenian bishop of Āmid, Mkr̄tich' Naghsh: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 210. But it is not clear whether the colophon's use of "Christians" refers only to the Armenians or includes Christians of other churches; nor is it clear what sort of jurisdiction is referred to.

⁵² For a general discussion of the topic for an earlier period, see Uriel I. Simonsohn, *A Common Justice: The Legal Allegiances of Christians and Jews under Early Islam* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011). *Qāḍī* court records were central sources for Amnon Cohen, *Jewish Life under Islam; Masters, Christians and Jews*. For a discussion of Jewish appeals to the Fatimid court in Cairo, see Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 11, 88–99, 166–68, 183, 228–29, 293–96, 311–13, 316–20. For a further discussion of the use of *qāḍī* courts by Christians, see Chapter 3.

⁵³ Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, f. 86a. For a recent scholarly interpretation of this episode, see Andrew Palmer, "John Bar Šayallāh and the Syriac Orthodox Community under Aqqyunlu Rule in the Late Fifteenth Century," in *Christians and Muslims in Dialogue in the Islamic Orient of the Middle Ages*, ed. Martin Tamcke (Beirut: Ergon Verlag, 2007), 202–3.

⁵⁴ Cambridge. Dd. 3.8¹, f. 87a.

⁵⁵ Vatican sir. 186, f. 240b. Identical text is found in a colophon dated 1800 AG / 1489, unfortunately damaged at its beginning: BL Or. 4399, f. 579a.

the rebuilding of churches at this time, is conspicuously the only surviving fifteenth-century East Syrian colophon that names a non-Christian ruler.⁵⁶ At the end of the century the Āqqūyunlū ruler Rustam b. Maqṣūd issued a firman in favor of the Armenian catholicos at Aght‘amar against his rival at Ējmiatsin, and we may presume that the prelate had requested it.⁵⁷ Christian patriarchs were often able to obtain the sultan’s ear.

The secular ruler also provided a court of appeals for other Christian bishops, sometimes against the patriarchs. For example, the bishops of Tūr ‘Abdīn complained to the secular authorities of Ḥiṣn-Kayf about Patriarch Mas‘ūd Zazoyo in 1494, leading to the patriarch’s arrest and imprisonment.⁵⁸ In the same affair, the Āqqūyunlū sultan of Mārdīn, Qāsim b. Jahāngīr, actively brokered the ecclesiastical reconciliation between the Syriac Orthodox bishops of Tūr ‘Abdīn and Patriarch Nūḥ Pūnīqoyo of Mārdīn.⁵⁹ Earlier in the century a Syriac Orthodox bishop had apparently appealed directly to Mīrānshāh b. Tīmūr to spare his village of Arbū, and the request was granted.⁶⁰ Two surviving Qarāqūyunlū firmans also confirm the authority of an Armenian vardapet over the monastery of Tat‘ew and the duties of the territories under the monastery’s jurisdiction.⁶¹ Sultan Ya‘qūb’s execution of the Persian soldier who killed Khōja Mirak‘, with which this chapter opened, likewise shows the Muslim ruler as the dispenser of justice for his Christian as well as Muslim subjects.⁶² While nonecclesiastical Christian subjects likely appealed to Muslim rulers or governors when and how they could, the surviving sources do not mention the fact other than in this case.⁶³ These accounts make clear that

⁵⁶ BL Add. 7174, f. 321a. An additional note added to Vatican sir. 186, f. 241b, soon after its completion, mentions Uzun Ḥasan, but these are the only two fifteenth-century East Syrian manuscripts that name Muslim sovereigns.

⁵⁷ Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Farmānhā*, 107–8.

⁵⁸ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 500–1. The text designates the Muslim rulers “possessors” (مستبدون), which does not indicate what title they may have used for themselves.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 502–3.

⁶⁰ Mīrānshāh is referred to only as “the son of Tīmūr Khan”: Gregory Abū’l Faraj Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xxxvii.

⁶¹ The earlier firman is undated, but from Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf (r. 1438–1467), while the later one, dated 4 Ramaḍān 872 / 28 March 1468, is from his son Ḥasan ‘Alī: Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Farmānhā*, 53, 56–57.

⁶² Woods, *Aqqūyunlu*, 141.

⁶³ Unlike in the period studied by Simonsohn, there are no surviving complaints about Christians using Muslim courts in fifteenth-century al-Jazīra and Iraq, but on the other hand there are also no surviving discussions of the function of Christian courts: Simonsohn, *A Common Justice*, 17–19. Amnon Cohen likewise documented Jewish use of *qāḍī* courts in sixteenth-century Jerusalem: Amnon Cohen, *Jewish Life under Islam*, 110–27.

Muslim rulers acted as a court of appeals for the Christians, whether against Muslims or against other Christians.

The rulers' justice was hardly blind, however, and judicial decrees were just one of several mechanisms ensuring a steady stream of money from Christian ecclesiastical leaders to their Muslim sovereigns. As noted above, the leaders of Ḥiṣn-Kayf imprisoned Patriarch Mas'ūd Zazoyo of Ṭūr 'Abdīn in 1494, in response to the complaint of some of his bishops, and they demanded a ransom of 500 gold dinars.⁶⁴ Although Patriarch Mas'ūd eventually escaped, he spent several years hiding in obscure monasteries.⁶⁵ During the contested election of 1484, evidently multiple bishops offered to pay Sultan Ibrāhīm Bey of Mārdīn large sums of money to be selected as patriarch.⁶⁶ Indeed, one source indicates that at a patriarch's death his residence was sealed shut by Türkmen leaders who held the patriarchal property for ransom.⁶⁷ Although rarely mentioned explicitly by sources, the payment of money upon election of a patriarch should perhaps be taken for granted.⁶⁸ Christian leaders in this region, as in others, also paid bribes for the purpose of repealing discriminatory regulations. An Armenian colophon from 898 AA / 1449 mentions earlier attempts to repeal restrictions on honoring Christian dead or building churches, which had failed despite the offer of large bribes.⁶⁹ The tax system also funneled taxes upon non-Muslims through the ecclesiastical hierarchy, holding the clergy responsible for any shortfall in their collection.⁷⁰ The many contacts between ecclesiastical leaders and Muslim rulers typically ensured the maintenance of a revenue stream from the former to the latter.

On occasion, the finances flowed in the other direction, as Christians sometimes profited from the patronage of Muslim rulers. Shāh Muḥammad b. Qarā Yūsuf, the Qarāqūyunlū ruler of Baghdad in the 1410s, employed a Christian physician named 'Abd al-Masīḥ as his chief civilian

⁶⁴ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 500–1.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 500–3; Barṣawm, *al-Lu'lu' al-manthūr*, 457.

⁶⁶ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 304–5. Wilmshurst translated نواب “nobles,” but it usually means bishops. See also Palmer, “John Bar Ṣayallāh,” 197.

⁶⁷ Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, f. 84b.

⁶⁸ Fattal, *Le Statut légal*, 214–15; Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan*, 79.

⁶⁹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 212–14. Amnon Cohen recorded a similar instance in sixteenth-century Jerusalem of Ottoman officials harassing Jews about discriminatory clothing restrictions in order to receive a bribe: Amnon Cohen, *Jewish Life under Islam*, 79–80.

⁷⁰ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 211. The mechanics of tax collection are discussed in greater detail below. A similar phenomenon existed in Egypt at an earlier period: Fattal, *Le Statut légal*, 215.

governor.⁷¹ In 1435, the Āqqūyūnlū ruler Qarā ‘Uthmān employed an Armenian as a deputy (*nā’ib*), who in turn paid for the construction of a monastery and the copying of a book of saints’ lives.⁷² These examples show the place Christians might hold in Türkmen government. One scribe portrayed Qarā ‘Uthmān and his son Sulṭān Ḥamza as lavishing gifts on the Armenian bishop of Āmid, Mkr̄tich‘ Naghash, and a colophon credits Qarā ‘Uthmān with building a new church in the citadel of Arghanī.⁷³ Another Armenian colophon, dated 911 AA / 1462, alleges that Catholicos Zak‘aria III of Aght‘amar received gifts from Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf, the Kurdish emir Sharaf of Bidlīs, and Jahānshāh’s foster-brother Maḥmūd Bey, in part because the patriarch mediated a dispute between the first two rulers.⁷⁴ Jahānshāh’s son Ḥasan ‘Alī is credited with building an Armenian church, and even Uzun Ḥasan reportedly made a donation to an Armenian monastery.⁷⁵ Fifteenth-century Christians in this region looked to Muslim rulers for patronage, and they were sometimes rewarded.

Although most rulers in fifteenth-century al-Jazīra and Iraq made gifts to Christian subjects at one time or another, in a couple of extreme cases a Muslim leader’s patronage of Christians led to rumors circulating that the sultan had himself converted to Christianity. Antagonistic historians in Mamlūk Egypt reported that the Qarāqūyūnlū ruler of Baghdad, Shāh Muḥammad b. Qarā Yūsuf, became a Christian.⁷⁶ T‘ovma Metsop‘ets‘i also mentioned the rumor that the ruler of Baghdad was “a servant of Christ.”⁷⁷ The Mamlūk sources are from a hostile political viewpoint,

⁷¹ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-ma‘rifat duwal al-mulūk*, ed. Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ ‘Ashūr (Cairo: Maṭba‘at Dār al-Kutub, 1972), vol. IV: 924; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*, XI: 183; al-Ghīyāth, *al-Tārīkh al-Ghīyāthī*, 252. The title given by Ibn Taghrībirdī is الغالب على دولته والحكم فيها (“the one with dominion over his state and the ruler in it”), but probably does not reflect the title employed by Shāh Muḥammad; indeed, it is probably inflated to heighten the shock value.

⁷² Sanjian, *Colophons*, 182. The *nā’ib* bears the Turkish name Khushqadam, but was probably Armenian, since he desired an Armenian book. Armenian laypeople often bore Turkish, Persian, or Arabic names. For *nā’ib* as a title component in the previous century, see Cahen, “Contribution,” 93–94. For the question whether this was new construction or repair, see below.

⁷³ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 205, 211, 213. The middle reference includes the church among new constructions.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 272–75.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 304–5, 307.

⁷⁶ Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk*, IV: 924; Abu al-Maḥāsīn Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *History of Egypt, 1382–1469 AD*, trans. William Popper (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1957–1958), vol. III: 119; vol. IV: 116, 201; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-ṣāfi*, vol. XI: 183.

⁷⁷ Metsop‘ets‘i, *Patmagrut’yun*, 137.

but Metsop'ets'i's report indicates that the idea enjoyed a currency beyond politics in Egypt. Likewise, the gifts from Sulṭān Ḥamza b. Qarā 'Uthmān to the Armenian bishop of Āmid also inspired speculation that the Āqqūyunlū ruler might be a crypto-Christian.⁷⁸ This was not just wishful thinking among the Armenian population, since a generation later an Āqqūyunlū court historian reported that Sulṭān Ḥamza had honored Christian priests over "the '*ulamā*' of Islam," and that he mocked children learning to read the Qur'ān.⁷⁹ It is certain that Uzun Ḥasan's court history attempted to discredit those predecessors who were not his direct ancestors, but again the contemporary Armenian colophon evidence shows that this rumor was not a later fabrication. On the other hand, the coins of both Shāh Muḥammad and Sulṭān Ḥamza display the typical Islamic *shahāda*.⁸⁰ Although most Türkmen rulers made occasional gifts to their Christian subjects, a few were so generous that they were suspected of abandoning Islam entirely.

Personal contacts between ecclesiastical leaders and Muslim rulers demonstrated the latter's authority over the former, through the rulers' influence on patriarchal elections or the distribution of patriarchates. A favorably disposed ruler could be beneficial for the patriarchs and bishops by providing a court of appeals against antagonists, whether Christian or Muslim, and sometimes Christians even benefited from the patronage of Muslim governors or rulers. After Uzun Ḥasan's final defeat of the Qarāqūyunlū in 1469, rulers continued to invest patriarchs and to provide a final court of appeals, but actual patronage of Christian leaders or institutions by the Āqqūyunlū rulers seems to have dried up, perhaps because in the context of a much larger empire stretching from the upper Euphrates to southeast Iran, the Christian population had limited provincial significance. The last recorded gift from a Muslim ruler to a Christian institution in the fifteenth century was Uzun Ḥasan's own donation to the monastery of Glak in 922 AA / 1473.⁸¹ Although Uzun Ḥasan was allied by marriage with the Byzantines of Trebizond, and although his son Ya'qūb executed a Persian soldier who killed an Armenian merchant, there were no rumors that either of them had secretly converted to Christianity.

⁷⁸ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 211; Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 57. But even Sulṭān Ḥamza demolished the Armenian cathedral of Āmid in the 1440s: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 213.

⁷⁹ Tīhrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, 136–37.

⁸⁰ Album, *Iran after the Mongol Invasion*, pl. 19, 69.

⁸¹ Khach'ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, II: 336; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 307. Sanjian's translation of the Armenian text erroneously reads 912.

MUSLIM RULERS AND CHRISTIAN SUBJECTS: TAXATION
AND DISCRIMINATION

The rulers in fifteenth-century Diyār Bakr and Iraq touched the lives of most Christians only indirectly, through taxation rather than personal contacts. Taxation in this region was most recently studied by Walter Hinz, using early Ottoman documents that cite the tax law of Uzun Ḥasan Āqqūyunlū.⁸² We can supplement these later official sources, however, with Armenian colophons that complain about taxes. While the complaints are often generic, some colophons enrich our understanding of how taxation worked at this time.⁸³ Multiple tax schemes operated concurrently in the fifteenth century. The scribe who complained “They demand a price for our faith” was probably referring to the *jizya* head-tax on non-Muslims.⁸⁴ Taxes fell especially heavily on the clergy, for in the 1440s Armenian scribes complained of greater taxes for priests than for laypeople under both the Qarāqūyunlū and the Āqqūyunlū.⁸⁵ In the early fifteenth century Christians under Āqqūyunlū rule were apparently also subject to a tax on church buildings, although the colophon that reports the fact asserts that the Armenian bishop of Āmid was able to get this tax burden canceled.⁸⁶ Christians were also affected by the transport tolls, which especially raised the cost of pilgrimages.⁸⁷ The continuation of Bar ‘Ebroyo’s world chronicle notes that in 1491–1492 a group of priests went from Ṭūr ‘Abdīn to Jerusalem in the company of the ambassador from Bāysunghur b. Ya ‘qūb to the Mamlūks, and in this retinue the priests

⁸² Hinz, “Steuerwesen,” 177–201. The primary documents are compiled in Ömer Lûtfi Barkan, *XV ve XVI İnci Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukukî ve Malî Esasları* (Istanbul: Bürhaneddin Matbaası, 1943).

⁸³ One scribe even thanked God for the Qarāqūyunlū ruler Qarā Yūsuf, who freed the Siwnik’ region from Timurid tax-collectors by defeating Abū Bakr b. Mīrānshāh in 1407: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 130. Later scribes also complained of Qarā Yūsuf’s heavy taxes: *ibid.*, 148.

⁸⁴ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 124; Khach’ikyan, *Tashbingerord*, I: 25. The word that Sanjian translated “price” (qḥū) can also mean “tax, tariff.”

⁸⁵ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 201, 211. A later colophon, dated 1476, also complained that priests were liable for the land tax (*kharāj*): *ibid.*, 316.

⁸⁶ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 211.

⁸⁷ Hinz devotes a whole section of his study of the tax system to tolls: Hinz, “Steuerwesen,” 196–99. The impact of road tolls on pilgrimage may be hinted at by a scribe who complained in 1421 that he was hindered from going to Jerusalem many times by Qarā Yūsuf’s taxes: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 148. For a discussion of Syrian Orthodox pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and a late fifteenth-century pilgrim account, see Hubert Kaufhold, “Der Bericht des Sargīs von Hāh über seine Pilgerreise nach Jerusalem,” in *Christsein in der islamischen Welt: Festschrift für Martin Tamcke zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Sidney H. Griffith and Sven Grebenstein (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015), 371–87.

“gave nothing to any man on the road, not even one [little coin].”⁸⁸ The absence of paying tolls was noteworthy, so road tolls may be presumed for other pilgrimage accounts.⁸⁹

Türkmen rulers from both confederations used the ecclesiastical hierarchies, though not exclusively, to gather taxes from the Christian populations.⁹⁰ Bishops acted as tax-gatherers under Āqqūyunlū rule, according to a colophon of 1449, and in 1462 Catholicos Zak‘aria III collected the taxes of the city of Bidlīs for Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf.⁹¹ It is likely that the rulers employed other tax-collectors as well.⁹² One anecdote in the continuation of Bar ‘Ebroyo’s ecclesiastical chronicle may imply that the Qarāqūyunlū ruler of Baghdad, Aṣpahān b. Qarā Yūsuf, employed Türkmen tax-collectors. The ruler sent a “Mongol envoy” to the Syriac Orthodox Maphrian Bar Ṣawmo Ma‘dnoyo demanding a certain amount of wine. “Mongol” presumably means Türkmen in this instance, but it is unclear whether or not the wine was a form of regular tax.⁹³ The fact that firmans granting tax exemptions were addressed to a wide range of ranks suggests that the collection process involved Muslims as well.⁹⁴ Likewise, an Armenian named Lala Miranshēs recorded in a 1481 colophon that he traveled to the imperial court at Tabriz to pay the *kharāj* (land tax) and the *tamghā* (commercial tax) for Aght‘amar and Ostan.⁹⁵

⁸⁸ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: li.

⁸⁹ Pilgrimages, often of high-ranking Syriac Orthodox clergy, are mentioned several times in the continuations of Bar ‘Ebroyo’s chronicles: *ibid.*, II: xxxv, l; Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 494–97.

⁹⁰ In a parallel case, Papademetriou argued that the Greek patriarchate of Constantinople functioned as a tax farm during the early Ottoman period: Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan*, 11–12, 67, 117–20, 124, 141.

⁹¹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 211, 273. The earlier scribe described the role of bishops more precisely as “customs chiefs” (Armenian տարաւապետ), reflecting the role that the *tamghāwāt* (taxes on commerce and transport of goods) played in the Āqqūyunlū tax system. It is unclear whether they collected only from the Christians, or from Muslims as well, since the latter colophon reports the Armenian catholicos guaranteeing the taxes due from a Kurdish emir.

⁹² It would be surprising if the scribes’ frequent reference to “wicked tax-collectors” described their bishops, but “tax-collector” (հարկաւապետներ) could also refer to the rulers themselves, as in a 1445 colophon that names both Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf and the governor Qilich Aṣlān of Van and Ostan: Khach’ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, I: 579.

⁹³ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 300–1. The translator did not recognize that Aṣpahān is the ruler’s name.

⁹⁴ For example, see the opening lines of Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Farmānhā*, 36, 92.

⁹⁵ Although the name is Persian, many Armenians had Persian names. The fact that he was Christian is deduced from the arrangements he made for the endowment of the Holy Cross Church at Aght‘amar, and that he recorded the fact in Armenian.

The same colophon also refers to the “*tamghā* officials of Ostan” in parallel to the “householders of Aght‘amar,” probably indicating that these officials were not bishops.⁹⁶ Tax collection in this period involved Christian clergy, lay Christians, and Muslims, even if their roles are not fully clear.

Yet the tax system was not all-encompassing. The rulers provided tax exemptions to certain Christians who petitioned the court, and some records of these exemptions have survived. The 1449 colophon extolling the virtues of the Armenian bishop of Āmid includes among his good deeds his successful effort to obtain tax exemptions for priests and churches.⁹⁷ Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf granted tax exemptions to Ohanēs, the catholicos of the Caucasian Albanians, and Vardapet Shēmawon, the abbot of Tat‘ew monastery in Siwnik‘.⁹⁸ Jahānshāh’s son Ḥasan ‘Alī renewed the tax exemption for the monastery of Tat‘ew in 872 AH / 1468.⁹⁹ Uzun Ḥasan granted tax immunity to the priests of Ūch Kilīsyā (probably Ējmiatsin) in 880 AH / 1475, and his son Ya‘qūb confirmed Jahānshāh’s tax exemption to Catholicos Shēmawon of the Caucasian Albanians in 892 AH / 1487.¹⁰⁰ An Armenian colophon from Van dated 933 AA / 1484 indicates the role that minor Armenian Christian lords could play in securing tax exemptions, because “they liberated the priests from the tax requirements of the wicked ones” [i.e. the Muslim rulers].¹⁰¹ These exemptions go beyond the standard Ḥanafī doctrine that *jizya* should not be collected from monks,

⁹⁶ Ոստանայ թամղաչոց (the second word representing the Turkish *tamghāchī*) and Աղթամարայ տանուտէրացու: Khach‘ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, III: 11. On the *tamghāchī* office, see Manz, *Rule of Tamerlane*, 171.

⁹⁷ The text does not specify which priests or churches were affected, but says the priests were freed from the “royal tax” (թագաւորական հարկ) and the churches from the *dimosakan* tax, a term that Sanjian defines in an appendix as “public, government, or municipal”: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 211, 447; Khach‘ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, I: 625–26. The term *dimosakan* is probably derived from the Greek *dēmosia*, which referred to a public tax in the later Byzantine period: Mark C. Bartusis, *Land and Privilege in Byzantium: The Institution of Pronoia* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 69, 134; Timothy Miller, “The Basilika and the Demosia: The Financial Offices of the Late Byzantine Empire,” *Revue des Études Byzantines* 36 (1978): 172–73. The use of the term in eastern Anatolia may date from the period of Byzantine control in the eleventh century. The precise exemption mentioned in this fifteenth-century colophon is thus somewhat obscure, but the report serves a hagiographic rather than fiscal function.

⁹⁸ Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Farmānhā*, 36, 53.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 56–58.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 79, 93.

¹⁰¹ Ջրահանայքն յանօրինաց հարկապահանջութենէն ազատեցին: Khach‘ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, III: 62. The priests in question may be the patriarchate of Aght‘amar, just offshore from Van.

because they also exclude the monasteries from *kharāj* and other taxes.¹⁰² These grants of tax immunity show that the ruler's taxation policy, while widely enforced, admitted exceptions.

At times Muslim rulers also enforced, or removed, the discriminatory social rules affecting *dhimmīs* (non-Muslims). Unlike many Muslim sources, which report the fact or the text of a ruler's decree on the subject, what Armenian scribes recorded are changes in the implementation of these discriminatory practices. A new decree with no practical change would not have been noteworthy to the subject population. When an Armenian colophon mentions a discriminatory regulation, then, it is evidence for both the state before and the state after the change. But Armenian colophons are not systematic: new distinctive clothing requirements, for example, were a source of complaint in Armenian colophons early in the fourteenth century as the Mongol Ilkhanate converted to Islam.¹⁰³ The distinctive clothing required for Christians in this region was a blue turban, identified explicitly in a 1336 colophon from Tabriz and described by some fifteenth-century colophons as "a blue symbol on the head."¹⁰⁴ After 1336 no extant colophons mention clothing differences until 1446, which may indicate either that the practice had become the local norm, or that the custom had lapsed. A colophon from Erzincan indicates that when the Āqquyunlū prince Maḥmūd b. Qarā 'Uthmān took the city in 1446 he ordered "that the Christians should remove the blue symbols from their heads and should freely practice their religion."¹⁰⁵ This indicates how the distinctive clothing was resented by the scribe, but also that it had been common practice in Erzincan in the period leading up to 1446.

¹⁰² At an earlier period, there was debate whether *jizya* should be exacted from monks: Fattal, *Le Statut légal*, 271–72; al-Ḥasan b. Manṣūr al-Ūzjandī al-Farghānī Qāḍī Khān, *Kitāb Fatāwā Qāḍī Khān* (Cairo: Maṭba'at Muḥammad Shāhīn, 1865), vol. III: 614. The later Ḥanafī doctrine not to impose the *jizya* on monks is mentioned in several works from the thirteenth century onward: 'Abd al-Laṭīf b. 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Malak, *Sharḥ Majma' al-Baḥrayn* (Princeton Garrett Islamic 3673Y), f. 275a; Zayn al-Dīn b. Ibrāhīm Ibn Nujaym and 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Nasafī, *al-Baḥr al-rā'iq sharḥ Kanz al-daqa'iq*, ed. Zakariyā 'Umayrāt (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 1997), vol. V: 188–89; Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ḥaṣkafī and Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Tamartāshī, *al-Durr al-mukhtār sharḥ Tanwīr al-absār*, ed. 'Abd al-Mun'im Khalīl Ibrāhīm (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 2002), 341. It is unclear whether the tax exemptions caused the tax burden to fall more heavily on the rest of the population, for example if a lump sum was required and not adjusted for the exemptions, but exclusion of monks from the *jizya* in Ḥanafī *fiqh* suggests that they would not be calculated into the total tax due.

¹⁰³ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 52–53, 60, 73, 76.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 76, 207, 221, 282, 316.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 207. For the identity of the princes in this episode, see Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 73.

The occasional nature and scattered distribution of the colophons make it difficult to generalize from any single reference to a region-wide practice.

For most of the fifteenth century, discriminatory practices against non-Muslims varied in their implementation from one ruler to the next. When Rustam Ibn Tarkhan captured Mārdīn in 1450 on behalf of the Qarāqūyūnlū ruler Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf, a scribe wrote that he “put a blue symbol upon the Christians,” indicating that it had not been required under the Āqqūyūnlū ruler Jahāngīr b. ‘Alī.¹⁰⁶ This example, with the preceding example of Maḥmūd b. Qarā ‘Uthmān taking Erzincan in 1446, shows that the discriminatory clothing regulations could change when a new ruler took over a city. Since Jahāngīr was reinstated in Mārdīn sixteen months after Rustam’s conquest, it is not clear whether Rustam’s rules for Christian dress remained in effect.¹⁰⁷ As mentioned above, the prohibition of non-Muslims raising their dead in honor on the way to burial is attested from the middle of the century: a colophon dated 1449, probably from Āmid, indicates that Christians and Jews were required to drag their dead, until an Armenian bishop secured the removal of the practice from the Āqqūyūnlū ruler.¹⁰⁸ The enforcement or removal of discriminatory policies might depend on whether a particular ruler was appealing to the ‘*ulamā*’ or to Christian leaders for political support. For example, an Armenian scribe accused Shaykh Ḥasan b. Qarā ‘Uthmān of promising the “mullahs” of Erzincan and Kamākh that he would demolish churches there if he captured the cities.¹⁰⁹ Yet the multitude of local rulers in the first half of the fifteenth century, each with a different perspective on the desired level of

¹⁰⁶ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 221.

¹⁰⁷ Woods, *Aqqūyūnlū*, 78; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 222. Grehan notes that differential clothing prescriptions were “imperfectly observed—particularly outside the towns” in Ottoman Syria: James Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints: Everyday Religion in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 180–81.

¹⁰⁸ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 212. The requirement that *dhimmi*s drag their dead to burial is also attested in a thirteenth-century treatise, citing a late Fatimid document, which explicitly contrasts it with lifting the coffins upon their shoulders: ‘Uthmān b. Ibrāhīm al-Nābulusī, *The Sword of Ambition: Bureaucratic Rivalry in Medieval Egypt*, ed. Luke B. Yarbrough (New York University, 2016), 78–79. The source of this prohibition is less clear. It might derive from a misreading of a text of the Pact of ‘Umar. One version given by Ibn ‘Asākir includes the line “we will not lift up *our voices* with their caskets” (ولا نرفع اصواتنا مع جنانزهم), but reading امواتنا instead would replace “voices” with “dead”: ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan Ibn ‘Asākir, *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*, ed. ‘Abd al-Qādir Badrān (Damascus: Maṭba‘at Rawḍat al-Shām, 1911), vol. I: 178. However, another version of the Pact given by the same author reads “we will not lift up our voices with our dead” (ولا نرفع اصواتنا بمواتنا): *ibid.*, I: 149. In this latter version the substitution would make less sense, but the text as it stands might be interpreted to prohibit lifting either voices or deceased.

¹⁰⁹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 206.

discrimination against Christians, prevented any region-wide policy on the *dhimmī* regulations, while the rapid changes of government, as cities continually changed hands, might limit the duration of any particular policy.

In the second half of the fifteenth century, Uzun Ḥasan seems to have attempted to standardize the enforcement of discriminatory regulations across his domain as he unified the region. He required the blue sign for Christians more extensively than previously: colophons complain of this from Kamākh in 1464, from a monastery in Siwnik' in 1470, and from an unidentified location in 1476.¹¹⁰ The 1476 colophon ascribes the agency of the decision to Uzun Ḥasan himself, and the 1470 colophon identifies the distinctive dress for Christians as a recent imposition following Uzun Ḥasan's defeat of Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf in 1467. The requirement that non-Muslims drag their dead to burial, revoked in Āmid in the middle of the century, appears to have been reinstated by Uzun Ḥasan, for in his reign two colophons mention the practice, in 1464 and 1476.¹¹¹ A colophon dated 1490 ascribed to Uzun Ḥasan's son Ya'qūb the command to "carry off the dead lowly."¹¹² The prohibition of church bells also appears as a late Āqqūyunlū development. A Persian miniature from the royal atelier in Tabriz depicts a Christian monastery with ringing bells (see figures 2.1–2.2), indicating an accepted practice.¹¹³ Yet church bells were prohibited according to colophons in 1470, 1476, and 1485.¹¹⁴ The prohibition was specifically associated with the Āqqūyunlū conquest of Tabriz in the colophons from 1470 and 1485. The fact that all of these discriminatory regulations are best attested under Uzun Ḥasan indicates that he attempted to systematize their enforcement during his reign, perhaps as part of his "attempts to curry favor with the Islamic religious establishment," as John Woods suggests.¹¹⁵

One aspect of the *dhimmī* regulations did not follow the trend of increasing standardization under Uzun Ḥasan, namely the prohibition on building churches. On the one hand, church buildings were often a bone of contention between the Christian population and their Muslim rulers in this period. Fourteenth-century colophons had complained of churches

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 282, 299, 316.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 282, 316.

¹¹² Ջսնեւալն ի ցած ասաց տաւնոյ: Khach'ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, III: 145.

¹¹³ TSMK. H.2153, fol.131b. For a discussion of this image and its dating, see Assadullah S. Melikian-Chirvani, "The Iranian Painter, the Metaphorical Hermitage, and the Christian Princess," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* n.s. 16 (2006): 37–52.

¹¹⁴ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 299, 316; Khach'ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, III: 71.

¹¹⁵ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 106.



FIGURE 2.1 A fifteenth-century Persian manuscript illustration of a monastery. TSMK. H.2153, fol.131b.

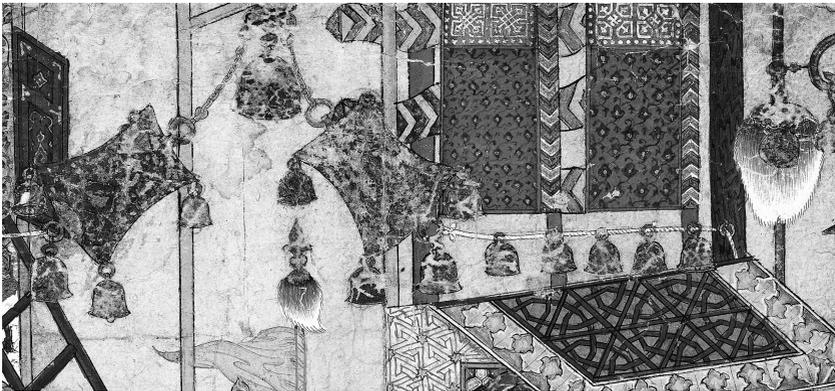


FIGURE 2.2 Detail of figure 2.1, bells ringing.

being demolished or closed by Muslim rulers.¹¹⁶ A 1403 colophon from Erzincan echoed these complaints without specifying who destroyed the local churches.¹¹⁷ A scribe labeled Iskandar b. Qarā Yūsuf “a destroyer of

¹¹⁶ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 58, 76, 86, 103. The last colophon complains specifically of the early Qarāqüyunlū emir Qarā Muḥammad, the father of Qarā Yūsuf, as the instigator of persecution against Christians.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 126.

churches” in 1425, probably reflecting the Qarāqūyūnlū ruler’s campaign to subdue the Hakkārī region, while the Āqqūyūnlū prince Shaykh Ḥasan b. Qarā ‘Uthmān reportedly promised the destruction of the churches in Erzincan and Kamākh in 1445 in order to secure political support from the ‘*ulamā*’ of those cities.¹¹⁸ Although most Muslim jurists argued that existing churches should not be destroyed, some Türkmen rulers often decided otherwise.

On the other hand, many other sources record the building of churches in the fifteenth century. Islamic legal sources typically drew a distinction between the repair of existing buildings and the creation (*iḥdāth*) of new churches and synagogues. Most Ḥanafī and Shāfi‘ī jurists permitted the former, although it was prohibited by the Pact of ‘Umar, while Muslim legal sources unanimously prohibited the latter.¹¹⁹ This distinction is seen in the efforts undertaken near the end of the fifteenth century by Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh, the Syriac Orthodox patriarch of Mārdīn, to secure the agreement of Muslim jurists in Nisibis that a church construction project was really “rebuilding.”¹²⁰ Yet variation in this policy existed in both directions. More restrictively, an Armenian colophon dated 1449, probably from Āmid, gives a specific statement of the prohibition of restoring ruined churches as well as the building of new churches: “no one could affix a stone onto the churches that were in ruins.”¹²¹ Some rulers evidently prohibited repair as well as new construction. Less restrictively, some new construction occurred, even with the approval of the rulers. The same scribe praised Mkrtych‘ Naghsh, the Armenian bishop

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 168, 206.

¹¹⁹ Fattal, *Le Statut légal*, 174–76. The version of the Pact of ‘Umar cited by Fattal prohibits rebuilding as well as new construction, but Fattal notes that enforcement in the late medieval period was variable: ibid., 61, 200–3. Amnon Cohen likewise documented the prohibition on “new” synagogues, but permitting restoration to the “old” synagogue, in sixteenth-century Jerusalem: Amnon Cohen, *Jewish Life under Islam*, 77–79.

¹²⁰ Cambridge. Dd. 3.8¹, f. 85a; Palmer, “John Bar Šayallāh,” 200–1.

¹²¹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 211. While in principle both Ḥanafī and Shāfi‘ī *fiqh* permit reconstruction of damaged churches, later Ḥanafī thought prohibited any “addition on the original building” (زيادة على البناء الأول): Ibn Nujaym and al-Nasafī, *al-Baḥr al-rā‘iq*, V: 191; al-Ḥaškafī and al-Tamartāshī, *al-Durr al-mukhtār*, 341. This restriction may be interpreted spatially, to mean that a building may not be enlarged, or materially, to prohibit adding any new building material. Ibn Nujaym cited the fatwas of Qāḍī Khān (d. 1196), who appears to be the earliest source of this teaching: Qāḍī Khān, *Fatāwā*, III: 616. I have not found this restriction in other pre-1500 Ḥanafī texts that I have checked (al-Nasafī’s *Kanz al-daqa‘iq*, Ibn Malak’s *Sharḥ Majma‘ al-Baḥrayn*, or the text it commented on). I am grateful to Luke Yarbrough for pointing out that Fattal’s attribution of this opinion to a fourteenth-century author is based on a misreading of his source, which is actually much later: Fattal, *Le Statut légal*, 176.

of Āmid, not only for repairing ruined churches, but also for “many new constructions,” naming as an example a church in Arghanī that an earlier colophon had ascribed to the Āqqūyunlū ruler Qarā ‘Uthmān.¹²² The same Syriac patriarch who sought the Muslim jurists’ signatures in Nisibis had earlier constructed “a new church” in the region of Ḥiṣn Ziyād (Kharput), and with the permission of the *qādī* and legal scholars (*fuqahā*) of Mārdīn he built “two other churches in that region, one new ... and the other repaired.”¹²³ Some rulers prohibited repairs as well as new construction, while elsewhere even new construction might be permitted.

Yet the authors of most accounts of church building did not see the need to distinguish between repairs to existing structures and new construction. Fifteenth-century authors used common words for construction in both Armenian (*shinem*) and Syriac (*bnā*) equally for both categories of work, and thus it is often impossible to distinguish. T‘ovma Metsop‘ets‘i narrates that an Armenian monk constructed a church in Archēsh north of Lake Van in the period 851–858 AA / 1402–1409.¹²⁴ Two colophons from Aght‘amar, both from the middle of the fifteenth century, report the construction of many churches and the restoration of a ruined monastery a generation earlier under the rule of the Kurdish emir ‘Izz al-Dīn Shīr and his son Malik Muḥammad.¹²⁵ A colophon from Kamākh in 1439 asserts that Qarā ‘Uthmān’s son Ya‘qūb allowed the building of churches.¹²⁶ A more contested example was the Armenian Cathedral of St. Theodore in Āmid, which Mkrtych‘ Naghsh began to construct in 1439: in this case a mob partly demolished the structure and the bishop himself went into exile in 1443. After the death of Sulṭān Ḥamza b. Qarā ‘Uthmān, Jahāngīr b. ‘Alī took over Āmid and allowed the cathedral to be restored; it was completed in 1447.¹²⁷ A scribe in Ostan on the southern shore of Lake Van memorialized his own construction of a church in a colophon from 1459, while a scribe on the island of Ktuts‘ in Lake Van recorded in 1481 that his maternal uncle had built a church.¹²⁸ A later colophon from nearby Khīzān praised Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf, remarking that “many churches

¹²² Բազումս նորաշէս: Khach‘ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, III: 625; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 205, 211, 213.

¹²³ Կառնաւոր շէնքի մը շինելու համար ինչպէս որ ինչպէս: Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, f. 85a.

¹²⁴ Metsop‘ets‘i, *Patmagrut‘yun*, 91.

¹²⁵ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 201, 203.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 192. The Armenian phrase could alternatively mean “he commanded them to build churches” (հրամսս սարք եկեղեաց որ շինէին): Xaç‘ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, I:498.

¹²⁷ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 213–14.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 263; Khach‘ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, III: 12.

Uzun Ḥasan.¹³⁶ These nonspecific references are confirmed by an inscription that records the repair of the church entrance of the East Syrian monastery of Rabban Hōrmīzd outside of the village of Alqōsh north of Mosul in 1485.¹³⁷ The paucity of references to specific sites built up by the Church of the East during this period is likely due to the lack of sources: the absence of any historical source comparable to the continuation of Bar ʿEbroyo’s chronicles or the vitae of Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh, and the infrequency (compared with Armenian colophons) of including historical accounts in Syriac colophons.

Although church construction, whether new building or restoration, was sometimes prohibited in this region, there were often means of completing building projects throughout the century, particularly when accompanied by a substantial bribe. The story of the cathedral of Āmid twice indicates the strategy of bribing the rulers, the first in the failed attempt to save the cathedral in 1443, and the second upon the bishop’s return from exile.¹³⁸ We should probably assume that paying for a construction permit was a common element in church building plans. But unlike the regulations pertaining to distinctive dress for Christians, to dragging the dead, and to prohibiting church bells, the prohibition of church construction was evidently not enforced more systematically in the late fifteenth century under Uzun Ḥasan or his son Yaʿqūb than under the earlier Türkmen emirs. Indeed, the more peaceful conditions in Diyār Bakr and Iraq in the 1470s and 1480s, following the final defeat of the Qarāqūyunlū, probably enabled a greater degree of construction, permitting some rebuilding after the destruction and depredations of the plundering armies during the earlier wars.

CONCLUSION

A. S. Tritton concluded his early, informative, and ultimately undersynthesized volume, “This study of the relations between the government and its subjects who did not profess Islam can only produce confusion in the mind.”¹³⁹ He successfully demonstrated that the Pact of ʿUmar was misattributed, and he proposed that jurists and caliphs codified a body of relevant “law” by the middle of the ninth century, yet he could not

¹³⁶ ܘܙܘܢ ܚܫܢܐ ܡܠܝܚܐ ܡܢ ܡܘܨܘܠ: BL Add. 7177, f. 321a.

¹³⁷ Vosté, “Rabban Hormizd,” 274.

¹³⁸ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 213–14.

¹³⁹ Tritton, *Non-Muslim Subjects*, 228.

explain why that “law” seemed so frequently irrelevant in later centuries. Subsequent scholarship has continued to regard the Pact of ‘Umar as “the basic document outlining the obligations of the non-Muslims living in *dār al-islām* ... and defining the relationship of the *ahl al-dhimma*, or *dhimmīs*, ‘protected people,’ with Muslims and with the Islamic state.”¹⁴⁰ But in late medieval Iraq and al-Jazīra, the Pact of ‘Umar does not provide a useful framework for the relationships between Muslim rulers and their non-Muslim subjects. Studies of *dhimmī* regulations have presumed a legal model that was foreign to late medieval Iraq and al-Jazīra, namely that the textual prescriptions of the ‘*ulamā*’ constituted a centralized body of law that Muslim rulers were expected to enforce, even when in fact they failed to do so.¹⁴¹

The place of non-Muslims under Islamic rule was determined not by the ‘*ulamā*’ but by the sultans, whose relationships with their subjects were perhaps primarily personal and financial. Muslim rulers confirmed and deposed Christian patriarchs, influenced patriarchal successions, sometimes even rewrote ecclesiastical jurisdictions, and adjudicated disputes among Christian leaders. They collected taxes, a perpetual source of complaint, and granted tax exemptions to patriarchs and monasteries. They received bribes from Christian leaders to remove discriminatory regulations, and they bestowed patronage on particular ecclesiastical figures and institutions. Various discriminatory regulations against non-Muslims were known and practiced, and their application varied widely among rulers. But as the nearly incessant warfare of the first two-thirds of the fifteenth century settled down into the regional hegemony of the Āqqūyunlū, the greater stability enabled Christians to restore churches and monasteries, and also build new ones, even as it also enabled Uzun Ḥasan and his successors to enforce more consistent discriminatory regulations on the non-Muslim populations. The political structures of Iraq and al-Jazīra in the fifteenth century were neither ceaselessly persecuting religious minorities nor a harmonious society of well-defined social roles.

This story of personal relationships, negotiable hierarchies, and unstable policy invites us to rethink not only the relationship between *dhimmī*

¹⁴⁰ Mark R. Cohen, “What Was the Pact of ‘Umar?,” 100.

¹⁴¹ For indications of the problem of “legal centralism” in other studies of Islamic law, and the rising interest in “legal pluralism” as an alternative, see Simonsohn, *A Common Justice*, 11; Ido Shahar, “Legal Pluralism and the Study of Shari‘a Courts,” *Islamic Law and Society* 15 (2008): 118–19. On the disjuncture between sultans’ decrees and the prescriptions of the ‘*ulamā*’, see fn. 15 above and Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition*, 24–28; Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 99.

subjects and Muslim rulers, but also the category *ahl al-dhimma* (“people of the pact”) and the social roles of the ‘*ulamā*’ who peddled that concept. Increasingly sophisticated studies of “Islamic law” have demonstrated that the jurists’ thinking developed over time,¹⁴² and that their *sharī‘a* was not the only legal option.¹⁴³ Yet studies of non-Muslims under Islamic rule have typically limited late medieval rulers’ policy options to two: enforcing what the ‘*ulamā*’ told them, or ignoring the issue entirely. Muslim religious leaders certainly advised any rulers who might listen, yet the sultans considered a range of other options, and shaped their decrees in order to further their own political goals rather than those of the ‘*ulamā*’. Some rulers were in fact harsher than the Pact of ‘Umar, while others repealed their predecessors’ and rivals’ discriminatory regulations. The most determinative actors in the government’s treatment of non-Muslims were not Muslim religious leaders, but the rulers themselves.

This is not to fall into a cliché of Eastern despotism, for the sultans and emirs of the late medieval Middle East were not the absolute monarchs of early modern Europe. Instead, those Muslim rulers chose their policies in order to shore up their weak legitimacy and strengthen their tenuous grasp on power, and they did so in order to appeal to different segments of the population. Sultans who sought the support of the ‘*ulamā*’ seem to have enacted more discriminatory regulations, while other rulers repealed those same regulations, evidently courting their non-Muslim subjects. The local Muslim rulers were themselves caught in the webs of power relationships, yet they were the people who issued the edicts. To the degree that the stipulations of the ‘*ulamā*’ were enforced as law, they did so only through the medium of the ruler’s decree, and subject to his repeal. Instead of considering the Pact of ‘Umar as a settled doctrine, even in the late medieval period,¹⁴⁴ we might regard these regulations as *potential* laws proposed by cultural brokers. To understand the actual role of the Pact of ‘Umar, then, we must turn to how late medieval Christians interacted with their various neighbors.

¹⁴² E.g. Behnam Sadeghi, *The Logic of Law-Making in Islam: Women and Prayer in the Legal Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 30–34, 136–40; Burak, *Second Formation*.

¹⁴³ Shahar, “Legal Pluralism,” 126–30.

¹⁴⁴ Levy-Rubin considered alternatives to the Pact of ‘Umar in the early ‘Abbasid period: Milka Levy-Rubin, “Shuruṭ ‘Umar and Its Alternatives: The Legal Debate on the Status of the Dhimmīs,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 30 (2005): 170–206. Her analysis could be extended later, even after the supposed canonization of the Pact of ‘Umar.

Living with Suspicious Neighbors in a Violent World

After the attack was over and the Türkmén had withdrawn, the people of Khlát' came out of hiding. Before they could return to normal life, they needed to assess what was missing and, just as importantly, who. In 1457 the Qarāqūyunlū ruler Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf captured Khlát' and other nearby cities, carrying off plunder and captives. A scribe on a nearby island in Lake Van mentioned that the Türkmén ruler "carried off 1500 women, children, and deacons." The remaining citizens must have soon learned, or already knew from previous attacks, where they had to go to recover some of these captives, which they could do by paying ransom. The question was the amount, fixed by the captors after each attack; on this occasion, the Türkmén soldiers demanded the princely sum of 500 silver Timurid coins for each captive, probably after haggling with the people of the city. After ascertaining the price, the remaining citizens of Khlát' no doubt searched their possessions, or rather what remained of them, to find anything of value that might help release their families and neighbors from captivity. In all likelihood, some people were ransomed, but many others were left behind weeping in captivity, to whatever fate they would find as slaves of their Türkmén captors. Of all these intense interactions between plunderers and those who had survived their earlier onslaught, the scribe in his island monastery recorded only the attacker's identity, the attack's outcome, the number of captives, and the amount required for ransom.¹ Everything else could be taken for granted.

Most of the sources for social interactions between fifteenth-century Middle Eastern Christians and their neighbors, whether Muslims or other

¹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 258. Other sources emphasize the weeping of captives. See below for a more detailed discussion of ransoming goods and people.

Christians, are colophons.² Syriac and Armenian colophons span the region now divided among eastern Turkey, Syria, northern Iraq, northeastern Iran, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and into Georgia, and frequently describe historical events from a local perspective within a few years of their occurrence.³ While Syriac and Armenian colophons fulfilled similar religious and historical functions, Armenian scribes more frequently included reports of recent events, although Syriac readers sometimes inserted notes recording happenings of interest into existing texts.⁴ Yet scribes composed these sources under particular circumstances and for particular purposes, and to use the colophons as historical sources requires an awareness of the scribes' world.⁵ Each colophon represents only a single view from a single locality; synthesizing these local viewpoints into a regional perspective is challenging.

The use of colophons as sources must take into account their focus on what is remarkable or unusual rather than common to everyday life. Except when colophons extolled the virtues of their patrons or of holy men, Sinclair notes that the scribes' "selection of events is somewhat biased in favor of disasters, and that the language, too, tends to systematically cast a formulaic gloom over the events described."⁶ The life of a scribe was often painful, and the warfare of the fifteenth century frequently and catastrophically interrupted normal life,⁷ but that is only part of the story. Everyday rhythms and positive events were less likely to be recorded than disasters and afflictions. For example, Sinclair pointed out that scribes complained of the rising price of bread after an invasion, but no colophon records any fall in the price of bread, or what the price normally was.⁸ The result of this one-sidedness for our analysis of social interactions, whether between Christians and their Muslim neighbors or among Christians of different denominations, is that the sources almost universally emphasize conflict. In order to get a more balanced picture

² Sinclair made the point that the Armenian colophons showed the structures of fifteenth-century Middle Eastern politics and society "in motion": Thomas A. Sinclair, "The Use of the Colophons and Minor Chronicles in the Writing of Armenian and Turkish History," *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 10 (2000): 47.

³ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴ On the religious and social functions of Ottoman-era Syriac colophons, see Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 271–91.

⁵ The most detailed study of the circumstances of late medieval manuscript production and the components of Armenian colophons is the introduction to Sanjian, *Colophons*, 1–41.

⁶ Sinclair, "Use of the Colophons," 46.

⁷ Sanjian discusses these difficult circumstances in Sanjian, *Colophons*, 19–25.

⁸ Sinclair, "Use of the Colophons," 46.

of social life, we must be alert to implicit and probable social contacts that are not explicitly discussed in the sources, as well as elements of culture shared across social boundaries. This approach reveals that social life in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra, while sometimes as violent as documented by the scribes, was more often unremarkable, with normal functioning systems and structures of interaction. These systems were at least not violent, even if they were also not often amicable.

CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM NEIGHBORS

Muslim sources from this region and period rarely refer to Christians. The two court histories of the Āqqūyunlū each mention one event involving local Christians. The *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya* mentions a Christian who handed the city of Āmid over to Sulṭān Ḥamza, who in return honored church leaders above the ‘*ulamā*’, and the *Tārīkh-i ‘ālam-ārāyi Amīnī* twice mentions a group of *dhimmīs* plundered by the Ṣafawī shaykh.⁹ The normative texts of the ‘*ulamā*’ contained the requisite chapters on *jizya*, and mentioned *dhimmī* status as relevant in other discussions, but they engaged more evidently with their tradition than with current conditions.¹⁰ Since, as suggested in the previous chapter, the *dhimmī* paradigm was not effectively structuring society, the discourse of “dhimmitude” should instead be seen as an attempt by the ‘*ulamā*’ to shape social relations between Christians and Muslims in a particular way, one that satisfied Muslim religious elites’ desire to demonstrate Islam’s superiority over other religions. This discourse was not the only option, however. Instead of appealing to the *dhimmī* paradigm, Dā’ūd al-Mawṣilī’s biographical dictionary praises the expertise of Jewish and Christian physicians from previous centuries, as well as two Christian contemporaries, and he recalled a Christian physician of the mid fourteenth century attending to a Kurdish ruler.¹¹ The distance between Dā’ūd al-Mawṣilī’s work and those of Islamic juristic scholars reveals competing fifteenth-century Muslim ideals for interreligious interactions, yet taken together these texts do not provide enough information for any detailed discussion of Christians in the society of al-Jazīra and Iraq.

⁹ Tīhrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, I: 136–37; Khunjī-Iṣfahānī, *Tārīkh-i ‘Ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, 281, 286.

¹⁰ This is not to say that current conditions did not affect their decisions, of course, as emphasized by Sadeghi, *Logic of Law-Making*, 11–25, 30–31.

¹¹ Berlin orient. quart. 1068, ff. 110b–111a.

If the Muslim sources of this period rarely refer to the Christian populations, with very few exceptions the Christian sources only mention nonruling Muslims to complain about them. Christian texts most frequently mention Muslim city-dwellers for their opposition to anything that helped the Christians. Muslim ‘*ulamā*’ reportedly objected to the fact that the Ayyubid sultan of Ḥiṣn-Kayf sent soldiers to punish Kurdish bandits who had wounded the Syriac Orthodox patriarch of Mārdīn at the beginning of the century,¹² while the procession of Catholicos Zak‘aria III back to Aght‘amar in 1462 excited the envy of the non-Christians in Ostan.¹³ The relative height of religious buildings was a sensitive issue, and Muslims in Āmid in the middle of the century opposed the construction of an Armenian cathedral with a dome higher than the minarets of nearby mosques.¹⁴ Muslims apparently opposed the construction of a church in Archēsh in the first decade of the century.¹⁵ In the previous chapter we saw that *dhimmī* regulations proposed by the ‘*ulamā*’ did not in fact prevent church construction. But the opinions of Muslim religious leaders sometimes inspired mob violence against non-Muslims.

Antagonisms among urban populations provided an opportunity for besiegers: a Muslim historian reported that a Christian betrayed Āmid to Sulṭān Ḥamza b. Qarā ‘Uthmān when he attacked the city in 1437.¹⁶ Conversely, during a siege of the city of Kamākh in 1446, Shaykh Ḥasan b. Qarā ‘Uthmān allegedly attempted to win the support of the city’s Muslim religious elites by promising to demolish the churches there, while the ‘*ulamā*’ of Erzincan schemed with Shaykh Ḥasan to betray the city and destroy the churches.¹⁷ No doubt each population sought to secure the ruler it considered most favorable to its interests, and some antagonism between Christians and Muslims is to be expected as a result of competition for patronage and resources.

But not all Christian reports of urban Muslims complain of conflict. According to one scribe’s panegyric, Bishop Mkr̥tich‘ Naghāsh of Āmid was so amazing that not only Armenians but even Turks, Persians, Kurds, Arabs,

¹² Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 296–97. The objectors are described as *faqīhē*, the Syriac definite plural of the Arabic *faqīh*.

¹³ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 275.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 213.

¹⁵ Metsop‘ets‘i, *Patmagrut‘yun*, 90–91.

¹⁶ Tihriānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, 136; Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 66, 247 n. 14.

¹⁷ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 206–7. A later scribe mentioned “city-dwellers” who betrayed Mārdīn to a besieging Qarāqūyunlū general in early 900 AA / late 1450, without specifying the religion of the citizens: *ibid.*, 221.

and Jews honored him.¹⁸ While the Armenian bishop was in exile, the *qādīs* evidently added their names to the letters requesting his return.¹⁹ T'ovma Metsop'ets'i likewise reported Muslims honoring an Armenian monk named Hovhannēs, whose appearance “terrified and put to shame all men, especially the Muslim peoples, so that the people of Chaghatay [i.e. Tīmūr] were coming to him for prostration.”²⁰ Another Hovhannēs is reported to have prayed for physical healing for non-Christians as well as Christians, “and for this reason he was loved by unbelievers and by believers.”²¹ While these are certainly in part hyperbole, Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh reportedly studied philosophy with a Muslim teacher in Mārdīn, and later he secured a permit to build a church from the *qādī* and other legal experts there.²² This example attests some Christian use of *qādī* courts.²³ Similarly, a firman of Ya'qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan dated 892 AH / 1487 indicates that the Āqqūyunlū ruler consulted the Muslim religious leaders about the legality of a tax exemption for the catholicos of the Caucasian Albanians.²⁴ Since the edict was issued and the exemption granted, the '*ulamā*' in question must have ruled in favor of this Christian leader; had the ruler ignored their verdict, the firman would not have mentioned the consultation. A band of Syriac Orthodox pilgrims returning from Jerusalem in the 1490s traveled part of the way in a company of Muslim merchants, presumably for mutual protection.²⁵ There must have been more such contacts, but even these few examples demonstrate that not all interactions between Christians and Muslims were hostile.

¹⁸ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 210. The respect may have been in part due to beliefs about Christian clergy's facility with “magic.” In the nineteenth century Western missionaries observed East Syriac clergy writing charms for Muslims: Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 215–16.

¹⁹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 214.

²⁰ ահաբակէր եւ ամաչեցուցանէր զամենայն մարդ, մանաւանդ զազգս այլազգեաց, փնչ զի ազգ չաղաթային յերկրպագութիւն զային նմա: Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 50.

²¹ Եւ վասն այսորիկ սիրեցեալ լինէի ի յանհաւատիցն եւ ի հաւատացելոցն: *ibid.*, 90. Similar reports in the early Islamic period, while recognized as hagiographic tropes, are also considered socially plausible by Michael Philip Penn, *Envisioning Islam: Syriac Christians and the Early Muslim World* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 156–59.

²² Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, ff. 83a, 85a. The document is termed *mapsānūthā* (“permission”) and *kirath ʿidhē* (“signatures”), while the Syriac uses *dayyān* for *qādī* and *faqīhē* for *fuqahā*.

²³ For a study of judicial pluralism and non-Muslim use of *qādī* courts in the early Islamic period, see Simonsohn, *A Common Justice*.

²⁴ Mudarrisi-Tabāṭabā'ī, *Farmānhā*, 93.

²⁵ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: lii. Although Budge's translation gives “Arab merchants,” the Syriac term *Ṭayyāyē* was used specifically for Muslims.

Cities provided a certain social stability in this region, and Christian sources typically present nonruling Muslims outside the cities as bandits and mercenaries. Kurds sometimes kidnapped or killed Christian leaders, as happened to a Syriac Orthodox bishop named Bar Şawmo Shashū'ō Man'amoyo and an Armenian vardapet, Grigor Khlāt'ets'i.²⁶ Even patriarchs feared them: Kurdish horse-thieves wounded the Syriac Orthodox patriarch of Tūr 'Abdīn, Ignatius III Mas'ūd Şalaḥoyo, and an Armenian scribe accused the Kurdish ruler of Ostan of plotting against Catholicos Zak'aria III of Aght'amar.²⁷ Kurds are frequently presented as plundering the Christian populations. Sometimes a source names the attacker: a colophon records that in 880 AA / 1431 the Kurdish emir Pīr Bey, the grandson of 'Izz al-Dīn Shīr, plundered the island of Aght'amar, the location of an Armenian patriarchate.²⁸ Often, however, Kurds appear as nameless, faceless hordes that ravage the countryside, including its monasteries and Christian populations, like locusts.²⁹ One chronicler even portrays a Kurdish group as being employed by an emir specifically as looters, evidently because they were so experienced at the task.³⁰ Although scribes might remember individual Kurdish rulers for their kindness to Christians,³¹ the Kurds were generally regarded by Christian authors as a source of tribulation.

Although the activities of Kurdish raiders caused frequent difficulties for the Christian population, the nomadic Türkmen and their almost incessant warfare commonly posed a greater threat. Fifteenth-century armies in this region, like the fourteenth-century Anatolian armies studied by Nicolas Trépanier, typically supported themselves by plundering the sedentary population for what was necessary or valuable.³² The Āqqūyūnlū historian Abū Bakr Tīhrānī boasted of his hero Uzun Ḥasan's

²⁶ Ibid., II: xl; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 168, 205; Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 62, 143.

²⁷ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 296–97; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 275.

²⁸ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 192–93.

²⁹ Ibid., 183, 263; Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xxxviii, xliii; Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 33, 37.

³⁰ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xlv.

³¹ An Armenian scribe praised the Kurdish rulers of Ostan, 'Izz al-Dīn Shīr and his son Malik Muḥammad, as “most beneficent protectors of our Armenian nation” in 1418: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 142.

³² Trépanier distinguished plunder from provisioning “friendly” armies: Nicolas Trépanier, *Foodways and Daily Life in Medieval Anatolia: A New Social History* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2014), 58–61. I see no such distinction in fifteenth-century sources from al-Jazīra or Iraq, either Persian or Christian. Indeed, one Armenian scribe depicted the Qarāqūyūnlū ruler Jahānshāh as devastating the regions already under his sovereignty during a dispute with the Kurdish emir of Bidlis: Sanjian, *Colophons*, 273.

raids upon the sedentary population.³³ Nor were Christians alone plundered: while Țihrānī pretended to be shocked when the Qarāqūyūnlū plundered Muslim peasants,³⁴ the Āqqūyūnlū army likewise plundered Muslims. Țihrānī made explicit that Qarā ‘Uthmān’s nephew Qilīch Aşlān b. Aḥmad and Uzun Ḥasan’s brother Jahānshāh b. ‘Alī raided Muslims.³⁵ Some Muslims were likely also among the Kurds and Bedouin raided by Uzun Ḥasan himself.³⁶ But typically the religious identities of plundered victims are not recorded, although presumably they included Christians as well as Muslims.³⁷ A sixteenth-century colophon complained of a raid on the mountain districts of Bāz and Jilū by Türkmen “bandits” employed by the Qarāqūyūnlū ruler Jahānshāh in 1760 AG / 1449.³⁸ This was such an established procedure that a Syriac chronicler assumed an army that did not plunder the local farmers must have received strict orders from the commander not to harm the populace.³⁹ An army failing to plunder was remarkable, because unusual.

Plunderers regularly converted what was not already food or coin into more usable form by selling the captives and stolen goods back to the sedentary populations. Many manuscripts survive with notes indicating that they had been looted and were bought by a Christian from the Muslims, sometimes even listing the price.⁴⁰ Church utensils and captured Christians were also common objects of ransom.⁴¹ In one case even the patriarchal church on the island of Aght‘amar in Lake Van may have been held for ransom.⁴² For captives who were not ransomed, enslavement was probably the usual result: an Armenian scribe explicitly complained that the Āqqūyūnlū emir Qarā ‘Uthmān enslaved captives from Erzincan in

³³ Țihrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, I: 237.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, I: 180.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, I: 206–7, 228–29.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, I: 214–15, 233, 244. On the other hand, Țihrānī also depicted Uzun Ḥasan as meritoriously releasing captives: *ibid.*, I: 243.

³⁷ E.g. Sanjian, *Colophons*, 122, 125, 128, 139, 273.

³⁸ Fiey, “Saint ‘Azzīza,” 431.

³⁹ The chronicler remarks twice on the fact that the vizier of Ya‘qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan, Sulaymān bey, did not allow his army to destroy the agriculture in his campaign given under the years 1796–1798 AG / 1485–1487: Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xlix–l.

⁴⁰ Cambridge BFBS 446, f. 255a; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 120, 131, 133, 165, 167, 194, 195, 215, 255, 263, 326; Khach‘ikyan, *Tashningerord*, III: 92; Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: liii.

⁴¹ The ransom of church furnishings is mentioned in Sanjian, *Colophons*, 86, 167, 171–72, 273, 283; Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xxxi, xxxviii, xlvii, liii. People are mentioned as being ransomed in Sanjian, *Colophons*, 258; Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xl, xlv.

⁴² Sanjian, *Colophons*, 140–41. Unfortunately, the original is not explicit that it is the Holy Cross Church rather than a liturgical cross that is being ransomed.

1422.⁴³ This recurrent practice of looting and ransom resulted in a progressive transfer of wealth from the sedentary populations into the coffers of the nomads, with almost the regularity of a nongovernmental form of taxation. The continual ransoming of captives and possessions, however, also implies the existence of standardized social practices of exchange by which people and property might be regained. Other less violent forms of commercial exchange should be presumed, of course, so that the ransom payments are probably simply the best attested of the economic relations that linked various population sectors.

Captivity was also feared for its relation to conversion to Islam. T'ovma Metsop'ets'i complained about captives being circumcised and "broken" (*bekēin*) from Christianity, and Armenians taken to Herat perishing in a sea of unbelief.⁴⁴ He praised an Armenian woman for killing her young son and herself rather than allowing themselves to be captured, and thereby risking apostasy.⁴⁵ A Syriac Orthodox chronicler likewise complained of captured Christians converting to Islam.⁴⁶ Muslim sources from this region seem not to mention any new Muslims in the fifteenth century, but Christian clerical sources lament conversion in general terms. A poem preserved in a fifteenth-century East Syrian manuscript takes as its theme an earlier deacon who apostatized, depicting the mourning of the other Christians, the deprivation of the liturgical functions assigned to deacons, and even the grief of the sun, moon, and stars as a result of his desertion.⁴⁷ An Armenian poet included apostasy in a list of sins prompted by avarice.⁴⁸ Sources written by leaders of the community that was abandoned naturally emphasize the illegitimacy of conversion. Yet forced conversions were rarer and smaller than in late medieval Egypt and Spain.⁴⁹ The only reported mass conversion,

⁴³ Ibid., 164. The Armenian word զերուքիւն, meaning either "captivity" or "enslavement," is used in dozens of colophons, but in this instance the scribe more specifically says that the Türkmen ruler carried off slaves (*ծարսայ*) and sold them.

⁴⁴ Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 154, 164.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 29–31. For a comparable development among Western European Jews in response to the pogroms of the First Crusade, see Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross*, 174–75.

⁴⁶ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xlvi.

⁴⁷ Paris BN Syr. 181, ff. 75a–78b. The text does not specify to which religion he converted, but Islam is the most likely.

⁴⁸ Ed. Khondkaryan, ed., *Mkrtich' Naghsh* (Yerevan: Haykakan S. S. R. Gitut'yunneri Akademiayi Hratarakzut'yun, 1965), 117.

⁴⁹ The only reported conversions explicitly identified as compelled are those of individual Georgian and Armenian princes captured by Tīmūr: Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 108–9, 119–20; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 152. Further east, Ulugh Bey b. Shāhrukh is said to have forced the Christians of Samarqand to choose between Islam or death: Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 36.

allegedly involving over 500 people, resulted not from a government initiative but from famine, as Armenians sought food from the Kurds.⁵⁰ Grigor Khat'ets'i complained that Armenian captives "intermingled with Muslims ... and learned their wicked ways," rather than that they were compelled to adopt Islam.⁵¹ Christian clergy presented this-worldly concerns as the sole motivation for conversion to Islam in the fifteenth century.

It is not clear that all conversion was so unspiritual. The same Christian clerical sources present a very different picture regarding Muslim conversion to Christianity, which would perhaps apply also to some Christian conversions to Islam. We noted in Chapter 2 that certain Muslim rulers were rumored to have adopted Christian beliefs.⁵² T'ovma Metsop'ets'i also reported the conversion and baptism of a young Persian man from Tabriz named Yūsuf, allegedly in response to a dream of Christ enthroned, the torments of hell, and the blessings of heaven.⁵³ An Armenian colophon from 1464 praised a bishop in Ankara for attracting crowds of Muslim notables who "listened to the word of God and believed in Christ."⁵⁴ Although Ankara is outside al-Jazīra, and we cannot exclude the possibility that this report is more panegyric than fact, it indicates that amicable discussions might lead to religious conversion, even if Christian clergy of course did not regard "apostasy" to Islam as in any way comparable to adopting Christianity, with their differing eternal effects. These opposite results were emphasized in T'ovma Metsop'ets'i's account of an Armenian vardapet named Hovhannēs preaching to Muslims to abandon Islam.⁵⁵ The positive social contacts that Christian authors celebrated when they led Muslims to honor Christianity or church leaders likely operated in the opposite direction as well, and conversion to Islam was safer than adopting Christianity.

Martyrdom also forms a prominent theme in Armenian, but not Syriac, sources from the fifteenth century.⁵⁶ Armenian sources apply the title "martyr" to any Christian killed by Muslims, apparently even to

⁵⁰ Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 162.

⁵¹ Ի յայլագգիս խառնակեցան, Ըզարութիւն նոցա ուսաւ: Khach'ikyan, *Tashningerord*, I: 285; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 160.

⁵² See Chapter 2, fnn. 76–79.

⁵³ Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 120–27. Metsop'ets'i did not record the year. The convert, unable to find a place to live peaceably, eventually settled in Georgia.

⁵⁴ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 284.

⁵⁵ Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 93.

⁵⁶ Syriac sources do not apply the term "martyr" to Christian victims of violence in the fifteenth century, for example Bishop Malkā in Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xxxiv.

Christians killed in battle.⁵⁷ T'ovma Metsop'ets'i listed four vardapets martyred in the 1420s: Grigor Khlat'ets'i, Yakob Ovsannats'i, Ghazar of Bidlīs, and a teacher named T'ovma.⁵⁸ Of these, Grigor Khlat'ets'i was killed in a raiding expedition; we do not know the circumstances of the other murders well enough to rule out the same motive.⁵⁹ The troops of Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf “went into the monastery of [Ghazar], and roasted the sacristan in the fire and made him a martyr, and then they went away.”⁶⁰ Martyrdom in the late antique Christian sense, judicial execution for refusing to engage in practices deemed (by the martyr or the martyr's community) incompatible with Christianity, is unattested in fifteenth-century sources from this region. When an Armenian noble named Musefir in Archēsh was killed, it was “by the slander and artifice of loveless Christians.”⁶¹ This may imply that he was judicially executed by Qarā Yūsuf rather than killed in battle or looting, but it would also imply that the charge was not his Christianity. In all of these examples the religion of the person killed seems not to have been the motive for the murder.

There are three examples closer to late antique martyrdom. The Armenian merchant Khōja Mirak' was murdered in 935 AA / 1486, reportedly after refusing to convert to Islam when summoned to do so by a soldier.⁶² T'ovma Metsop'ets'i presented Ghazar of Bidlīs as being killed by “infidel” Kurds after insisting that anyone who did not teach the divinity of Christ would suffer eternal destruction.⁶³ Yūsuf, the Persian convert to Christianity, was stoned in Archēsh, although in this case it did not result in the death of the individual.⁶⁴ In none of these cases was the murder done by a ruler or government representative, nor was there any judicial process. Indeed, in the last example, the Armenian historian recorded that it was the “mullahs” who rescued him from the mob's anger, an instance where Muslim 'ulamā' helped even an apostate from Islam to Christianity. It is clear that accounts

⁵⁷ T'ovma Metsop'ets'i and Dawit' of Mārdīn both refer to large numbers of Christians being martyred at once, in the former case by Timūr as he ravaged the lands of Armenia, and in the latter instance by the Qarāqūyunlū general Rustam Ibn Tarkhan, who “tortured numerous Christians and made them martyrs” in the process of capturing and devastating a city: Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 19; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 221.

⁵⁸ Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 63–65.

⁵⁹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 168.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 293. The soldiers were probably torturing the sacristan in order to find hidden treasures.

⁶¹ Չարախօսութեամբ եւ նենգութեամբ անսէր քրիստոնէիցն: Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 71.

⁶² See Chapter 2, fn. 1.

⁶³ Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 64.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 126–27.

of martyrs in the period involved real violence suffered by Christians, but typically for the purposes of plunder rather than persecution.

The paucity of references to Christians in Muslim sources is keenly felt in any attempt to reconstruct the relationships of Christians with their nonruling Muslim neighbors, for we are forced to rely almost exclusively on Christian clerical sources. The various authors of these sources present their Muslim neighbors in an exclusively negative light, with the exception of panegyrics extolling particular Christian preachers by highlighting the non-Christians in their audiences. Certainly there were many strained and even violent interactions between the Christian and Muslim populations, such as urban competition and rural plunder with its attendant killing. But there were probably also regular social systems that functioned normally much of the time, permitting economic exchange and occasionally more amicable relations across religious divides.

RELATIONS AMONG CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS

Clerical sources not only portray the negative side of relations between Christians and their Muslim neighbors, they also highlight conflicts among different Christian populations. Just as we can infer a broader range of interactions in the former case, so also Christians of different denominations did not always interact in hostile ways. Nevertheless, the negative interactions among Christian groups are more obvious in the sources. Although there is no record of physical violence among different Christian populations in this region, the leaders of each denomination attempted to enforce separation from other groups.

Divergences of doctrine and practice remained a point of contention. Charles Tieszen's observation of an earlier period applies equally to the fifteenth century: "The differences between these Christian traditions were not limited to Christological confessions. Each community celebrated different liturgies and languages and practiced varying liturgical devotions."⁶⁵ The Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Nūḥ of Mārdīn wrote a "Treatise on the faith of the Syrians" in which he condemned the dyophysite Christology of other Christian groups, including the Church of the East.⁶⁶ While he was maphrian, he delivered a sermon in Mosul in

⁶⁵ Tieszen, *Cross Veneration*, 11.

⁶⁶ Franz Cöln, "Die anonyme Schrift 'Abhandlung über den Glauben der Syrer,'" *Oriens Christianus* 4 (1904): 82–85. The work is entitled *ميمير علي الامانة السريانية*, and although it is anonymous in the text, it is traditionally ascribed to Patriarch Nūḥ. For a discussion of the authorship of the text, see *ibid.*, 33–39.

1803 AG / 1492 “on account of those who oppose Mary the God-bearer and do not celebrate the glorious festival of the Annunciation.”⁶⁷ Only the Church of the East refused to call Mary “God-bearer” (*yāldath ’allāhā*), preferring instead the term “Christ-bearer” (*yāldath mshīhā*), and only they celebrated the Annunciation not as a single feast in spring, but as a liturgical season leading up to Christmas. Thus it is clear that the Syriac Orthodox maphrian was targeting the “Nestorians” in this sermon, delivered in the city where the catholicos of the Church of the East frequently resided.

Nor was the Church of the East the unique recipient of hostility from other Christian groups. The anonymous continuator of the ecclesiastical chronicle of Bar ‘Ebroyo recalled the earlier anathemas between Syriac Orthodox and Armenian patriarchs.⁶⁸ The different Armenian patriarchs had also issued excommunications against each other in the late fourteenth century, which remained a point of interest for T’ovma Metsop’ets’i in the middle of the fifteenth century.⁶⁹ One Armenian Orthodox author even rejoiced at the dispersal of the Armenian Catholics when Iskandar b. Qarā Yūsuf captured the fortress of Mākū in 1426.⁷⁰ After the death of a Syriac Orthodox patriarch in Mamlūk Syria in 1732 AG / 1421, his successor, Shem’ūn of Gargar, went to the Coptic pope in Egypt for consecration rather than to Syriac Orthodox bishops.⁷¹ Although Shem’ūn alleged as a reason the opposition of the Muslim rulers,⁷² after his death in 1756 AG / 1445 the Patriarch Ignatius Basil Ḥedloyo of Mārdīn traveled to Jerusalem to prevent the election of a successor, “lest the schism and confusion become even worse than before.”⁷³ Clearly relations among Syriac Orthodox patriarchs were not all amicable, and one wonders if fear of the suppression of the patriarchate was part of the reason Shem’ūn of Gargar had turned to the Coptic pope. The rejection of other Christian groups was so emphatic that the Church of the East had a ritual for the reception of “Jacobites and Melkites who become Christians,” i.e. who

⁶⁷ *Min ajli mu’ānidīn Maryam Wālidat Allah wa-lam ya’malūn ’id al-bashāra al-majīd*: Vatican sir. 97, f. 142a.

⁶⁸ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 288–89.

⁶⁹ Metsop’ets’i, *Patmagrut’yun*, 46–47, 81.

⁷⁰ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 171. For a more sympathetic Orthodox lament over the fall of Mākū, see *ibid.*, 175.

⁷¹ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 296–97.

⁷² *Ibid.* Although Wilmshurst’s translation gives “Arabs,” the Syriac term *Tayyāyē* was used specifically for Muslims.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 298–99.

join their church.⁷⁴ Each of these Christian minorities rejected the others with which it interacted.

Of course this mutual hostility among Christian groups expressed itself in other forms of opposition as well. T'ovma Metsop'ets'i hints at "Nestorian" antagonism toward Armenians in his account of the Persian convert to Christianity who traveled to Baghdad.⁷⁵ Between 1482 and 1489, the East Syrian congregation in Nisibis also opposed the attempts of the Syriac Orthodox patriarchs of Mārdīn and Ṭūr 'Abdīn to build a church there.⁷⁶ One Armenian scribe reported that "merciless clergymen" delayed him from redeeming a book that had been looted; they perhaps belonged to a rival denomination.⁷⁷ Clergy of rival Christian denominations were viewed as a spiritual threat.

Monks of different denominations also competed with each other. The poem for the commemoration of Rabban Hōrmīzd by Īshō'yahb b. Mqaddam presents intense hostility and spiritual conflict between the seventh-century East Syrian monk and a nearby Syriac Orthodox monastery, no doubt illustrating how inter-Christian relations were experienced at the time of the text's composition in the fifteenth century.⁷⁸ The continuation of Bar 'Ebroyo's world chronicle also narrates in rich detail an episode of monastic competition. After part of a Syriac Orthodox church roof had collapsed in the village of Bēth Sbhīrīno in Ṭūr 'Abdīn in 1474, the congregation discovered some relics of a saint previously unknown to them, one Mār Dādā. Some East Syrian monks boasted that Mār Dādā's history was known in the Church of the East, specifically at an East Syrian monastery outside Tabriz, whereupon a Syriac Orthodox monk traveled to that monastery, posed as a "Nestorian" from Nisibis, and copied the saint's history.⁷⁹ The official anathemas and excommunications that divided different Christian hierarchies were also played out in mutual opposition.

⁷⁴ Cambridge Add. 1988, f. 142a. For the dating of this ritual, see Appendix D.

⁷⁵ Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 126. He describes the convert as "tormented by the Nestorian people" (չարչարեալ ի նեստորական ժողովրդէնէն), without specifying the nature of the harm. On the other hand, perhaps the East Syrian priests, whom Metsop'ets'i considered heretics, were attempting to convince the new convert to join their church instead of the Armenians, which the historian would have regarded as spiritual harm.

⁷⁶ Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, ff. 85a–b; Fiey, *Nisibe*, 111.

⁷⁷ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 133.

⁷⁸ Berlin orient. fol. 619, ff. 103a, 104b–105b.

⁷⁹ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xlv–xlvi. For a mid sixteenth-century example of the reverse, East Syrian clergy consulting a Syriac Orthodox priest to find a history of their patron saint, see Fiey, "Saint 'Azzīza," 432.

However, these negative interactions which are recorded in the sources are not the entire story. Although the sources do not make the point explicit, they imply a broader range of social contacts among Christians of different groups. Neither T'ovma Metsop'ets'i nor the continuator of Bar 'Ebroyo's chronicle considered it necessary to explain why the Persian convert in Baghdad or the Syriac Orthodox monks of Ṭūr 'Ab-dīn were conversing with "Nestorian heretics." Social interactions among Christian denominations were taken for granted. Some more positive interactions across denominational lines were recorded in the laudatory biography of Patriarch Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh (d. 1493). After a raid on the kingdom of Georgia by Uzun Ḥasan, the Syriac Orthodox patriarch ransomed some of the Georgian captives and sent them home, even though the Georgian church was Chalcedonian and therefore "heretical" according to the Syriac Orthodox.⁸⁰ After the patriarch completed his controversial construction project in Nisibis mentioned above, according to the account, "the Nestorians were sorry about the shame which they had done, and they brought gifts and offerings, and they were offering them to our father [Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh] while falling on his feet and begging forgiveness," which he granted, "and they made peace with each other."⁸¹ On occasion, in certain circumstances, it was possible for Christians of different denominations to live together in peace. Inter-Christian interactions remain elusive in the available sources, but they were not wholly negative.

PATRIARCHAL INHERITANCE

Social interactions of the more stable variety, when they existed, relied upon shared cultural foundations that are likewise nearly invisible in the sources. But one example of a shared, though not uncontested, cultural element in Iraq and al-Jazīra is the heritability of religious leadership. Syriacists have typically presented the hereditary patriarchate as a curious feature of the Church of the East introduced in the fifteenth century,⁸² but in fact it was a widely practiced model for the transfer of religious authority within this region in the medieval period. It was practiced by every other Christian denomination in late medieval Iraq and al-Jazīra, despite contemporary criticisms, as well as by Jewish and Islamic religious

⁸⁰ Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, f. 84a.

⁸¹ Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, f. 85b.

⁸² For example, Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 19.

die before the patriarch.⁸⁹ Some also favored keeping the maphrian's succession "in the family": on the death of Maphrian Dioscorus Behnam Arboyo in 1728 AG / 1417, "the Easterners wished to install [his nephew Bar Şawmo] as maphrian after his deceased uncle."⁹⁰ In 1782 AG / 1471, Patriarch Ignatius VI Khalaf of Mārdīn consecrated his nephew 'Azīz as maphrian to designate him his successor, although on the death of this patriarch in 1795 AG / 1484 the election was disputed between partisans and opponents of Maphrian 'Azīz.⁹¹ Even though Maphrian 'Azīz did not become patriarch of Mārdīn, his partisans are reported to have said "Leadership is fitting for this man because he is the nephew of the one who passed away."⁹² These Syriac Orthodox put forward their candidate's relationship to his uncle Patriarch Khalaf as his qualification for the office, and they were not the only Syriac Christians to favor a hereditary patriarchate.

Nor was patriarchal inheritance limited to Syriac Christianity. The anonymous chronicler, complaining of the succession, twice referred to it as the current practice of the Armenians and the "Hagarenes," or Muslims.⁹³ Already at the end of the thirteenth century, Catholicos Zak'aria I of Aght'amar succeeded his older brother Step'annos II.⁹⁴ Again at the end of the fourteenth century, Dawit' III succeeded his brother Zak'aria II as Catholicos of Aght'amar, following the latter's martyrdom.⁹⁵ Step'annos IV succeeded his paternal uncle Catholicos Zak'aria III at Aght'amar, and his maternal great-uncle was Dawit' III.⁹⁶ According to Robert Hewsen, by the latter half of the fifteenth century, the office of the Catholicos of Caucasian Albania also became hereditary, passing from uncle to nephew within the local ruling house, the Ḥasan-Jalalids.⁹⁷ A firman of Ya'qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan from 892 AH / 1487 supports this: it names "the priest Shim'ōn Khalīfa and Mardirōs

⁸⁹ Ibid., 292–93.

⁹⁰ ܡܫܘܚܘܬܝܢ ܕܩܕܝܫܝܢ ܕܩܘܝܢܝܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܘܬܝܢ ܕܩܕܝܫܝܢ ܕܩܘܝܢܝܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܘܬܝܢ ܕܩܕܝܫܝܢ ܕܩܘܝܢܝܐ: Ibid., 496–97. "Easterners" refers to Syriac Orthodox Christians in Iraq.

⁹¹ Ibid., 304–5.

⁹² ܕܡܫܘܚܘܬܝܢ ܕܩܕܝܫܝܢ ܕܩܘܝܢܝܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܘܬܝܢ ܕܩܕܝܫܝܢ ܕܩܘܝܢܝܐ (my translation): ibid., 306–7.

⁹³ Ibid., 288–89, 304–5.

⁹⁴ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 376.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 119, 149.

⁹⁶ Nersēs Akinean, *Gawazanagirk' kat 'oghikosats' Aght'amaray: Patmakan usumnasirut 'iun* (Vienna: Mkhitar'arean tparan, 1920), 108–10; Frédéric Macler, "Le 'liber pontificalis' des catholicos d'Althamar," *Journal Asiatique* 202 (1923): 54.

⁹⁷ Robert H. Hewsen, "The Meliks of Eastern Armenia: A Preliminary Study," *Revue des Études Arméniennes* n.s. 9 (1972): 317–18.

the monk” as “the nephews of the priest Mātiyōs the Catholicos” who ruled in the time of Jahānshāh Qarāqūyunlū, and confirms the former as “leader” (i.e. catholicos) of the Armenians.⁹⁸ Armenian Christians also practiced patriarchal heredity, especially in the patriarchates of Aght‘amar and Caucasian Albania, titling the designated heir *at‘orakal* (“throne-possessor”).⁹⁹

Nor was hereditary religious leadership a Christian distinctive. Islam did not require celibacy of its religious leadership, and so offices were commonly passed from father to son rather than from uncle to nephew. The anonymous continuator of Bar ‘Ebroyo’s chronicle labeled patriarchal heredity the practice not only of the Armenians, but also of the “Hagarenes,” i.e. Muslims.¹⁰⁰ Both the Umayyad and ‘Abbasid caliphates claimed inherited religious authority within Islam. However, no caliph was recognized in Iraq and al-Jazīra during the fifteenth century, and it is unclear that a Christian chronicler would refer to the continuing figurehead ‘Abbasid caliphate in Mamlūk Egypt when his Muslim compatriots did not. The chronicler might instead refer to the common practice of a *qādī* being succeeded by his son,¹⁰¹ or to the hereditary succession of the leaders of Sufi orders. As an example of this latter, the Ṣafawī shaykhs in the fifteenth century passed on their increasingly militaristic rule of the Ṣafawiyya order from father to son as they intermarried with the Āqqūyunlū dynasty: Shaykh Junayd (d. 864 AH / 1460) married Uzun Ḥasan’s sister Khadīja, whose son Shaykh Ḥaydar (d. 893 AH / 1488) married a daughter of Uzun Ḥasan, whose sons in turn succeeded him.¹⁰² Although not mentioned by the Syriac Orthodox polemicist, Jewish communities likewise had their dynastic authorities into the fifteenth century, the scions of the medieval fascination with descendants of the biblical King

⁹⁸ كنيش شمون خليفه ومردوس محراسيا برادرزاده ها [ى] كنيش ماتيويس كنياكوس, *Farmānhā*, 92–93. In this case the named nephews were not the immediate successors to their uncle, the earlier catholicos, but it demonstrates a tendency to keep the succession within one family.

⁹⁹ Sanjian interpreted the աթոռալիւ as a “coadjutor catholicos,” suggesting simultaneous patriarchs sharing patriarchal duties: Avedis K. Sanjian, “Catholicos Aristakēs II’s Encyclical of AD 1475,” *Revue des Études Arméniennes* n.s. 18 (1984): 161. But the Armenian could mean someone who “holds the throne” in the event of it becoming vacant. Sanjian emphasized that appointing an աթոռալիւ during the lifetime of the current catholicos was a fifteenth-century development, but there was an earlier history of nephews or brothers inheriting the patriarchal throne from their relations.

¹⁰⁰ See fn. 93.

¹⁰¹ One example of a *qādī* who was at least the son and grandson of *qādīs* in early fifteenth-century Cairo is given in Ibn Taghrībirdī, *History of Egypt*, III: 173–74.

¹⁰² Woods, *Aqqūyunlu*, 150.

David.¹⁰³ Heredity was a widely acknowledged principle of the transfer of religious leadership among Muslims and Jews as well as Christians.

In light of these earlier practices of other religious groups it becomes clear that the hereditary office of *catholicos-patriarch* in the Church of the East was not a peculiar institution. Instead, it was a long-standing regional concept of the legitimate transfer of religious authority in the late medieval period. The Church of the East adopted this concept later than most other groups around it, only in the fifteenth century,¹⁰⁴ and it is unique only in maintaining this practice, although not without opposition, into the twentieth century. The broad-based support for the hereditary transfer of religious authority, cutting across sectarian boundaries, reveals another dimension of the relationships among different groups in the fifteenth-century Middle East: a shared cultural heritage.

CONCLUSION

Because scribal colophons are the main source we have for the relationships among members of different religious groups in society, understanding the scribes' world is necessary for understanding these interactions. This world is only partially described in the colophons, because scribal sources favor what is remarkable, and ordinary life is by definition unremarkable. What *was* remarkable, in the fifteenth century, was primarily violence, and the scribal sources document abundant conflict among different religious groups. Yet the social logic of these recorded scenes of conflict reveals that there were also normal interactions, both between Muslims and Christians, and among different Middle Eastern Christian denominations. This is not to minimize the violence that was endemic in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra, but it is to indicate that modern scholarly models of "dhimmitude" and of *convivencia*, or binaries of tolerance and intolerance, are too simplistic to capture the range of positive and negative social interactions among members of various religious groups in a diverse society.¹⁰⁵ The varied social relationships in the fifteenth century, even within the same religion, were sometimes violent but usually

¹⁰³ For examples, see Franklin, *This Noble House*, 202–3. Franklin's study shows, among other things, that exilarchs should not be regarded as exclusively political authorities: *ibid.*, 4.

¹⁰⁴ For a discussion of what prompted the Church of the East to adopt patriarchal heredity, see Chapter 8.

¹⁰⁵ See Chapter 2, fnn. 11, 14.

unremarkable.¹⁰⁶ The example of the transfer of religious leadership by inheritance reveals aspects of a shared religious culture even among Muslims and Christians in the late fifteenth century. The scribes, even in their very partial ways, introduce us to a muddled world of often suspicious coexistence punctuated by deadly violence.

¹⁰⁶ Grehan argues that, in Ottoman Syria, “peaceful coexistence” across religious boundaries “sprang from daily interactions ... bound by shared values and crisscrossing social networks.” He also emphasized a “cultural unity that, in everyday social life, tended to overshadow official religious distinctions”: Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 189. The violence of fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra was frequently greater than in Ottoman Syria.

Interlude: Concepts of Communities

When Īshāq Shbadnāyā, a priest from the region of al-Jazīra, wrote about Christianity, he did not define it in terms of the social relations described in the preceding chapters.¹ A theologian and poet of the mid fifteenth century, he thought instead of specific cultural content that was implicit in the act of labeling an individual or a group as “Christian.” Shbadnāyā wrote of a Trinitarian God, of Jesus and the world, of particular rituals, and of communal pasts. Identification as Christian was an action that meant something to people such as Shbadnāyā in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra; the challenge for modern scholars is how to delineate precisely what. Subsequent chapters will explore what it meant to be Christian in this region at this time; the present interlude will sketch a method for doing so. The approach presented here asks how the people of the past conceptualized their social divisions and communities, in order to access the cultural meanings that were likely to be socially relevant in their period. While concepts of communities are slippery subjects for historical inquiry, this interlude suggests that fifteenth-century people in al-Jazīra and Iraq, including Shbadnāyā, considered being Christian a primary identity, more significant than ethnicity, family, occupation, politics, or place of origin.

Fifteenth-century people conceptualized their societies in ways that surprise modern scholars. For example, an Armenian colophon dated 898 AA / 1449 boasted that the Armenian bishop of Āmid was honored by “not only our Christian people, but also the Turks, the Tat, the Tatar, the Kurd, the Arab, the Jew, and all the peoples.”² Evidently the scribe divided the population of his region into different groups, among which the

¹ For what is known about Shbadnāyā, see Carlson, “Shbadnaya’s Life and Works,” 191–214.

² Ոչ ... միայն յազգս քրիստոնէից, այլև թուրք, և թաթ, և թաթար, և քուրթ, և Արապ, և Ջհուս, և ամենայն ազիւն: Khach’ikyan, *Tashbingerord*, I: 623–24.

religious affiliation “Christian” sits alongside several ethnic identities; the final category, Jews, was both. The colophon later subdivides Christians: the bishop convinced the Türkmen ruler to overturn an onerous requirement of “Armenians, Syrians, Nestorians, and Jews.”³ This list includes a polemical religious label, Nestorians, alongside two ethnic labels used for Christian groups, Armenians and Syrians, and Jews again at the intersection of religion and ethnicity. Modern scholars might be tempted to divide medieval society along either ethnic or religious lines, depending on the question under discussion, but such a division would be no more natural than the seemingly mixed categories of this Armenian scribe. The division of a society into its constituent communities is not fixed by population statistics, but rather varies with the conceptual framework used.

It is also important to contextualize the invoked categories appropriately. Western scholars, whether Islamicists, Syriacists, or historians, tend to assume that medieval Middle Eastern Christianity was similar to more familiar forms of the religion in Europe or America. In many ways it was; Christianity in this region developed few unique beliefs or practices. Yet Heleen Murre-van den Berg has suggested that in the study of Middle Eastern history, “a greater sensitivity to the specific characteristics of identify formation of religious communities is needed, especially when acknowledging and understanding the different positions that Christians may take in societies in which they feel marginalized.”⁴ Even shared religious elements, when given different emphases and expressed in a radically different social and cultural context, could lead to surprising features and distinctive developments. The case of patriarchal heredity reminds us that Christians also participated fully in the distinctive culture of Iraq and al-Jazīra.⁵ Unfortunately, due to the many divergences within western Christianity, scholars approach Middle Eastern Christians expecting or assuming different characteristics, so that it is difficult to rely upon a common foundation of scholarly understanding. Furthermore, the typical Western approach to the subject, which lists ways in which eastern Christians “diverge” from familiar European norms, implicitly casts the Middle Easterners as odd and marginal, if not heretical. That, of course, was not the experience of Shbadnāyā and others in late medieval Iraq,

³ Հայք, և Ասորիք, և Նեստորականք, և Ջհուտք : Sanjian, *Colophons*, 212; Khach‘ikyan, *Tasnhingerord*, I: 627. I have clarified Sanjian’s translation. The groups mentioned, in this and the preceding example, are evidently relevant due to their presumed religious affiliation, but semantically the terms used are primarily ethnic rather than religious labels.

⁴ Murre-van den Berg, “Unexpected Popularity,” 9–10.

⁵ See Chapter 3.

for whom it was the few visiting European outsiders who were bizarre. By contrast, the approach adopted here avoids privileging European forms of Christianity, at the same time as it allows us to pay particular attention to the social implications of particular beliefs, ideas, concepts, and practices.

THE CONCEPTUAL DIMENSION OF SOCIETY

Every community is as much conceptual as social. Benedict Anderson famously asserted that any community larger than a village exists in the imagination.⁶ ʾIshāq Shbadnāyā could not have met every member of the Church of the East, so when he referred to his community, he had some abstract concept of that community in mind. In other words, for every recognized social group there is a corresponding idea of what shared features define and shape the membership and their interactions. We can go further: the concept of a community is what distinguishes a socially significant identification from a common feature shared by many people but considered irrelevant for interpersonal or institutional relations. The defining features of the group are typically conceptualized as independent of the specific individuals who socially constitute the membership of the community at a given time. I prefer the term “community concept” over Anderson’s phrase “imagined community” for three reasons.⁷ First, it indicates that what is under discussion is a concept, rather than a group of people, and thus avoids the misunderstanding that it is describing some special kind of community. Second, it emphasizes that the inquiry examines widely held social concepts rather than perhaps idiosyncratic imaginings. Third, it avoids connotations of unreality and invention, which Anderson partly disclaimed but nevertheless employed in his work.⁸ The concepts of communities are a subject for historical inquiry that probes how the people of the past structured their societies and understood their relations.

⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn. (London: Verso, 2006), 6. Actually, his assertion is equally true for villages: the inhabitants have a concept of what type of village this is, what kind of people constitute the village or are excluded, how this village is different from the next village, etc. The existence of a community concept is not determined by the size of the community but by its communal self-awareness.

⁷ “Community concept” may be distinguished from “communal concept” in that the latter may describe any concept shared among a group of people, while the former refers to the concept that describes the community.

⁸ For example in his discussion of newspapers: Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6, 33.

Social groups of all kinds have their corresponding conceptual existence. Whether the community in question is national, such as the affiliations that Anderson investigated, or ethnic, political, religious, professional, linguistic, or recreational, each member has a concept of the purpose and collective actions of the community, the history and characteristic features of this society, the social constitution of the group, and how to recognize and relate to other members. The fact that all communities have self-concepts enables scholars to compare social groups across multiple typological categories.

Scholars debate the degree to which the typological categories for social groups are fungible. For example, John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith criticized one typology of ethnicity because it “fails to capture the specifically ‘ethnic’ content of an ‘ethnic community.’” They rectify this lack by providing six characteristics that make groups specifically ethnic.⁹ Thus they presume that ethnic identity is distinct in kind from other forms of social organization. Max Weber, on the other hand, asserted that terms for ethnic groups usually implicitly refer to “either the existence of a contemporary political community ... or the existence of a linguistic or dialect group; or, finally, of a religious group.”¹⁰ In other words, group identities might cross conceptual typologies, although Weber’s point is merely to indicate that ideas of collective affiliation often reinforce each other in multiple social domains: “All history shows how easily political action can give rise to the belief in blood relationship,” which is apparently the kernel of Weber’s notion of ethnic identity.¹¹ Clifford Geertz likewise highlighted the differences between types of communities, proposing that certain categories of social collectivities, those based on ties perceived as “primordial” such as kinship, language, region, and religion, command more loyalty than “class, party, business, union, profession” or other voluntary associations.¹²

For this study, however, it is sufficient that every recognized community has a conceptual dimension, which implies that affiliations of different types can be compared in terms of their associated ideas. The

⁹ John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, eds., *Ethnicity* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 6–7.

¹⁰ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978), I: 393.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Clifford Geertz, “The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States,” in *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York, NY: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 111–13.

ability to compare community concepts across typological boundaries is especially helpful when the primary sources list communities of different kinds side-by-side, even though scholars would classify the groups in different categories. The colophon from 1449 cited earlier lists the populations affected by a ruler's decree as "Armenians, Syrians, Nestorians, and Jews,"¹³ mixing ethnic and religious labels. Social allegiances may be classified into categories, but the examination of community concepts provides the correct level of generalization for exploring how all varieties of collective affiliation interact within a society.¹⁴ The notion of community concepts enables scholars to analyze a society's understanding of its own diversity and integration.

It may appear, however, that community concepts suffer from certain limitations or pitfalls that hinder their analytical use. First, an association's understanding of itself may be at variance with the reality of its social existence. Is what ʾIṣḥāq Shbadnāyā wrote about his Christian community accurate? This may be termed the problem of inaccuracy. Second, the multiplicity of members of any group also raises the question whether a community concept can be treated as a singular idea, or whether there are as many concepts of a community as there are participants in that association. Did Shbadnāyā and his contemporary ʾIshōʿyahb b. Mqaddam, the East Syrian metropolitan of Erbil, conceptualize the Church of the East in the same way? This is the problem of plurality. Finally, there is the question of significance, namely whether community concepts are themselves causal forces or whether they are instead merely epiphenomena of social developments. Does it matter what Shbadnāyā or anyone else thought about the Church of the East? Addressing the issues of inaccuracy and plurality will highlight the dynamics of community concepts and their use as analytical tools, and I will explore the question of significance in the following section.

¹³ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 212.

¹⁴ In particular, this study does not presume any particular account of what makes a group "religious": Talal Asad, "The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category," in *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, 1994), 27–54. Recently, Grehan has argued that religious differences in Ottoman Syria were less significant than the shared culture and practices that crossed religious boundaries, although he also acknowledged the simultaneous presence of "sectarian" distinctions: Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 190–96. The shared religious culture described by Grehan, so central to much religious practice, was less relevant for conceptions of social organization, which are the focus of this study.

The concept of a community frequently exists in tension with social reality. For example, the court historian of the Āqqūyunlū ruler Uzun Ḥasan carefully emphasized his patron's pedigree as a Muslim raider (*ghāzī*) by reporting ancestors waging war on unbelievers (*kuffār*) since before the rise of Islam. The *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya* presents a legendary ancestor of the Āqqūyunlū emirs as a contemporary of Muḥammad who was waging war with the *kuffār* of the plain of Qibchāq before hearing the call of Islam, while his father had been engaging in *jihād* even earlier, "in the time of Anushirvan."¹⁵ The same historian depicts Despoina Khātūn as a daughter of the Greek king captured by Uzun Ḥasan's great-grandfather Qutlū Bey in battle,¹⁶ when in fact the peaceful alliance between the Āqqūyunlū and the Greek rulers of Trebizond was sealed by Qutlū's marriage to Maria Komnene, and renewed by Uzun Ḥasan's own marriage to Theodora Komnene.¹⁷ Perpetual warfare with neighboring Christian kingdoms was not the *modus operandi* of the early Āqqūyunlū beys, despite the historian's assertions to the contrary. This example demonstrates a tension between a community's conception of its past and its actual historical development. But it also shows that the understanding of the communal past is not independent of the author's notion of his contemporary community, because he altered the history to conform more closely to his present concept of how Muslims *should* be ruled, a concept that was at variance with his sovereign's actual policy.

Another example of tension between concept and reality existed in the Türkmen confederation's self-consciousness of nomadic and sedentary lifestyles: in the early fifteenth century, the Āqqūyunlū ruler Qarā 'Uthmān personally practiced nomadic pastoralism.¹⁸ Qarā 'Uthmān asserted that sovereignty rightfully belongs to nomads, while at the same time he strengthened the ruling clan's ties with the urban elites, Muslim and Christian.¹⁹ Three generations later the tension between nomad ideology and ruling power was more acute. Under Ya'qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan in the 1480s, a court historian praised the ruling Bāyandur clan for maintaining a nomadic life.²⁰ At the same time, however, Ya'qūb himself

¹⁵ Tīhrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, 18–19.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁷ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 34, 88.

¹⁸ Johannes Schiltberger, *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger: A Native of Bavaria, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, 1396–1427* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1879), 14; Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 56.

¹⁹ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 17, 57.

²⁰ Khunjī-İşfahānī, *Tārīkh-i Ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*, 24–25, 419–21.

was busy remaking his domain into an Iranian sedentary empire: John Woods illustrates how Ya‘qūb’s diplomacy was primarily determined by Iran’s sedentary economy based on the silk trade rather than on his great-grandfather’s pastoralism, and Ya‘qūb himself built a permanent palace within the city of Tabriz.²¹ The question how nomadic the late Āqqūyunlū Empire really was illustrates the tensions between a concept of the nature of this group and the social reality.

Divergences such as these can be uncovered for almost all social groups, and they have sometimes tempted historians to dismiss a community’s concept of itself as merely self-deluded fantasy. On the other hand, scholars should not necessarily expect greater accuracy – or less significance! – of a community’s self-concept than in their concepts of agriculture, politics, economics, and medicine. Simply put, even if they were sometimes wrong about themselves, they acted individually and collectively on the basis of their community concept. To make sense of their actions, scholars must understand the conceptual background to their decisions. A community concept is no less significant for being sometimes inaccurate.

The multiplicity of people who have ideas about any given social group immediately raises the issue that community concepts, of any size, are neither universal nor uniform.²² How outsiders understand a community, for instance, typically diverges (sometimes widely) from its own members’ concept of its character.²³ This is perhaps most apparent in rival religious communities, whose self-concepts both contain fidelity to God and whose concepts of each other contain faithlessness: Muslims are “pagans” according to Īshāq Shbadnāyā and “infidels” according to Armenian Christians,²⁴ who are themselves *kuffār* according to Āqqūyunlū Muslim sources.²⁵ But even members of the same social group often disagree over

²¹ Woods, *Aqqūyunlu*, 137. For a parallel shift in the Timurid empire, also only partly successful, see Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition*.

²² Although contestations of community imagination are central to the development of nationalism, especially the transition from colonial control, Anderson focused on nationalism as a system (or rather, a family of unique systems). One exception is the brief parenthetical remark citing “the struggles in late-twentieth-century Europe by certain ‘sub-’nationalities [*sic*] to change their subordinate status by breaking firmly into print – and radio”: Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 45. By relegating these groups to the status of sub-nationalities, even with scare quotes, he implicitly took the conceptual side of those who oppose such struggles.

²³ Although the internal and external conceptions of a community are distinct, they are not independent, as is shown by the practice of groups adopting as self-designations terms that were originally applied to them derogatorily.

²⁴ Biblioteka Jagiellońska Sachau 178, f. 120b; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 196.

²⁵ Ṭihrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, 12.

the character and source of their community, how it is defined, who is or is not considered a member, and every other feature of the association. For example, both the Qarāqūyunlū emir Qarā Yūsuf and the Mamlūk Sultan al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh claimed to be faithful Muslims, and yet in 821 AH / 1418 the latter persuaded the *qādīs* of Cairo to declare Qarā Yūsuf to be outside the bounds of the Muslim community.²⁶ These examples show that community self-understandings are not uniform.

This lack of conceptual uniformity does not mean that concepts of a community are fully individual or idiosyncratic, however. Many communal activities and institutions regulate the range of acceptable conceptualizations. On a subconscious level, the meaning of any term, including the names of communities, is socially regulated by linguistic exchange. Collective rituals call community members to reaffirm certain concepts of their community. For example, priests such as Shbadnāyā prayed for the well-being of the patriarch in every liturgy, encouraging the participants to maintain a certain kind of loyalty to the ecclesiastical hierarchy.²⁷ Communities also privilege certain forms of authoritative discourse, such as the *khutba* or the sermon, which equally exert continual pressure for conceptual conformity. Muslim vassals typically demonstrated loyalty by striking coins and giving the Friday sermon in the name of the sovereign,²⁸ which indicates an awareness of the power of authoritative discourses to influence community concepts. The pressure is not insuperable, but neither is it negligible, for the collective ritual life of a group communicates certain ideas about the nature of the community itself. In studying any group's conceptual existence, scholars must be alert to divergence and disagreement, to descriptive as well as prescriptive characterizations of the community, and to the mechanisms by which communities seek to regulate their self-conceptualization. This plurality, far from vitiating the utility of community concepts, merely invites historians to a more nuanced understanding of the past.

If community concepts are useful analytical tools, they must be understood in light of their simultaneous multiplicity and their historical dynamics. It would be strangely simplistic to assume that for any group of people there is only a single community, and thus a single community concept, relevant to the whole range of their social interactions. *Īshāq*

²⁶ Ibn Taghrībirdī, *History of Egypt*, III: 57.

²⁷ Arthur John Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices* (London: Rivington, Percival, & Co., 1894), 7.

²⁸ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 69.

Shbadnāyā was a Christian, but also a priest and a member of the Church of the East, indicating three religious identifications of different sizes, as well as a Syriac author, a native of al-Jazīra, and perhaps also a blacksmith or artisan of some kind.²⁹ People belong to multiple groups simultaneously. One limitation of Anderson's *Imagined Communities* is that he only examined what might be termed "top-level" imagined communities, nations or larger "transcontinental sodalities" such as world religions or expansionist empires. He explained the rise of the nation and nationalism as occasioned by the eclipse of the latter.³⁰ While this may have been sufficient for his purposes, Latin Christianity and Sunni Islam did not cease to exist with the advent of the nation-state; they merely ceased to be the most significant social identification for large portions of the population. Competing allegiances sometimes reinforce and at other times relativize primary social identifications. While this makes it difficult, apart from specific evidence, to attribute particular actions to community concepts, it also calls scholars to study not just "top-level" communities but the whole range of communal identifications.

A study of the multiplicity of social allegiances swims against certain currents in sociology. Edward Shils explicitly defined the object of sociology, "a society," as the top-level identification, although he recognized the parallel existence of "parochial loyalties."³¹ Geertz similarly downplayed the impact of voluntary associations compared with groups based on "primordial" ties, since communities in the former category "are virtually never considered as possible self-standing, maximal social units, as candidates for nationhood."³² In other words, according to Geertz, only groups that could function as independent "maximal social units" can be primary loci of loyalty. However, an individual's primary loyalty need not rest in a self-sustaining social unit; the evidence of aristocratic elites, for example, suggests that a dominating class or clan can be a powerful locus of social loyalty. The Mongol prince Sartaq (d. 1256) was identified as a Christian by both Christian and Muslim sources, yet his "Nestorian" chancellor instructed William of Rubruck, "Do not say that our master is a Christian, for he is not a Christian but a Mongol."³³ This enigmatic assertion, misunderstood by the Flemish friar, reflects the prince's primary identification

²⁹ Carlson, "Shbadnaya's Life and Works," 198–200.

³⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 36.

³¹ Edward Shils, *Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology* (University of Chicago Press, 1975), vii, xiii.

³² Geertz, "Integrative Revolution," 111.

³³ Christopher Dawson, ed., *Mission to Asia* (University of Toronto Press, 1980), 121.

not with any religion but with his conquering tribe, and shows how different segments within a single society can have different priorities for ranking their social allegiances. Every society is composed of multiple layers and overlapping circles of communities, and scholars may pursue the reconstruction, to the extent the sources permit, of competing claims for adherence.

Concepts of communities are also not ahistorical or superhistorical, but, like all concepts, they change and develop over time. Historians rightly object to studies that treat Islam as a monolithic and immutable whole, as if sixteenth-century Turks understood Islam in the same way as did eighth-century Andalusians.³⁴ Similarly, scholars should not presume that fifteenth-century Iraqi Christians would recognize fifth-century North African, thirteenth-century French, or twenty-first-century American varieties of Christianity. To understand a community, therefore, it is not sufficient to identify the label by which the community designates itself, a label that might have been used with other concepts at other times and in other places.

To identify how a group's self-understanding changes over time, it is critical to be aware of the often subtle shifts in the meaning of continuously used collective names and to analyze what forces affect ideas of group identity.³⁵ For instance, the unexpected violent destruction of an institution previously considered essential to a community will compel either a reappraisal of the group's central structure or a desperate attempt to reconstitute it, both of which happened in the wake of the Mongol execution of Caliph al-Musta'şim after the capture of Baghdad in 1258.³⁶ A more subtle influence on the development of community concepts is the idea that an association's character cannot change, which was common to many premodern ethnic and religious societies. Such an alleged immutability requires proposed modifications in the group's self-concept to be justified by demonstrations that the novel development is not really

³⁴ This point is well made by Devin A. DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 51, 66.

³⁵ For one such study focused on the shifting meanings of the ethnonym "Kurd," see Boris James, "Ethnonymes arabes ('ağam, 'arab, badw, turk, ...): Le cas kurde comme paradigme des façons de penser la différence au Moyen Âge," *Annales Islamologiques* 42 (2008): 93–125.

³⁶ A general narrative of both the Mamlūk establishment of a new caliphate and the shifts in the nature of that caliphate is given by D. Sourdel, "Khalifa," *EI2*. A development in Muslim political theory in "postcaliphal, post-Mongol times" in terms of the "renewer of the Faith" is indicated by Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 104.

new but rather fidelity to the unchanging collective identity. Clarifying the forces that shape and affect members' community concepts requires analyzing both their self-understanding's internal logic and its relations to the world in which they lived.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY CONCEPTS

Historians focus their efforts on identifying and analyzing forces that explain why certain trends and events developed as they did, rather than documenting all of the outcomes that might be identified as caused by various developments. It must be asked whether the conceptual dimension of any community has causative force itself or merely responds to underlying forces. The answer, however, is both. A community's self-concept possesses a logic of its own, which partly derives from and partly influences the social dimension of the group's existence.

Concrete examples demonstrate the causal significance of community concepts in fields traditionally recognized as historically determinative. Concerns over dynastic legitimacy indicate the power of community concepts in political history.³⁷ In the post-Mongol period, many legitimizing genealogies of ruling powers were forged and modified, but this fact itself reveals not the weakness of the prevailing community concept but rather its strength: courtiers invent legitimate genealogies not to flatter a ruler's vanity but to appease his anxieties and justify his rule to the governed, for the purpose of stabilizing a regime. Thus Tīmūr's progression from claiming authority in the name of a Chinggisid puppet khan, to marrying a Chinggisid princess to become a "son-in-law," to asserting direct descent from Genghis Khan for himself, reveals the need to acquire legitimacy in order to gain and maintain support from the nomadic military elite.³⁸

It is hard to find a starker instance of a community concept's impact on political and administrative history than the 1469 shift of the Āqqūyunlū capital from its hereditary location in Āmid to the recently conquered Qarāqūyunlū capital of Tabriz 330 miles to the east. At first sight, it is

³⁷ For the significance and contestations of dynastic legitimacy in an earlier context, see Anne F. Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

³⁸ The legitimization of Tīmūr's rule is discussed most fully by Beatrice Forbes Manz, "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty," *Iranian Studies* 21 (1988): 105–22. Manz did not discuss the rumor that Tīmūr was descended from Genghis' son Chaghatay, heard during the conqueror's lifetime by a Castilian envoy: Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403–1406*, trans. Guy Le Strange (London: G. Routledge, 1928), 214.

surprising that Uzun Ḥasan adopted the capital of a conquered rival power, far removed from his consolidated bases of support, as his new capital. But the move is readily understood as a bid for legitimate sovereignty: an Armenian colophon noting the event connects it with the elevation of Tabriz as the capital of the Mongol Ilkhanate by Hülegü Ilkhan two centuries earlier.³⁹ Indeed, a chain of Armenian colophons had noted who held the “throne of Tabriz” as an indicator of Qarāqūyunlū legitimacy in the half-century leading up to that confederation’s defeat by Uzun Ḥasan.⁴⁰ The Ilkhanid legacy provided political legitimacy to the holders of the Mongol capital in Iran, and the Āqqūyunlū relocation reveals a desire to lay hold of that mantle. Such an agenda also shaped the genealogy of the Āqqūyunlū emirs in the *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, Uzun Ḥasan’s court-sponsored history, which highlights the links of two of his forebears with the most memorable rulers of the Ilkhanate, Hülegü and Ghāzān Khān.⁴¹ The fact that Mongol rule was also considered universal rule indicates that Uzun Ḥasan’s exchange of capitals was another strategy in his project to claim that his dominion was a world empire.⁴² The links between concepts of legitimate sovereignty, political strategies, and administrative reality are multiple and tightly woven.

Economic history also demonstrates the importance of community concepts. Near the end of the reign of Sultan Ya‘qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan, his tutor and chief financial officer Qāḍī Ṣafī al-Dīn ‘Īsā objected to the *tamghā* tax on crafts and commerce, which was the backbone of the Āqqūyunlū fiscal system. The *qāḍī* considered such a tax to be inconsistent with Islamic *shari‘a*, and he proposed replacing it with taxes on land and people permitted by his religious scruples.⁴³ In Woods’ words, this plan “required shifting the entire state revenue system from the predatory exploitation of commerce by the nomadic military elite to the orderly taxation of a sedentary, agrarian ‘Oriental society.’”⁴⁴ The ‘*ulamā*’ debated the acceptability of the *tamghāwāt*, but they took for granted that the concept of their polity as an Islamic monarchy should have specific economic consequences.⁴⁵ Ultimately the tax reform plan was defeated by the death of Sultan Ya‘qūb and the opposition of the military leaders, but not before

³⁹ Sanjian, *Colophons*, 319.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 141, 156–57, 159, 174, 176, 189, 217, 272, and 285.

⁴¹ Tīhrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*, 14–15.

⁴² Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 104–8, 115.

⁴³ Minorsky, “Land Reforms,” 451–52.

⁴⁴ Woods, *Aqquyunlu*, 144.

⁴⁵ Minorsky, “Land Reforms,” 454–57.

stirring up a great deal of economic turmoil in the province of Fārs.⁴⁶ In this instance a concept of his community led a high-placed government official to undertake a complete overhaul of his government's economic basis, and even in defeat the debate over this community concept had a wide-ranging social effect.

To summarize, instead of regarding the diverse groups that comprise a population at any given time as stable transtemporal social structures, I have suggested the importance of such groups' cultural constitution for political and social history. One must not overstate the case: community concepts are merely one category of historical causes, and they are as much influenced by social and political developments as they influence them, yet their impact is demonstrable in various cases. Rather than taking a position on the question whether social adhesion is "given" or "performed," and instead of asserting the factuality or falsity of the identity claims of the various communities located in eastern Anatolia and northern Iraq in the fifteenth century, I emphasize the significance of the conceptual framework itself. This method of analysis allows the historian to use the surviving literature and poetry from the fifteenth century in order to include late medieval Christians such as Īshāq Shbadnāyā in Middle Eastern history.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH OF THE EAST
AS A COMMUNITY CONCEPT

Before we analyze what it meant to belong to the Church of the East in the fifteenth century, we may explore how significant that allegiance was, relative to other affiliations in the same period. This relative importance determines how significant studying this community concept may be for our understanding of late medieval Iraq and al-Jazīra. If identification as a member of the Church of the East was an afterthought or "held lightly," it presumably had fewer social ramifications and therefore is less significant for our understanding of the period. If, on the other hand, it was considered a primary social identity in the way racial or gender identity is emphasized by many people today, then it is correspondingly

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 453–54. For the somewhat more successful Timurid turn to agriculture, see Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition*.

more important for our understanding of the Christian minorities in fifteenth-century Iraq and Iran. The evidence is indirect, but suggests that the community concept corresponding to the Church of the East was a primary social identification.

The corpus of theological and liturgical poetry by clerics such as Īshāq Shbadnāyā and Īshō'yahb b. Mqaddam, which comprises most of the sources for the fifteenth-century Church of the East, of course emphasizes religious affiliations over other social associations, but other sources also suggest the primacy of the identification as Christian. A short non-liturgical poem probably by Īshāq Shbadnāyā complains of mistreatment by outsiders, setting the author's group identification as "Christians" against the exterior groups, "the Muslims and the Turks" and "Kurds and Ishmaelites [i.e. Arabs]."⁴⁷ From this author's perspective, the Christian identification distinguishes his community from others and provides the occasion for harassment by outsiders. The same poem puts "our poor people" in a parallel position to "the chosen Church,"⁴⁸ again suggesting the primacy of the religious concept. The dominance of ecclesiastical terms of identification in manuscript colophons is not solely due to the fact that almost all scribes were clerics. Most scribes are identified only by their ecclesiastical rank, their father's name and rank (and perhaps grandfather's as well), and their village of origin. When the colophons or inscriptions speak of laypeople, they identify them again by their occupation, their father's name, and their village of origin, which suggests that only occupational or village group loyalties were considered significant enough to mention.

Ethnic and political allegiances are almost entirely missing from fifteenth-century East Syrian sources. The only self-referential use of an ethnic label in such a text seems to be Īshō'yahb b. Mqaddam's poem in commemoration of Rabban Hōrmīzd, which referred to "all the *Sūryāyē*" (i.e. Syriac people).⁴⁹ The near total absence of ethnic labels in fifteenth-century East Syrian sources contrasts markedly with late medieval Armenian colophons and, to a lesser degree, with the West Syrian minority, both of which more prominently employ ethnic names for their

⁴⁷ Bodl. Syr. c. 9, ff. 128a-b.

⁴⁸ Bodl. Syr. c. 9, f. 129b.

⁴⁹ *ܡܩܕܕܡܐ ܫܘܪܝܝܐ*: Berlin orient. fol. 619, f. 101b. Shbadnāyā also quoted Rabban Emmanuel's earlier reference to "Persians, Assyrians, and Medes" in the Church of the East, as part of a larger discussion of the spread of Christian clergy: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 201b.

communities.⁵⁰ Political loyalty is also notably absent from sources in the Church of the East. Fifteenth-century East Syrian colophons, like those of other centuries, are dated according to the Seleucid era rather than by the reigns of local rulers. Colophons almost always name the reigning patriarch, but only two manuscripts identify the Türkmen sultan,⁵¹ which implies that the patriarch was considered more relevant for structuring this community's perception of time than secular rulers. Again, this contrasts strikingly with Armenian colophons, which typically identify the period both by the ruler of one of the Türkmen confederations and the current Armenian patriarch.⁵² Although a few manuscript colophons mention village chiefs within this community,⁵³ there does not seem to have been any political entity larger than a village in which members of the Church of the East actively participated. It is probable, of course, that social groups existed in the fifteenth century that do not appear in the surviving sources, but it is very unlikely that such unmentioned affiliations were the most significant social allegiances. Instead, to identify the most important affiliation for this segment of the population, we should weigh those kinds of group which are mentioned in the sources.

On the basis of the fifteenth-century evidence, it seems probable that the associations that competed for the loyalty of East Syrian Christians would have been their religious community, their villages, their families, or their occupations.⁵⁴ It is likely that no single loyalty was considered most important by all members of the Church of the East. The ranking of the multiple communities to which a person belongs according to relative significance usually varies from one individual to the next, or even in the same individual from one social context to the next. Yet the few glimpses

⁵⁰ Armenian colophons often refer to the "Armenian race" (Հայկազնիս սեռ) or "Armenian people" (Հայկազնիս ազգ): for a few examples, see Sanjian, *Colophons*, 123, 142, 169, 204. Syriac Orthodox sources occasionally employ the same ethnic term *Sūryoyē* (ܣܘܪܝܝܐ) as a self-designation: Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 502–3. Later East Syrian texts employ more ethnic labels, such as Israel of Alqōsh's use of *Sūrāyē* in the early seventeenth century: Israel of Alqosh and Joseph of Telkepe, *A Story in a Truthful Language: Religious Poems in Vernacular Syriac (North Iraq, 17th Century)*, ed. Alessandro Mengozzi (Lovanii: Peeters, 2002), I: 22, 27, 43.

⁵¹ Vatican sir. 186, f. 241b is an additional note that indicates that Uzun Ḥasan had just died, while BL Add. 7177, f. 321a identifies the current ruler as Sultan Ya'qūb Āqqūyūnlū.

⁵² Sanjian, *Colophons*, 8.

⁵³ See Chapter 1, fn. 138.

⁵⁴ In the early nineteenth century, village or tribe of origin was the predominant self-identification, alongside the ethnic name *Sūrāyē* and the geographical "Easterners": Becker, *Revival and Awakening*, 5, 48.

we get into the actions of fifteenth-century members of the Church of the East suggest placing their ecclesiastical membership ahead of other attested loyalties.

Both village and occupational loyalties seem to have been less significant than membership in the Church of the East, according to fifteenth-century Christians. Shbadnāyā's works, although extensive, never name his place of origin. The fact that the village community was considered secondary may be indicated by scribes who had left their villages, as well as by the cooperation between people of different villages to rebuild monasteries or fund scribal activity. Some scribes were from villages other than where they performed their copying, such as those of three manuscripts dated 1448, 1474, and 1477.⁵⁵ A monk from Salmās and a group of villagers from Hakkārī did construction work at the monastery of Rabban Hōrmīzd, outside Alqōsh, in 1485.⁵⁶ Three manuscripts were copied in Mosul but commissioned by priests who were sons of village chiefs in the surrounding plain, from Talkēpē and Tal Zqīpā.⁵⁷

Occupations, the only other identifying information regularly included in colophons and inscriptions, seem to have been less significant as a basis for collective identification in this region in the fifteenth century than in Europe at the same time. It is unclear what varieties of professional organizations may have existed in fifteenth-century al-Jazīra and Iraq.⁵⁸ Yet references to workers' professions in the available sources almost always make clear, whether contextually or explicitly, the religious adherence of the worker as well, while the reverse is not true. Thus Dā'ūd

⁵⁵ See Chapter 1, fnn. 130–31, 134.

⁵⁶ Vosté, "Rabban Hormizd," 274–75.

⁵⁷ Berlin orient. quart. 801, BL Or. 4399, and BL Add. 7174: Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 396–97.

⁵⁸ The debate over the existence or absence of guilds in Islamic history has been plagued by divergent stipulated definitions of "guild": Claude Cahen, "Y a-t-il eu des corporations professionnelles dans le monde musulman classique? Quelques notes et réflexions," in *The Islamic city: A colloquium*, ed. A. H. Hourani and S. M. Stern (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, 1970), 52; Abbas Hamdani, "The *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa'* and the Controversy about the Origin of Craft Guilds in Early Medieval Islam," in *Money, Land and Trade: An Economic History of the Muslim Mediterranean*, ed. Nelly Hanna (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), 166–67. The transformation of earlier *futuwwa* and *akhī* groups, essentially Muslim young men's associations, into organizations whose membership was based on a common profession is commonly acknowledged as a key development, which Baer dated as late as the rise of Ottoman power after 1450: Gabriel Baer, "Guilds in Middle Eastern History," in *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East: From the Rise of Islam to the Present Day*, ed. M. A. Cook (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 16–17.

b. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī's biographical dictionary consistently labeled Jewish physicians *al-Yahūdī* and Christians *al-Naṣrānī* or *al-Masīhī*, even where the religious affiliation was not relevant for any portion of the subsequent biography, whereas no Muslim physician received a comparable adjective.⁵⁹ In the few places where other Muslim sources mention non-Muslims, no occupation is named, although the court histories of the Āqqūyunlū do not typically mention manual laborers of any religion. The account of the reconstruction of a church in Bēth Sbhīrīno, a village in Ṭūr 'Abdīn, indicates that the architects and builders were Christians, and the carpenter was named as a priest.⁶⁰ The chief builder on the repair of Rabban Hōrmīzd monastery, near Alqōsh north of Mosul, identified himself by his father, his village, and his pious reference to his own sinfulness; his and his father's names were also distinctively Christian, Ḥannō b. Iṣhō'.⁶¹ Since religious designations took precedence over occupational names in the various sources, it seems likely that the religious identification is the primary community concept for this particular minority, more significant than the disparate village or occupational loyalties, or of any other unnamed affiliations.

The community concept framework requires, and enables, scholars to consider the Church of the East on its own terms. It seems probable that fifteenth-century members of the Church of the East would have identified themselves primarily with their religious community before other forms of collective life.⁶² This is not to claim that any single religious idea motivated all or even most of their social interactions and relationships, but that belonging to this particular community was more significant than other forms of social organization. At earlier or later periods, it may have been more important for members of this group to identify as ethnically "Assyrian" or theologically "Nestorian," or perhaps according to their

⁵⁹ E.g. Berlin orient. quart. 1068, ff. 95a, 108a. Sometimes Christian affiliation was made explicit by clerical rank (*al-qass*, *al-mutrān*, etc.): Berlin orient. quart. 1068, ff. 110b–111a. Probable exceptions are the father and brother of a Christian metropolitan, whose biographies do not indicate their religious affiliation: Berlin orient. quart. 1068, ff. 110b–111a.

⁶⁰ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, II: xlv–xlvi.

⁶¹ Vosté, "Rabban Hormīzd," 274–75. Ḥannō is a nickname for Yōḥannān (i.e. John).

⁶² Heleen Murre-van den Berg has likewise concluded that at the end of the fifteenth century the Church of the East did not consider itself an "ethnic" community, but a "world church": Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg, "The Church of the East in the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century: World Church or Ethnic Community?," in *Redefining Christian Identity: Cultural Interaction in the Middle East since the Rise of Islam*, ed. Jan J. van Ginkel, Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg, and Theo M. van Lint (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2005), 310–13.

occupation or political allegiance, but apparently not in the fifteenth century.⁶³ The multifaceted concept of what it meant to belong to the Church of the East, which will be explored in the subsequent chapters, was evidently a major organizing principle of social life within this portion of the population. Since this was the most significant Christian group around Mosul in northern Iraq and further east, and since Christians still comprised around one-third of the population of the Mosul plain in the sixteenth century,⁶⁴ this means that the concept of Christianity held by members of the Church of the East was a dominant organizing principle for a substantial portion of the population of northern Iraq. To understand the cultural history of this region, scholars must come to terms with this community’s understanding of its collective existence.

“ONE HOLY, CATHOLIC, AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH”

Fifteenth-century Syriac texts, including those of ʾIṣḥāq Shbadnāyā, do not generally contain much explicit discussion of their authors’ community concept. Where indications occur, they are often in passing and usually implicit, not the main topic of discussion. In the chapters that follow, therefore, we will discuss many elements of the Church of the East, most of which are shared to varying degrees with other branches of Christianity. The goal is not, except incidentally, to identify distinctive features of East Syrian religion, still less to trace the origins and development of new religious ideas. Most of the community concept of the Church of the East was not “new” in the fifteenth century, and an over-emphasis on innovation inevitably distorts our understanding of the past. Instead, the goal is to trace widely held concepts of East Syrian community, and the possible social ramifications of those ideas. Yet we may

⁶³ It was certainly significant for fifteenth-century people outside of this group to speak of them as “Nestorian,” whether in Armenian, Syriac, or Arabic. At a later period the term would be used by certain members within the Church of the East, as well. According to one eighteenth-century manuscript of the text, a fifteenth-century liturgical poem by ʾIṣḥāq yāhb b. Mqaddam used the term “Nestorians,” but a nineteenth-century manuscript reads “Christians” instead: Berlin orient. fol. 619, ff. 103b, 104b, 106b; Berlin Sachau 222, ff. 322a–b, 324b. Without a critical edition it is unclear whether the use of the term was due to the fifteenth-century author or due to a later scribe. A ritual preserved in a sixteenth-century East Syrian manuscript used the term “Nestorians” to refer to the community: Cambridge Add. 1988, f. 143b. This portion of the text seems to have been added by the sixteenth-century scribe, however, as argued in Appendix D.

⁶⁴ See Introduction, fn. 36.

for Pentecost,⁷⁰ liturgical sources understood the ecclesiastical attribute of unity primarily as linking the human congregation with the angelic world in worship.

This unity of worship is ultimately derived from the unity of God, and it is effected in a human context by the unity of baptism. The liturgy for Easter rephrases 1 Corinthians 12:13 to express the unity of all Christians in the unity of Christ and the unity of the Spirit that is given at baptism: “In one Spirit you were baptized and one Spirit you put on, one Lord you knew, for you will be called by his name.”⁷¹ Later in the same service, Ephesians 4:5 is expanded: “The Lord is one, one the faith, one the baptism for the forgiveness of sins.”⁷² In his long poem, Shbadnāyā also asserted the sacramental unity expressed in both of these scriptural paraphrases in the liturgy, where he described baptism as “the new birth, the renewer, and the unifier.”⁷³ The fifteenth-century author likewise quoted an exegetical tradition of Īshō‘ dād of Merv that the Jordan River, in which Jesus was baptized, draws from two sources in order to demonstrate “the communion of the [Jewish] people with the gentiles in the unity of sonship and worship.”⁷⁴ Again, worship and sacrament define the community’s unity. On the other hand, apart from the quotation of Mār Ābā cited above, the theme of the Church united between the angels and the humans that dominates the liturgical sources is otherwise absent from Shbadnāyā’s works, which place greater emphasis on baptism as the marker for unity in the human Church. The liturgical dimension of the community concept of the Church of the East, and the contours of the membership that it constructed, will be explored in Chapter 7.

Of the four attributes attributed to the Church by the Creed, the community’s holiness is the one most frequently invoked by fifteenth-century sources. On the other hand, it is difficult to be very concrete about the way in which holiness was understood, since “the holy Church” seems to have been used almost interchangeably with “the Church.” The range of nouns that can be modified by the adjective gives hints as to its meaning: “holy” modifies the distinctive items and actions of the Church, such

⁷⁰ “May your kindness, Lord, keep the Church and her children in one accord of faith” (ܩܠܝܬܗܘܢ ܩܘܪܕܢܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ): BL Add. 7177, f. 227b.

⁷¹ ܩܠܝܬܗܘܢ ܩܘܪܕܢܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 186a.

⁷² ܩܠܝܬܗܘܢ ܩܘܪܕܢܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 190b.

⁷³ ܩܠܝܬܗܘܢ ܩܘܪܕܢܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 92b.

⁷⁴ ܩܠܝܬܗܘܢ ܩܘܪܕܢܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 89a.

as the ritual objects and liturgical celebrations.⁷⁵ As a substantive, Syriac *qaddīshē* (“holy ones”) referred to the saints. Holiness is most consistently linked, however, with God and his attributes. Not only is the third divine *qnōmā* named the *Holy Spirit*, but the Trinity itself is often qualified by the adjective “holy,”⁷⁶ and Shbadnāyā once referred to God as “Yah, the Holy one.”⁷⁷ References to God’s holiness are multiplied in the descriptions of the divine presence as “the holy of holies,”⁷⁸ drawing from Old Testament temple language, and in the allusions to the seraphim singing “Holy, holy, holy” in Isaiah 6.⁷⁹ Christ is also specifically described as “holy,” drawing on Luke 1:35,⁸⁰ as is the divine nature and name.⁸¹ Thus we may provisionally understand the holiness of the Church to be a participation in God’s character and radiance.

The community’s holiness derives from divine sanctity. The service of Yaldā (Nativity) refers to the congregation as “children of the Holy Spirit,”⁸² while Shbadnāyā cited previous authors in his tradition as writing “by the holy inspiration of the Paraclete.”⁸³ Christ’s agency in Christian holiness is presented poetically by Shbadnāyā: “he delivered the sacrament of his body to those whom he purified.”⁸⁴ Shbadnāyā’s references to “deification” or “*theōsis*” (*ma’llāhānūthā*) can therefore also be interpreted as the transformation of Christians to more completely partake of

⁷⁵ The liturgies refer to the “holy altar,” “holy vestments,” and “holy festivals,” although the “holy Cross” is so labeled by association with Christ: BL Add. 7177, ff. 20a, 179a, 188a, 191b. Shbadnāyā also applied the adjective “holy” to festivals, baptism, and the sacraments in general: Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 82a, 90b, 92a, 110b. Shbadnāyā also referred to a “sanctuary” as *ܟܢܝܫܝܢ* (literally “house of holiness”): BL Or. 4062, ff. 123a, 130a.

⁷⁶ Shbadnāyā speaks of the “holy Trinity” at Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 1b, 82a, 85a, and 90a. Also in the Pentecost liturgy, among many other places: BL Add. 7177, f. 224b.

⁷⁷ *ܟܢܝܫܝܢ*: BL Or. 4062, f. 128a.

⁷⁸ The service for Sullāqā (Ascension) has more references to the “holy of holies” (*ܟܢܝܫܝܢ*) than any other service: BL Add. 7177, ff. 215b, 218a, 220a. Shbadnāyā also uses the phrase repeatedly: BL Or. 4062, ff. 135a, 136b, 138b; Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 89b, 193b.

⁷⁹ Shbadnāyā alludes to this episode on three occasions: BL Or. 4062, f. 141b; Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 187a; and Berlin orient. fol. 1201, f. 6b. An abbreviated liturgical reference is given for Sullāqā (Ascension): BL Add. 7177, f. 216a.

⁸⁰ The biblical text is quoted by Shbadnāyā at Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 200a. Christ is referred to as the “holy first-born Son” in the service for Yaldā (Nativity): BL Add. 7177, f. 22a.

⁸¹ For example, the divine nature is labeled “holy” by Shbadnāyā at the end of his largest work: Berlin orient. fol. 1201, f. 107b. The “holy name” is mentioned in the Pentecost service: BL Add. 7177, f. 224a.

⁸² *ܟܢܝܫܝܢ*: BL Add. 7177, f. 25a.

⁸³ *ܟܢܝܫܝܢ*: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 22b.

⁸⁴ *ܟܢܝܫܝܢ*: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 110b.

divine holiness, in both the moral and the glorious aspects.⁸⁵ The liturgy for Denhā (Epiphany) concurs with deriving human holiness from God in general: “Deity today has come to humanity to sanctify it.”⁸⁶ Soon afterward the service blesses Christ “who sanctified us by his baptism, washed us with his cleansing, exalted us by his humiliation, and qualified us for his glory.”⁸⁷ This poetic reduplication presents Christ as the source of every aspect of holiness. The relationships of theology to the community concept of the Church of the East will be analyzed in Chapters 5 and 6.

In contrast to unity and holiness, the Church’s attributes of catholicity and apostolicity are rarely invoked as such in fifteenth-century sources. The services for Yaldā (Nativity) and Qyāmtā (Easter) each mention “the holy catholic Church,”⁸⁸ but they provide no explanation for what the phrase means or why it is used in this context. The Anaphora of Addai and Mārī includes the same reference to the Church.⁸⁹ Shbadnāyā used the adjective “catholic” only once, in his prose commentary coupled with the Greek word *ekklēsia* (“church”), in contrast to contemporary Jews.⁹⁰ But even here no definition is given. A ritual for the reception of heretics into the Church of the East, of uncertain date but preserved in a sixteenth-century manuscript, refers to “the apostolic catholic Church.”⁹¹ The context identifies the “Greek fathers” Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Nestorius as pillars of the Church. Perhaps “apostolic” and “catholic” in this context are opposed to the “heretics” who anathematized these saints. But by far the most common use of the word “catholic” in the fifteenth century was as the title of the catholicos-patriarch who headed the hierarchy, so that it would not be surprising if the term were understood in a Syriac context in relationship to the patriarchal title, rather than the other way around. Chapter 8 will sketch a trajectory for how the hierarchical dimension of the community concept of the Church of the East was changing in the fifteenth century.

⁸⁵ Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 93a, 112a, 196b. Although Shbadnāyā does not identify the agent, he ascribes instrumentality in *theōsis* to baptism, which suggests a divine origin. The complex agency of baptism will be analyzed in Chapter 7.

⁸⁶ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 30a.

⁸⁷ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 31b.

⁸⁸ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: BL Add. 7177, ff. 24a, 194a.

⁸⁹ Macomber, “Anaphora of Addai and Mari,” 366, ll. 55–56.

⁹⁰ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 137a.

⁹¹ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: Cambridge Add. 1988, f. 143a. On the date of this ritual, see Appendix D.

The apostolic character of the Church was understood in both historical and doctrinal terms, although typically without employing the adjective found in the Creed. The Church of the East continually taught that it was founded by the apostles.⁹² This history was understood to have continuing relevance for the community's adherence to the doctrine taught by the apostles. Thus the liturgy for Yaldā (Nativity) speaks of "apostolic orthodoxy,"⁹³ while the Pentecost service asserts that "the holy apostles in the Holy Spirit taught one perfect confession."⁹⁴ Shbadnāyā likewise mentioned the theological teaching of the apostles in his longest poem: "The confession of the truth they taught and wrote, they also made known."⁹⁵ In another poem, Shbadnāyā exhorted his congregation to hold fast to this truth that they had received: "And let us keep the teaching of truth which we learned from the preachers ... / If in truth we are children of those who proclaim the truth, / Let us confess and sing ... / And thus let us keep the deposit which we were commanded."⁹⁶ Here we see that the concept of the Church as apostolic played a role, even where the adjective was not used, in understanding the history and doctrinal stability of the community. Chapter 9 reveals the power of the past in the community concept of the fifteenth-century Church of the East.

⁹² Shbadnāyā, for example, narrated the foundation of the Church by the apostles: Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 196a–b.

⁹³ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 24a.

⁹⁴ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 223b.

⁹⁵ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 196b.

⁹⁶ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ... ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 138b.

against “whoever does not love our Lord Jesus Christ,” there is nothing distinctively Christian about his theological statements in this colophon.⁵ Muslim and Jewish authors equally believed in the eternity, immutability, and unity of God, as well as the fact that he created all things and rules over all things. Different theological statements have different social footprints, larger or smaller ranges of people who would agree with them.

In the fifteenth century, the most common term by which the Church of the East referred to itself was not “Christians,” and certainly not “Nestorians,” but rather “believers” (*mhaymnē*). The liturgy for Yaldā (Nativity) asks Christ to save “your believing people,”⁶ while a bit later it prays for God to “crown the heads of the believers.”⁷ Toward the end of the service Christ is praised for having “enlightened all of us with knowledge and made faith (*haymānūthā*) shine in us.”⁸ The theological treatise-poem of Īshāq Shbadnāyā also frequently referred to Christians as “believers,”⁹ sometimes referring to the Church as “those who believe” in God and as “the sons of my faith.”¹⁰ A century earlier, Timothy II had implied a connection between the unknowable Trinitarian nature of God and the acceptance of that doctrine by “believers” in his interpretation of a portion of the rite of baptism as indicating “the mystery of the Trinity which was given into the hearts of believers by Christ’s mediation.”¹¹ Of course, the Church of the East was not the only group in this region to identify itself as “believers”: so too did the Syriac Orthodox and Armenian Christians,¹² and the Arabic cognate *al-mu’minīn* was used ubiquitously in the Qur’ān.¹³ The use of the term “believers” by the late

⁵ ܡܢ ܕܠܐ ܢܫܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܥܡܕܐ ܨܘܪܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 321a.

⁶ ܠܚܘܨܝܢ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 23a.

⁷ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 24a.

⁸ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 24b.

⁹ Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 152b, 176a, 204b, 209b.

¹⁰ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 81b (quoting Shem’ōn Shanqlāwāy). ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 220b. ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 149b. The possessive pronoun was necessary for poetic reasons.

¹¹ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ: Timothy II, *The Mystery of Baptism: The Text and Translation of the Chapter “On Holy Baptism” from The Causes of the Seven Mysteries of the Church of Timothy II, Nestorian Patriarch (1318–1332)*, trans. Paul Blaize Kadicheeni (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1980), 72. On this author, see S. P. Brock, “Timotheos II,” *GEDSH*.

¹² West Syrian use of ܡܫܝܚܐ: e.g. Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 494–95. Armenian use of “the believers” (հաւստուգեալքն): e.g. Metsop’ets’i, *Patmagrut’yun*, 17–18, 28, 41; Sanjian, *Colophons*, 211.

¹³ The social import of the Qur’ānic terminology of “believers” is disputed; see Fred McGraw Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010). By the fifteenth century, the Arabic term was used by Muslim authors as one of many self-designations.

medieval Church of the East calls attention to both the role of beliefs in defining the community, and the culture shared with other religious groups in the same context.

To analyze the theological dimension of East Syrian community, we must remember that the development of theology is not the goal of the discussion. Historians of doctrine may be most interested in doctrinal disputes and new developments, but these aspects of theology may not be the most significant in group members' concepts of their own community.¹⁴ The historical exponents of particular theological systems have often emphasized the unchanging continuity of their doctrine, obscuring the real developments. To counteract this trend, modern historians of theology have devoted their attention primarily to new developments and controversial formulations in any given period. Yet either program misses the totality of East Syrian theological thought and risks overlooking what is central to this social group's self-concept at this time. The "payoff" of this discussion is not a story about theological change, but an account of how these people understood their social group, in theological terms. Which theological concepts were most central to the community concept of the Church of the East must be inferred from the available sources.

It would be foolish to assume, of course, that there was a single theological system embraced by all members of the Church of the East, or even by all clergy. For this reason scholars must pay attention to divergences of emphasis within the available sources. Just as for community concepts themselves, differences of understanding do not invalidate the endeavor but invite a nuanced approach. Divergences emerge not only in the content of the theological concepts, but also in their relative priority. Particularly significant is the relative unimportance assigned to distinctive theological concepts that separate this group from others, as compared with theological ideas that East Syrian Christians shared with some or all of their neighbors.

The structure of East Syrian theology is prefaced with the Trinity and built around the account of Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection, emphasizes that bridge the differences with other Christian groups, while simultaneously distancing the Church of the East from Muslim, Jewish, and Yezidi neighbors. In its most erudite formulations, fifteenth-century East Syrian Christology maintained a distinctive application of

¹⁴ Grehan contrasts a "theological conception of religion" with the shared religious culture he terms "agrarian religion": Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 19. He seems to reserve the term "theology" for normative orthodoxies, while in this study I have used "theology" to designate any ideas about God, no matter who expressed them.

Aristotelian philosophical jargon to assert the simultaneous existence of two *qnōmē* in Christ, which late medieval authors had inherited from late antique theologians.¹⁵ Yet this formula was very rarely cited in the fifteenth century. Even discussions of the content of Christian orthodoxy emphasized instead the Trinity and the trajectory of the Incarnation, ideas shared with other Christians. The prominence given to the deity of Christ and the Trinity may have functioned as a bulwark against Christians converting to other religions, especially to Islam, but the dam was not watertight. For any Christians who began to emphasize the stories of Christ's life over his divine status, that relative weighting might have prompted them to reconsider the value of Islam, which also claimed to honor the prophet ʿĪsā al-Masīḥ. The stories of occasional converts from Christianity to Islam in the fifteenth century suggest that some made this conceptual shift.

THEOLOGY AND BELONGING

Most Christians in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra never consciously chose their religion; they were born into it. This chapter does not argue that theological ideas formed the East Syrian community, or even that the theological beliefs emphasized by East Syrian clergy were held consciously and accurately by every member of the group. On the other hand, as suggested in Chapter 4, the religious community loomed large in fifteenth-century reflections on the divisions of society. In light of that prominence, this chapter asks two questions. First, when fifteenth-century members of the Church of the East identified themselves as Christians or “believers,” what did they mean? What were believers expected to believe? There are many dimensions to any religious culture; this chapter focuses on ideas about God that were thought to characterize Christianity according to fifteenth-century East Syrian Christians. Second, did those doctrinal ideas have any social implications? Rather than suggesting that theology formed the community, this chapter suggests that the doctrines emphasized in the fifteenth century may have helped maintain the community, especially against the possibility of conversion to Islam.

¹⁵ I have left the term *qnōmē* (sing. *qnōmā*) untranslated for reasons presented by Sebastian P. Brock, “The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries: Preliminary Considerations and Materials,” in *Aksum-Thyateira: A Festschrift for Archbishop Methodios of Thyateira and Great Britain*, ed. G. Dragas (London: Thyateira House, 1985), 131.

But for any theological ideas to have social consequences, we must assess the accessibility of theology to various classes of society, including the laypeople, the common members of the Church of the East. It has been customary for Westerners since at least William of Rubruck in the thirteenth century to stress the theological ignorance of East Syrian clergy and laity.¹⁶ A scholastic tradition of biblical interpretation and theology within the Church of the East stretched back to Nisibis and perhaps Edessa in the fifth century,¹⁷ but a millennium later no educational institutions as such are known to have existed for this population. Nevertheless authors such as Iṣḥāq Shbadnāyā cite their predecessors as authoritative sources for doctrine,¹⁸ and historians should not forget how well-developed scholastic theology had once been. Even as hostile a witness as William of Rubruck incidentally documented that a group of priests in the Mongol capital of Qaraqorum, far from the centers of East Syrian intellectual life, were able to produce a “chronicle from the creation of the world as far as Christ’s Passion; and they went beyond the Passion, to touch on the Ascension, the Resurrection of the Dead and the Coming in Judgment.”¹⁹ Theological literacy among clergy, even in remote Central Asia, was clearly higher than Rubruck’s condemnation of the “ignorant” priests of the “Nestorians” would lead us to believe.

Like the debates surrounding string theory, the most abstract levels of theological speculation remained the domain of the few. Yet all levels of the populace had access to basic theological concepts, for example as rehearsed in the weekly liturgies or transmitted orally as the reasons for certain practices.²⁰ While only the theological views of

¹⁶ Anastasius van den Wyngaert, *Sinica Franciscana* (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi-Florence): apud Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1929), 238; William of Rubruck, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke, 1253–1255*, trans. Peter Jackson and David Morgan (London: Hakluyt Society, 1990), 163.

¹⁷ A. H. Becker, “Nisibis, School of,” *GEDSH*.

¹⁸ A list of authors cited by Shbadnāyā is given in William Wright and Stanley Arthur Cook, *A Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge University Press, 1901), 441–44.

¹⁹ “Cronica a creatione mundi usque ad passionem Christi; et pertranseuntes passionem tetigerunt de ascensione et resurrectione mortuorum et adventu ad iudicium”: Wyngaert, *Sinica Franciscana*, 293; Rubruck, *Mission of Friar William*, 230. The work is not a “chronicle” but a theological treatise, as shown by the topics listed, including future events, and by the preparation of the text for an interreligious debate.

²⁰ This is amply demonstrated in another context by Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c.1400–c.1580*, 2nd edn. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 11–87. The linguistic barrier separating premodern English laity from the medieval Latin mass was greater than that between the Syriac liturgies of the

the literate are preserved, scribes were typically drawn from the lower clergy and in many cases probably received no education outside of their village. They need not have had an advanced command of Syriac grammar before they could compose their own theological statements, as demonstrated by the deacon of Kfarbūrān cited above.²¹ The lack of clerical celibacy would lead to greater integration of the priesthood in lay society through intermarriage. The Syriac of the liturgy was not the native language of East Syrian Christians, but clergy who in many cases received their position and training from their fathers should not be viewed as a separate clerical class with views unrelated to those of the larger population.²² The diversity of scribal theological interests represents a broader section of the populace than the authors of new doctrinal treatises. Where the same ideas appear in a range of different sources, including liturgical texts and colophons by scribes, we may presume that those ideas were accessible to most of the Church of the East.

THE STRUCTURE OF EAST SYRIAN THEOLOGY

The organizing topic of Syriac theology is most frequently expressed as God's *mdabbrānūthā*. This is the key word in the title of the most important East Syrian theological treatise of the fifteenth century, the "Poem on God's *mdabbrānūthā* from 'In the Beginning' until Eternity"

Church of the East and the Aramaic dialects or Arabic spoken by most East Syrian lay-people. A moderately high level of lay comprehension of the liturgies is proposed by Heleen Murre-van den Berg, "Let us partake, all who believe in Christ: Liturgy in the Church of the East between 1500 and 1850," in *Christliche Gotteslehre im Orient seit dem Aufkommen des Islams bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Martin Tamcke (Beirut: Ergon Verlag, 2008), 151–52.

²¹ Even in the phrase cited, Deacon Mas'ūd erroneously used a masculine pronoun for a feminine referent: Paris BN Syr. 184, f. 124b.

²² This point was made for Ottoman Syria and for the Church of the East in the early nineteenth century: Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 52–53; Becker, *Revival and Awakening*, 57. Fifteenth-century colophons, however, indicate a stronger grasp on Christian theological ideas than Grehan suggests for the later period. His depiction of institutional religion's weakness depends in part, without apparent qualification, on the tendentious self-justifications of reformers and missionaries, and in part on always incomplete urban perspectives of village life. One need not oppose the "agrarian religion" which he describes to "orthodox doctrine," however; both may have flourished simultaneously, often, as he documents, with the support of religious elites, e.g. Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 74–75, 200, 202. By contrast, Becker asserts that most East Syrian villages had a church: Becker, *Revival and Awakening*, 61.

by ʾIṣḥāq Shbadnāyā.²³ The same author entitled a poem composed for the Feast of Shkhāhtā (the Finding of the Cross), “On the *mdabbrānūthā* and on the revered Cross.”²⁴ The noun *mdabbrānā* means “leader” or “governor,” and the abstract noun can mean “guidance” or “government.” In a theological context, it can also refer to how God guides the development of events, in English usually called “providence.”²⁵ The related verb is used of God in the liturgical service for Yaldā (Nativity): “Blessed is the Being governing [*mdabbar*] all, who sent his Son for the salvation of all.”²⁶ To say, therefore, that East Syrian theology is concerned with God’s *mdabbrānūthā* is to indicate a complex topic comprising God’s reign, providence, and modes of interacting with the world and humans in it.

We may obtain a more concrete sense of the content of *mdabbrānūthā* from the structure and topics of ʾIṣḥāq Shbadnāyā’s largest work, which seems to have been composed as a single-volume digest of East Syrian theology, in the form of a long poem with a prose commentary supplied by the author. In an era of frequent population displacements, clergy needed to be more mobile to minister to captives and exiles. Shbadnāyā’s prose commentary excerpts a millennium of East Syrian theological tradition, as well as key points received from the Greek heritage, and arranges them in an accessible format as a clerical handbook of East Syrian doctrine. The structure of this work reveals which doctrines this author, the most prolific theologian of the fifteenth-century Church of the East, considered indispensable in such unsettled times. Shbadnāyā divided his long poem into thirty sections covering a wide range of topics, yet there is a clear progression. The first section sets forward the Trinity. The topic of the creation of all things occupies the next five sections and part of a sixth, addressed in the order of the account in Genesis 1, with explicit reference to the numbered days of that narrative. A lengthy discussion of the fall of humanity precedes a terse summary of the rest of the Old Testament. The central body of the text then narrates the incarnation, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ in seventeen chapters. The work ends with two sections addressing the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles at Pentecost, two sections delineating eschatological

²³ Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 1b. For what is known about Shbadnāyā and his surviving works, see Carlson, “Shbadnaya’s Life and Works,” 191–214.

²⁴ BL Or. 4062, f. 133a.

²⁵ Theologians often translate the term “economy” in the medieval theological meaning rather than the modern monetary sense.

²⁶ تفضي لسمه مدينته حد بدينته تفضي لسمه حد: BL Add. 7177, f. 20b.

Shbadnāyā's thought shares this central theological structure with the earlier *Book of the Pearl*, written in 1292 by 'Abdīshō' b. Brīkhā.³³ 'Abdīshō' identified the topic of his work as "the truth of Christianity," rather than *mdabbrānūthā*, and he divided it into five topical "treatises" (*mēmre*), each of which is subdivided into sections.³⁴ Yet the Trinity and the incarnation of Christ are central to this structure. The first treatise discusses the divine nature, the final and longest section of which explains the Trinity.³⁵ The second treatise summarizes the Old Testament from a distinctly Christian perspective; the longest of these sections presents Messianic prophecies.³⁶ 'Abdīshō' entitled the middle treatise, "On the *mdabbrānūthā* which is in Christ," again using the narrow sense of the term to refer to the incarnation, and it is the longest of the five treatises that compose the work.³⁷ The final two treatises of 'Abdīshō' b. Brīkhā's work enumerate the sacraments and point to eschatology, respectively, without tying them as tightly to Christ's incarnation as Shbadnāyā did.³⁸ The *Book of the Pearl* branches out beyond the central theological themes of the Trinity and the Incarnation to give a specifically Christian slant to ideas shared with Muslim and Jewish theologians, and to emphasize the ecclesiastical structure. Perhaps, in the upheavals of the fifteenth century, Shbadnāyā's theological work is more narrowly focused because he did not wish to build theological bridges to other religions, and did not feel he could presume that Church institutions were continuously operating to the same degree as his predecessor in the Mongol period.³⁹

A theological treatise by the Syriac Orthodox patriarch Mas'ūd of Ṭūr 'Abdīn, writing at the end of the fifteenth century, indicates that this theological framework was shared with Christians outside the Church of the East as well. Mas'ūd entitled his treatise, "On the Trinity, on the division and the unity, on the incarnation [*mdabbrānūthā*] of our Lord, and on the grants, gifts, and divine miracles which were granted by it to

³³ On this author, see J. W. Childers, "'Abdisho' bar Brikha," *GEDSH*.

³⁴ 'Abdīshō' b. Brīkhā, *Kthābhā d-methqrē margānūthā d-'al shrārā da-krestyānūthā*, ed. Yosip d-Qelayta, 2nd edn. (Mosul: Mṭabba'tā Āthōrāyta d-'ēdtā 'attīqtā d-madhnhā, 1924), 2.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3–10.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 10–16.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 17–32.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 32–59.

³⁹ For the weakness of the institutional church in Shbadnāyā's context and writing, see Chapter 8.

celebrating the angel announcing to Mary her conception of the Messiah. The feasts of Yaldā (Nativity) and Denhā (Epiphany), the latter of which extended to form a new liturgical season, commemorated Christ's birth and baptism. As in the West, the "Great Fast" (*ṣawmā rabbā*, Lent) culminated in the celebration of Jesus' triumphal entry, last supper, crucifixion, and finally resurrection on Qyāmtā (Easter).⁴⁶ The Feast of Sullāqā (Ascension) concluded the liturgical seasons that narrated events related to Christ's incarnation, and then Pentecost began the season of the Apostles. The narrative of the liturgical year traced the *mdabbrānūthā* through the descent of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church, as did Shbadnāyā in his long doctrinal poem. The Anaphora of Addai and Mārī likewise praises Christ "because of your whole marvelous *mdabbrānūthā* toward us."⁴⁷ The Trinity and the incarnation of Christ were the central topics of East Syrian theology, both as expounded in doctrinal treatises and as inculcated in the liturgy. They are therefore also the doctrines whose social impact may be most clearly discernible, whether in barriers erected against other religious groups or bridges connecting them.

THE TRINITY

While Muslim and Jewish theologians agreed that God existed before and independently of creation, only Christians held that the divine nature was inherently Trinitarian. The emphasis on Trinitarian doctrine in the late medieval Church of the East, therefore, linked their theological reflection with that of other Christian groups, while acting as a barrier to Muslim and Jewish ideas. Nor did East Syrian theologians from the fifteenth century develop the Trinitarian doctrine of God in terms distinctive from other Christian denominations; instead, the expressions of this theology within the Church of the East could just as easily serve other Christian groups.

Īshāq Shbadnāyā's long "Poem on God's *mdabbrānūthā*" begins with a quatrain indicating his starting-point in the nature of God:

We will glorify him who is forever in his existence,
Who by his essence made known to us his hiddenness,

⁴⁶ A liturgical calendar is given as an appendix to Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices*, 264–81.

⁴⁷ ܡܕܒܪܐܢܘܬܗ ܕܡܪܝܘܢܐ ܕܐܕܝܐ ܕܡܪܝܘܢܐ: Macomber, "Anaphora of Addai and Mari," 368–70, ll. 69–70.

truth. In addition to its theological centrality, the doctrine of the Trinity played significant social roles, distinguishing Middle Eastern Christians from their Jewish and Muslim neighbors. Muslim Arabic sources had criticized the doctrine of the Trinity since the Qur'ān, and later authors such as Abū 'Īsā Muḥammad b. Hārūn al-Warrāq in the ninth century described the doctrine in detail for the purpose of refuting it.⁷⁶ A thirteenth-century Jewish author from Baghdad, Sa'd b. Manṣūr Ibn Kammūna, likewise recorded the Christian belief in the Trinity in order to refute it.⁷⁷ But Trinitarian theology did not distinguish the Church of the East from the other Christian groups in the Middle East, which also emphasize the doctrine of the Trinity, often in the same or parallel terms. The theological treatise of the fifteenth-century Syriac Orthodox patriarch Mas'ūd of Ṭūr 'Abdīn also begins with an exposition of Trinitarian doctrine, revealing a similar prominence in that denomination as well.⁷⁸ The continued significance of this belief in East Syrian theology distinguished the Church of the East from certain groups, but not others.

Indeed, an emphasis on Trinitarian doctrine may have served to rebut the accusations of heterodoxy that the other Christian groups had leveled against the Church of the East from late antiquity onwards. Polemical texts since the sixth century had accused "Nestorians" in Persia of introducing a fourth member into the Trinity,⁷⁹ which led an East Syrian patriarchal synod already in the year 554 to anathematize any who spoke of a four-fold deity.⁸⁰ This accusation persisted at least into the late medieval period: 'Abdīshō' of Nisibis offered three counter-arguments to show that the Church of the East did not include four persons in the Trinity,⁸¹ and a late fifteenth-century liturgy book interrupts the ritual for

⁷⁶ Al-Nisā' Q 4:171; al-Mā'ida Q 5:116; Muḥammad b. Hārūn Warrāq, *Anti-Christian Polemic in Early Islam: Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq's "Against the Trinity,"* ed. David Thomas (Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁷⁷ Sa'd b. Manṣūr Ibn Kammūna, *Sa'd b. Manṣūr Ibn Kammūna's Examination of the Inquiries into the Three Faiths; a Thirteenth-Century Essay in Comparative Religion*, ed. Moshe Perlmann (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 51, 54; Sa'd b. Manṣūr Ibn Kammūna, *Ibn Kammūna's Examination of the Three Faiths; a Thirteenth-Century Essay in the Comparative Study of Religion*, trans. Moshe Perlmann (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1971), 78, 83.

⁷⁸ Van Helmond, *Mas'oud du Tour 'Abdin*, 3*, 45*.

⁷⁹ Antoine Guillaumont, "Justinien et l'église de Perse," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23–24 (1969): 64.

⁸⁰ Jean Baptiste Chabot, ed., *Synodicon orientale ou recueil de synodes nestoriens* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1902), 98, 355. On this source, see L. Van Rompay, "Synodicon Orientale," *GEDSH*.

⁸¹ 'Abdīshō' b. Brīkhā, *Kthābhā d-methqrē margānīthā*, 30–31.

and Theodore of Mopsuestia,¹¹¹ yet they considered their Christology to be of apostolic origin, in line with the quotation from ‘Abdīshō‘ above. The Church of the East did not view their Christological formula as Nestorian, nor value it for sectarian difference, but rather because of its alleged apostolic origin and truth.

Yet the notion of doctrinal orthodoxy figured rarely in the self-concept of the fifteenth-century Church of the East, and when it did, orthodoxy was typically defined with reference to ideas other than this distinctive Christological formula. The festival whose liturgy asserted the community’s orthodoxy with the greatest frequency was Pentecost, but the orthodoxy celebrated in that festival is Trinitarian, not Christological: “the true faith in the revered name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the incomprehensible nature.”¹¹² Apart from this festival, most church services referenced orthodoxy only once, when the consecrating priest would pray before breaking the Eucharistic bread, “We break [the bread] with orthodox confession.”¹¹³ But the content of that confession is unspecified, and may be assumed to refer to the Nicene Creed, shared among all fifteenth-century Middle Eastern Christians. The notion of orthodoxy is invoked repeatedly in one *hūthāmā* (hymn closing the service), but this hymn was only one of several alternatives that could be used, and there is no indication that it was preferred.¹¹⁴ In the general liturgical life of the Church of the East, references to orthodoxy were almost exclusively defined to be Trinitarian rather than Christological.

Christological orthodoxy is only very rarely invoked by East Syrian liturgies. According to one poem for the Yaldā (Nativity) service, “orthodox teachers proclaimed [Christ] divinely and humanly,” a Christological formulation that all of their Christian neighbors could share.¹¹⁵ Later in the same service, the Virgin Mary is unusually praised as “the decorated

¹¹¹ Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices*, 266–67. Seleznyov argued for understanding the Church of the East as “Nestorian” based on this liturgical veneration, but he did not address East Syrian authors’ ignorance of and divergence from the actual Christological views of Nestorius, nor the medieval ascription (even if fictitious) of their Christology to the apostles: Nikolai N. Seleznyov, “Nestorius of Constantinople: Condemnation, Suppression, Veneration, with Special Reference to the Role of His Name in East-Syriac Christianity,” *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 62 (2010): 165–90.

¹¹² ܩܘܠܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ: BL Add. 7177, f. 223b. Cf. f. 224b.

¹¹³ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ: Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 92b–93a.

¹¹⁴ Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 99a–100a.

¹¹⁵ ܩܘܠܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ: BL Add. 7177, f. 24a. This poem is uniquely filled with recognizably Greek words, so the first word of this quotation is probably a corruption of the Greek *didaskoloi*, immediately glossed by the Syriac equivalent.

formulations used, were uniquely held by this group to the exclusion of all their neighbors. Yet some neighbors were excluded. The emphasis on shared Trinitarian and Christological doctrines reveals a theological continuity with other Christian groups in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra, while the concept of the Creator provided an idiom for reflecting on God and the world that was shared even more broadly. Yet the same Trinitarian and Christological doctrines, which served as bridges to other Christian groups, simultaneously functioned as barriers to separate the Church of the East from its Jewish, Muslim, and Yezidi neighbors.¹⁵¹ Unlike the Syriac Christians of the first two Islamic centuries studied by Michael Penn, fifteenth-century Christians seem more worried about the appeal of Islam than that of rival expressions of Christianity.¹⁵²

These theological emphases probably had social effects, for example in the relationships between individual Christians and the question of conversion to Islam. In Chapter 3 we saw that theological discussions and conversions between different groups were ongoing in the fifteenth century. The Christian leadership's struggle against conversion to Islam was a factor in the continued existence of this minority despite social and economic pressure to assimilate. In that struggle, the theological structure that emphasized the Trinity before all other doctrines may have reduced the loss of community members to rival groups, especially to Islam. The emphasis placed by East Syrian sources on Jesus Christ's divinity and sacrificial death on the cross would likewise be an obstacle to conversion in either direction. Yet Islam also honored Jesus the Messiah, as a prophet, and both Muslims and Christians claimed to practice strict monotheism, which provided points of contact that might ease the transition from one religion to the other. As long as a Christian accepted the perspective offered in the East Syrian sources analyzed here, that the most significant elements of theology are precisely those rejected by Muslims, conversion to Islam would hardly be a possibility. But when particular Christians began to regard the commonalities as more important, or to suspect that the other side might have better arguments for their distinctive views, then their theology might in fact allow other factors to render becoming Muslim the most attractive option. Thus theological views could variously restrain or facilitate conversion, depending on individual factors.

¹⁵¹ Grehan cites examples of lay Christians in Ottoman Syria unable to distinguish between denominations, but recognizing the different holy books of Islam and Christianity: Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 58.

¹⁵² Michael Philip Penn, *Envisioning Islam: Syriac Christians and the Early Muslim World* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 185.

logic of key doctrines in order to understand how what is believed affects the group's understanding of itself. In the incessant warfare and social instability of fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra, East Syrian theology had a very practical intent. The present security and eternal salvation offered by Christ were seen as the necessary answer to the very real threats faced by the community in the fifteenth century.

The Church of the East claimed a defining relationship directly to Christ and the Holy Spirit more frequently than any propositional content about any person of the Trinity. The doctrines that Christ is the Lord and the Savior, and that the Holy Spirit applied the benefits earned by Christ to Christians, were not unique to this denomination, being shared with Christian groups from Europe to China. Yet this particular group of Christians believed that these doctrines represented truths that characterized their denomination, and from which they would benefit in this world and the next. Yet even East Syrian beliefs about these benefits were ambiguous about the precise scope of the beneficiaries of salvation, with the result that what was believed to be a distinctive group characteristic defined the community concept, but could not define the group membership.

CHRIST THE LORD AND KING

The most common titles applied to Jesus indicated his relationship to the community, especially his authority. Although his sovereignty over all creation was frequently asserted, nevertheless the Church of the East claimed a special relationship with Christ as *their* master. Thus the name Jesus (Īshō' in Syriac) was so frequently preceded by the title "our Lord" (*māran*) that scribes sometimes joined them into a single word.³ Of course, the title "my lord" (*mār*) was also used for bishops and saints, but the form *māran* was almost exclusively used of Christ, hinting that Christ's lordship held a communal import which that of Christian leaders lacked. The augmented title "*the* Lord" (*māryā*) was exclusively used of God, including sometimes for Christ.⁴ The title "King" (*malkā*) was also traditionally used of Christ, even though the Arabic cognate *malik* was only one among a variety of sovereign political titles used in the region. Shbadnāyā once referred to Christ as "King of kings."⁵ The liturgies

³ E.g. BL Add. 7177, ff. 191b, 215b, 216a, 223a.

⁴ This title is used for Christ in BL Add. 7177, f. 29a.

⁵ حليج ملك: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 153b.

frequently called Christ “the King,” or referred to “his kingdom.”⁶ Titles of Christ’s authority were the most common expressions of Christological doctrine in the fifteenth-century Church of the East.

But these references to lordship and royalty were shared, in fifteenth-century sources, with the other persons of the Trinity. “King” could be used of God without specifying a reference to the Father, the Son, or the Spirit: Shbadnāyā wrote of “the glorified King whose hidden nature has no end” in his liturgical poem for the Feast of the Cross.⁷ Shbadnāyā also invoked Christ as “the King’s Son,” applying the royal title to God the Father.⁸ A liturgical acclamation of Christ on Good Friday applied both titles simultaneously: “This is the King and the King’s Son.”⁹ The commonality in titles between Christ and God, while sometimes ambiguous, was not accidental. For example, Shbadnāyā appealed to Christ’s divine royal status to justify worshipping him, a point of contention with his non-Christian neighbors: the crowds of Jerusalem “wove for him a crown of praise, for the King’s Son, the Chief of judges, / To whom worship and confession are fitting at all times.”¹⁰ The service for the Friday of the Passion also made explicit the precise recipient of worship: “But we indeed worship Christ who suffered for our sake.”¹¹ The designation of worship for Christ, of course, should not be taken to exclude the other divine *qnōmē*, as the service for Pentecost made clear in a prayer: “With the Father and with the Son, you, the Holy Spirit, we worship without division.”¹² Christ’s royal role was understood to indicate his deity and therefore the acceptability of worshipping him, but it also evoked other aspects of his relationship to the Church of the East.

The status of Christ as Lord means, in the first instance, that he is in charge. It is in this sense that East Syrian authors referred to themselves as Christ’s Church, that is, the Church belonging to Christ and under his authority. In a prayer that Shbadnāyā put into the mouth of St. George, the saint prays to Christ for “your Church which you have chosen from all peoples.”¹³ The Yaldā (Nativity) service addressed Christ in prayer regarding

⁶ E.g. BL Add. 7177, ff. 21b, 28b, 180b, 185a, 188a.

⁷ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܡܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 133b.

⁸ BL Or. 4062, f. 135b.

⁹ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܡܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 180a. Cf. ff. 192b, 216a, 220b.

¹⁰ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܡܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 106a.

¹¹ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܡܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 181b.

¹² ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܡܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 221a.

¹³ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܡܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 131a.

“your Church, which you chose for yourself.”¹⁴ The notion that the Church was chosen by Christ indicates that his relationship with the Church arose from his divine initiative. References to Christ “commanding” occurred infrequently with respect to Christ’s authority, for example in the Pentecost liturgy, “By the prophets who announced you, you indicated and made known to us the way of your commands, Lord.”¹⁵ The obedience of the gathered community to Christ’s will was requested in prayer in the same service, “Grant us by your grace that we may please your Lordship and may complete with diligence the will of your Lordship.”¹⁶ The liturgies also refer to the congregation as “Christ’s servants,” the correlative term to “Lord.”¹⁷ Although it is not a major theme, Shbadnāyā occasionally invoked the notion of Christ instituting a “spiritual law.”¹⁸ So also is the presentation of Christ as guiding the community: Shbadnāyā wrote the line, “Our Tutor guided, led, drew us by the lamp of his ways.”¹⁹ The lordship of Jesus Christ was therefore understood as his being the ruler of this community.

The content of Christ’s commands typically referred to specific instructions to the apostles as recorded in the gospels. For example, Shbadnāyā reports that Christ commanded his disciples to remain in Jerusalem until Pentecost, as recorded in Luke 24:49.²⁰ One example not taken from the gospel accounts, but reflecting medieval East Syrian liturgical practice, is the account in an anonymous poem included by Shbadnāyā that Christ “commanded them at his ascension to put among his churches / The leaven which they took from his body that it should be for the sacrament and for baptism.”²¹ But commands received by the apostles were often considered binding on the subsequent community, for instance in Shbadnāyā’s treatment of the commission of the apostles recorded in Matthew 28:18–20. He included this episode as the ninth in his enumeration of appearances of the risen Christ, “In Galilee, when he commanded them to make disciples of the peoples.”²² Shbadnāyā later applied this command to his present community with no apparent need to justify the

¹⁴ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܩܝܣܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 23a.

¹⁵ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܩܝܣܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 228b.

¹⁶ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܩܝܣܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 229a.

¹⁷ Macomber, “Anaphora of Addai and Mari,” 366, 368.

¹⁸ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܩܝܣܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 81b. The apostles are also said to transmit “his law” (ܩܘܪܒܢܐ): Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 196b.

¹⁹ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܩܝܣܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 172a.

²⁰ Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 172b, 197a–b.

²¹ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܩܝܣܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 176b.

²² ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܩܝܣܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 167b.

as the purpose of Christ's work in the incarnation. Shbadnāyā's poem for Shkhāhtā (the Finding of the Cross) asserted, "So he became human and also incarnate to save his image," i.e. humanity.⁴⁷ The liturgy for Yaldā (Nativity) indicated that Jesus "came for the salvation of the world,"⁴⁸ while the service for Good Friday addressed Christ regarding the Church's celebration of "your severe passion which was completed for our salvation."⁴⁹ Indeed, so central was salvation to the East Syrian concept of God's governance (*mdabbrānūthā*), that Shbadnāyā's largest work could refer to the incarnation as "the *mdabbrānūthā* of the salvation of all."⁵⁰ One might say that salvation was the reason Christ was not only God but also human.

The liturgies presented Christ's work as conferring specific benefits upon his people, namely rescuing them from death, from Satan, from idolatry, from sin, and from hell (*shyōl*). Salvation from death was mentioned four times in the Qyāmtā (Easter) liturgy.⁵¹ The notion was not, of course, that Christians would not physically die, but that the expectation of final resurrection guarantees that physical death is temporary. This was expressed in the service for Qyāmtā (Easter) in the form, "The authority of death is broken! Christ by his suffering conquered death and promised life by his resurrection."⁵² Elsewhere the Qyāmtā (Easter) liturgy called attention to how Jesus saves humans from the devil: "Blessed is the one who rose from among the dead through authority and gave victory to our nature over Satan."⁵³ The same service also presented Satan as complaining that Jesus is making him "a joke to Adam and his children" by plundering his property, namely those who had died.⁵⁴ The service for Holy Saturday praised Christ who "by his cross freed us from error, death, and Satan."⁵⁵ The error in question was identified as "the error of idols" in the liturgy for Denhā (Epiphany).⁵⁶ Although the language of "saving from sins" is not used in the liturgies, the concept of forgiveness of sins was linked with Christ's role as Savior in the liturgies for Holy Saturday and

⁴⁷ ܩܘܡܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 135a.

⁴⁸ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 22a.

⁴⁹ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 178b.

⁵⁰ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 149a. See Chapter 5 for the range of meanings encompassed by the Syriac term *mdabbrānūthā*.

⁵¹ BL Add. 7177, ff. 189a, 192a, 193b, 194b.

⁵² ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 194b.

⁵³ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 189a.

⁵⁴ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 186b.

⁵⁵ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 185a.

⁵⁶ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 29a.

Qyāmtā (Easter).⁵⁷ Hell was indicated less frequently in the liturgies than the other spiritual threats, but the service for Qyāmtā (Easter) mentioned both that “hell is closed”⁵⁸ and “by the rays of the lamp of [Christ’s] suffering [God] brought us out of the hellish darkness.”⁵⁹ This community considered the benefits of salvation to be multifaceted.

Shbadnāyā’s poetry often described salvation with other verbs, but in his largest work he provided the narrative frame that places these spiritual threats and Christ’s solutions into a coherent order. Shbadnāyā related the fall of Satan and the transgression of the first humans, Adam and Eve, against God’s command not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil at the devil’s instigation. Their disobedience resulted in the expulsion of humanity from paradise and their condemnation to death by God’s just judgment.⁶⁰ Condemnation to death is equivalent to being destined for *shyōl*, the place of the dead. Satan was also presented as the instigator of idolatry, the error of failing to recognize the true God, in a long quotation that Shbadnāyā takes from John Penkāyā.⁶¹ These are the same threats from which East Syrian Christians sought salvation in Christ. The poet referred to salvation from Satan with the line, “And [Christ] made our adversary kneel, he grieved him, and he made us victorious in his contests”; a marginal gloss clarifies the referent.⁶² “The shadows of death, the tyrant, he drove out from our family by his words” depicts Christ’s saving the community from death.⁶³ Idolatry is probably the “error” in which God “saw the gentiles ... and he saved them,” according to a poem of Rabban Emmanuel quoted by Shbadnāyā.⁶⁴ “He took our sins” tersely expresses salvation from sin, while the same context dramatically presents deliverance from hell in the line, “The bars of *shyōl* he destroyed before us.”⁶⁵ Shbadnāyā echoed the liturgy in presenting a multifaceted doctrine of salvation from which his community benefited.

There is a significant ambiguity, however, concerning the beneficiaries of Christ’s saving work. Both the liturgical services and Shbadnāyā presented salvation as a distinctive characteristic of the Church of the

⁵⁷ BL Add. 7177, ff. 184b, 189a.

⁵⁸ ܘܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ: BL Add. 7177, ff. 193b.

⁵⁹ ܘܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ: BL Add. 7177, f. 187b.

⁶⁰ Fall of Satan: Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 24a (quoting Theodore of Mopsuestia), 25a–b. Transgression of Adam and Eve: ff. 27a–28b. Expulsion: f. 37b. Condemnation to death: ff. 24a (quoting Theodore of Mopsuestia), 27b (quoting Mark the Monk).

⁶¹ Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 30b–31b.

⁶² ܘܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 172a.

⁶³ ܘܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 172a.

⁶⁴ ܘܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 145a.

⁶⁵ ܘܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ ... ܘܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܘܠ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 149a.

East. Shbadnāyā, for example, addressed his group as “beloved flock saved by the Cross”⁶⁶ and “crowds saved by the crucifixion.”⁶⁷ In his poem for the Prayer of the Ninevites (Bā’ūthā d-Nīnwāyē) he prayed to Christ, asking for salvation for “your people who have been forgiven.”⁶⁸ At Yaldā (Nativity), the liturgy prayed, “Save, my Lord, your faithful people who have celebrated your birth,”⁶⁹ namely those present. The services for Good Friday and Holy Saturday repeatedly identified the people who are saved as “his sheep,”⁷⁰ a common self-designation for the Church of the East. The liturgy for Qyāmtā (Easter) exhorted the congregation, “Confess, oh Church, the death of the Son who saved your children by the sacrament of his death.”⁷¹ Even more explicitly, the service for Good Friday prayed, “Christ, who saved us by his own blood, give peace to your Church saved by your Cross.”⁷² Even the frequently used Anaphora of Addai and Mārī asserted that the worshippers present will glorify God “in your Church saved by the precious blood of your Christ.”⁷³ The festivals of Yaldā (Nativity), Denhā (Epiphany), Qyāmtā (Easter), and Sullāqā (Ascension) all referred to “our salvation” or Jesus saving “us,”⁷⁴ and Christ was most commonly called not “*the* Savior,” but “*our* Savior.”⁷⁵ The first-person possessive suffix is significant: the salvation accomplished by Christ was considered a defining element of this particular community’s character.⁷⁶

Yet Christ was also called “the Savior of all,” for example in the liturgy of Sullāqā (Ascension).⁷⁷ Fifteenth-century discussions of the beneficiaries

⁶⁶ ܩܘܼܕܼܫܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 140b. As indicated above, the use of pastoral terminology in a context of salvation was rare for Shbadnāyā, who typically used it with reference to Christ’s protection. Nevertheless, this line shows that the distinction in usage was not absolute.

⁶⁷ ܩܘܼܕܼܫܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 142b.

⁶⁸ ܩܘܼܕܼܫܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 123b.

⁶⁹ ܩܘܼܕܼܫܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 23a.

⁷⁰ BL Add. 7177, ff. 180b, 182b, 184a.

⁷¹ ܩܘܼܕܼܫܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 186b.

⁷² ܩܘܼܕܼܫܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 179a. Cf. the liturgy for Qyāmtā (Easter) at BL Add. 7177, f. 191a.

⁷³ ܩܘܼܕܼܫܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ: Macomber, “Anaphora of Addai and Mari,” 370, ll. 70–71.

⁷⁴ BL Add. 7177, ff. 22b, 28b, 191a, 195a, 215b.

⁷⁵ BL Add. 7177, ff. 178b, 182a, 191b; BL Or. 4062, f. 136a; Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 192a.

⁷⁶ This is not to imply that membership in the Church of the East was what accomplished or guaranteed salvation. Rather, the clergy of the Church of the East thought other religious groups could not offer salvation, and therefore salvation was distinctive to this community. There may also have been a presumption that most members of the Church of the East would receive salvation through the sacraments. For a discussion of the sacraments as means of both membership and salvation, see Chapter 7.

⁷⁷ ܩܘܼܕܼܫܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ ܕܥܘܼܠܼܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 215a.

of salvation resisted the tidy imposition of communal boundaries. The salvation of human nature in general was extolled especially in the Feast of Yaldā (Nativity).⁷⁸ The liturgy for Qyāmtā (Easter) made explicit that human salvation is a consequence of Christ “putting on our nature,” so all humanity may be said to benefit at least theoretically from Christ’s salvation.⁷⁹ Later in the Yaldā (Nativity) service, the angels at Christ’s birth were said to “have proclaimed hope for humanity and salvation for all flesh.”⁸⁰ Shbadnāyā identified the purpose of Christ’s incarnation as the salvation of “his image,” i.e. humanity.⁸¹ The liturgical references to Christ saving “all the peoples” could be understood with reference to a universal Church incorporating all ethnic groups,⁸² but the other references to salvation for all humanity are less easily explained consistently with the notion of salvation as a distinctive communal characteristic. While most of these references may be understood as referring to the *potential* of salvation made available to all people, contingent upon the acceptance of the offer, other references expand the range of beneficiaries even further.

This conceptual tension was heightened by statements that salvation is not restricted to embodied organisms. The liturgy for Yaldā (Nativity) also declared, “By his birth he saved the created things.”⁸³ A little later the liturgy continued, “He saved material creation and the four elements from the slavery of sin.”⁸⁴ The liturgical affirmation, “He came for the salvation of the world,” emphasizes a universal scope for salvation.⁸⁵ Indeed, in a couple of services Christ was called “the Savior of all worlds.”⁸⁶ The liturgy at Denhā (Epiphany) spoke of “the new creation” that Christ saved.⁸⁷ That service also referred to Christ’s baptism being for the salvation even of *unfallen* angels: “The watchers [i.e. angels] in their ranks extolled and cried glory with their voices at the baptism of the Son of their Lord who

⁷⁸ E.g. BL Add. 7177, ff. 18b, 19a, 22b, 23a.

⁷⁹ **ܠܚܝܫܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ**: BL Add. 7177, f. 192a.

⁸⁰ **ܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܡܝܢ ܩܘܡܬܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ**: BL Add. 7177, f. 21a.

⁸¹ BL Or. 4062, f. 135a.

⁸² For three examples from Qyāmtā (Easter), see BL Add. 7177, ff. 189a, 191a, 192b. This interpretation might be supported by the parallel in the last prayer with “all the churches” (**ܠܚܝܫܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ**) on f. 192b.

⁸³ **ܠܚܝܫܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ**: BL Add. 7177, f. 22b.

⁸⁴ **ܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ**: BL Add. 7177, f. 23a.

⁸⁵ **ܠܚܝܫܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ**: BL Add. 7177, f. 22a.

⁸⁶ **ܠܚܝܫܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ ܘܫܒܪܝܢܐ ܠܚܝܫܐ**: BL Add. 7177, ff. 27a, 215a.

⁸⁷ BL Add. 7177, f. 29a.

the case that the doctrine of salvation at the same time partly characterized the self-understanding of the Church of the East and also made it conceptually more difficult to delimit their group precisely. In other words, the concept of the group's nature was clarified at the expense of the identification of its membership.

THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Although the Holy Spirit played a more limited role than Christ in the liturgy and theological poetry of the fifteenth century, we would be mistaken to presume that the third *qnōmā* of the Trinity was irrelevant to the self-understanding of the Church of the East. Neither 'Abdīshō' of Nisibis nor Īshāq Shbadnāyā devoted a section of their respective theological works particularly to this divine *qnōmā*, yet the liturgy for Yaldā (Nativity) referred to the congregation as the "sons of the Holy Spirit,"⁹⁵ indicating the prominent role that the Spirit could play in communal self-characterization. Some of these roles overlapped with other persons of the Trinity, as is seen most clearly in the Pentecost liturgy. That service addressed the Holy Spirit with worship: "With the Father and with the Son we worship you, Holy Spirit, without division."⁹⁶ The Trinitarian faith of the apostles was presented later in the same liturgy: "they believed in and confessed the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."⁹⁷ The Holy Spirit's role in the accomplishment of Christ's incarnation and saving work also extended the communal relationship with Christ to include this additional divine agent.⁹⁸ Thus the Pentecost liturgy referred to the Holy Spirit as "the Paraclete ... who gives life to all,"⁹⁹ and prayed to the Holy Spirit, "that you will save the souls of all of us."¹⁰⁰ Both of these quotations extend Christ's saving work to include the work of the Holy Spirit, with the same ambiguity as to the beneficiaries of that salvation as discussed above.

Both Shbadnāyā and the liturgical sources presented the Holy Spirit's relationship to the Church in terms of individual Christians, as opposed to the almost exclusively collective nature of the Church's relationship

⁹⁵ ܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 25a.

⁹⁶ ܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 221a.

⁹⁷ ܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 223b.

⁹⁸ See, among many possible examples, the discussion of the Spirit's role in Christ's birth by Shbadnāyā's poetry and the service for Yaldā (Nativity): Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 56b; BL Add. 7177, f. 19b.

⁹⁹ ܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ... ܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 223b.

¹⁰⁰ ܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ ܕܩܘܢܘܡܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 221a.

Scribes attributed the ecclesiastical leadership to the Holy Spirit, while Shbadnāyā saw in the Spirit a divine guidance for doctrinal development.

Even more than authors or ecclesiastical officials, saints were thought to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit. The liturgical memorial of John the Baptist celebrated him for providing “in his radiant and holy soul a dwelling of the Holy Spirit.”¹¹² Shbadnāyā’s poem for the memorial of St. George alleged a unique relationship between the Holy Spirit’s power and the saint’s intercession: “His prayer became the key of the Holy Spirit for all miracles.”¹¹³ The poet pled inability to praise St. George due to the Holy Spirit having glorified the saint: “My tongue is insufficient to praise you, for the Holy Spirit adorned your glory.”¹¹⁴ The liturgy for Pentecost presented the Spirit protecting saints as they battled for monotheism: the Holy Spirit, “who is the invincible armor, clothed the workers whom he chose that they may conquer the error of paganism.”¹¹⁵ Clearly, saints enjoyed a special relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Among saints, the apostles were particularly singled out for the action of the Holy Spirit in their work. Shbadnāyā depicted Christ “establish[ing] them as temples for his Spirit,”¹¹⁶ but it is preeminently the festival of Pentecost that repeatedly extols the apostolic connection to the Holy Spirit. That service depicts the earliest followers of Jesus as empowered by the Spirit to bring Christianity to the world: “The strength of the Spirit filled them that they may convert the erring peoples.”¹¹⁷ To this end the Holy Spirit entrusted them with the priesthood and delivered to them “the keys of the heavenly treasury,” probably a reference to the sacraments.¹¹⁸ Both Shbadnāyā and the liturgy understood the Holy Spirit to bring God’s presence and grace to individual Christians, especially to Christian leaders such as apostles, saints, theologians, and ecclesiastical hierarchs.¹¹⁹

¹¹² ܘܚܘܪܘܫܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 38a.

¹¹³ ܘܚܘܪܘܫܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 130a.

¹¹⁴ ܘܚܘܪܘܫܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ: BL Or. 4062, f. 130b.

¹¹⁵ ܘܚܘܪܘܫܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 225b.

¹¹⁶ ܘܚܘܪܘܫܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 172b.

¹¹⁷ ܘܚܘܪܘܫܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 225a. The Holy Spirit’s role in sending the apostles is described at greater length earlier in the service, at BL Add. 7177, f. 221b.

¹¹⁸ The Spirit’s role in establishing the priesthood is asserted at BL Add. 7177, f. 226a, although the service later presents Christ as making the apostles into priests: BL Add. 7177, f. 229a. “The keys of the heavenly treasury” (ܘܚܘܪܘܫܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܗܘܐ): BL Add. 7177, f. 224b.

¹¹⁹ The place of apostles, saints, and past authorities in constituting the self-concept of the Church of the East will be examined more fully in Chapter 9.

CONCLUSION

In the violent times of the fifteenth century, the Church of the East knew it needed a protector to guard it from threats to life, both physical and eternal. Like Christians of other periods, it found that protector in Christ, who as Lord was seen to defend his people from the dangers of this world, and as Savior to liberate them for eternity. The individual benefits of Christ's lordship and salvation were communicated through the Holy Spirit, in theory to all Christians, but especially to Christian leaders of various kinds. Yet the collective communal relationship with Christ was also attenuated by a conceptual ambiguity regarding the beneficiaries of salvation: sometimes salvation was considered characteristic of this particular community, while elsewhere it expanded to include all of creation. This conceptual tension was one reason it was not readily possible to define the membership of the Church of the East in terms of receiving these practical benefits. For the purpose of delineating membership, as well as for other goals, the Church of the East used collective rituals.

and do not celebrate the glorious Feast of the Annunciation.”⁴ Even without naming a particular denomination, he had clearly identified the targets of his critique: the so-called “Nestorian” church, which probably comprised the largest Christian group in late medieval Mosul, whose catholicos at that time lived in or near Mosul itself.⁵ Only the Church of the East demurred from giving the mother of Jesus the honorific title “God-bearer,” preferring the more specific “Christ-bearer,” and only the Church of the East failed to celebrate the Annunciation as a single day nine months before Nativity, instead commemorating the event as a four-week liturgical season building up to that mid-winter feast.⁶ Festival calendars and ritual observances demarcated communities.

Communal rituals were both spiritual actions and ways to delimit communities for Christians in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra. As with theology, our goal is not to identify new developments or distinctive East Syrian interpretations, but to explore what liturgical actions communicated about belonging to this Christian community, and their social implications. The rituals communicated certain aspects of the community concept, namely that salvation consisted both of new spiritual life obtained in baptism and forgiveness of sins offered in the Eucharist. Those same actions also imposed a structure on the membership of the Church of the East. While the clergy understood baptism to delimit the membership precisely, baptized members versus unbaptized outsiders, other rituals added texture to the group and enabled a dynamic with gradations and varieties of membership based on gender, age, ordination status, and elective level of participation. On the one hand, this texture designated certain members more central and constituted the clerical hierarchy itself. On the other, it also enabled resisting the rigidity of clerical definitions and provided mechanisms for partial membership to those who might desire less exclusive communal loyalty.

PARTICIPATION IN THE MYSTERIES

The theological self-reflection of the Church of the East, discussed in the previous chapter, identified many benefits that the community derived

⁴ معاندين مريم والدة الله ولم يعملون عيد البشارة المجيد: Vatican sir. 97, f. 142a. The text is in Garshuni, but I have transcribed it here in Arabic script.

⁵ See Chapter 1, fnn. 93–95.

⁶ Armenians argued with the Syriac Orthodox whether the Annunciation should be celebrated on April 6 rather than March 25, in keeping with their preference for a January 6 observance of the Nativity conjoined with Epiphany. But Armenians had no trouble calling Mary “God-bearer,” and so are not in view here.

from their divine connection. But these theological concepts did not delineate precisely who benefited. Many of the benefits discussed were not visible, such as forgiveness of sins or the presence of the Holy Spirit, or not absolute, such as protection in this life. What guarantee was there that God provided these benefits to specific people here and now? The answer given in fifteenth-century Iraq was through the “mysteries” (‘*rāzē*), the standard Syriac term for the sacraments.

Like their European contemporaries, Syriac theologians of the late Mongol period were inclined to enumerate seven sacraments, although the precise contents varied from one list to another.⁷ ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brīkhā listed priesthood, baptism, holy oil, the Eucharist, absolution, holy leaven, and the sign of the cross in his *Book of the Pearl*, although the same work elsewhere identified marriage as a “mystery” as well.⁸ Timothy II’s enumeration of seven “ecclesiastical mysteries” contained priesthood, the consecration of the altar, baptism, the Eucharist, monastic vows, funerals, and marriage.⁹ The only items common to both authors are priesthood, baptism, the Eucharist, and marriage, which indicates that the number seven was significant, but precisely which rituals and consecrated items might make up that number was of secondary importance. The fact that Iṣhāq Shbadnāyā dedicated sections of his theological *magnum opus* to baptism and the Eucharist, but not to other sacraments, also shows the centrality of those two.¹⁰ Although priesthood was necessary for the performance of the sacraments, as the next chapter will discuss, yet baptism and the Eucharist were the identified means by which Christians obtained the theological benefits of their communal relationship with God and Christ.

Baptism: The Mystery of Divine Adoption

Baptism was the sacrament that, at least from a clerical perspective, made people Christians and members of the community. Metropolitan Sabrīshō’ of Ḥiṣn-Kayf, in a colophon dated 1808 AG / 1497, repeatedly

⁷ As a dissenting voice, Shbadnāyā quoted the thirteenth-century Yōḥannān of Zō’bī, “I confess two sacraments which are instituted in the Church of Christ,” namely baptism and the Eucharist (ܩܘܠܘܡܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܢ): Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 174b–175a.

⁸ ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brīkhā, *Kthābbā d-methqrē margānīthā*, 32, 44. The holy leaven was a culture kept in the churches and used to make the leavened bread for the Eucharist.

⁹ Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 5a–b.

¹⁰ Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 92a, 110b.

referred to “all the children of the Holy Church,” by which he meant not only the clergy but also the laity.¹¹ This phrase is significant especially for its occurrence in one of the priest’s prayers for consecrating the Eucharist, which specifies it further: “all the children of the holy catholic Church, those who have been signed with the living sign of holy baptism.”¹² Clerical regulations required a person to have been baptized before participating in the Eucharist, which itself was necessary for a person to be commemorated in the church after their death: Shbadnāyā ascribed to earlier authorities the rule according to which “the memorial should be performed for the deceased who had received the medicine of life,” i.e. the Eucharist.¹³ The necessity of baptism for participation in the Eucharist was enshrined in the liturgical command for the unbaptized to depart before the communion,¹⁴ and is the reason Shbadnāyā called the Eucharist “the second grace which is bestowed on the one who trusts.”¹⁵ Baptism was a boundary marker for communal membership, but we must also ask what the ritual communicated about the membership that it constituted.

The majority of the recipients of baptism were the small children of Christians. This is seen in the baptismal rite itself, where the minister’s prayer presumed that the recipients were “in the age of childhood” and receiving baptism “although they did not ask.”¹⁶ The priest prayed, “In them may bodily stature and spiritual growth spring up together,” which would make no sense for adult recipients.¹⁷ The presumption that children would receive baptism is strengthened by the fact that the ritual of baptism included variants to this opening prayer for baptizing only one child, but provided no alternative text for adults.¹⁸ Later in the service, the rubrics for the liturgy of baptism presumed that the recipient is carried by the deacon to the priest and back, although variant instructions were given for the case of “a child who walks” and “a man.”¹⁹ Adult

¹¹ ܡܫܠܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ: Paris BN Syr. 369, ff. 105b–106b contains the phrase three times, once without “all.” Unlike Western European usage, Syriac authors did not typically restrict “the Church” to refer only to the clergy.

¹² ܡܫܠܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 91a.

¹³ ܡܫܠܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 112b. For Timothy II’s assertion that baptism must precede the Eucharist, see Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 107a–108b.

¹⁴ Berlin Sachau 167, f. 81a.

¹⁵ ܡܫܠܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 111a.

¹⁶ ܡܫܠܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 107a. ܡܫܠܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 107b.

¹⁷ ܡܫܠܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܬܐ: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 107a.

¹⁸ Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 107b–108a.

¹⁹ Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 118b–119a. Grehan noted that in Ottoman Syria baptism was often put off until age 3 or 4: Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 254 n. 71.

bottom upward and from left to right.²⁴ Then the priest entered the baptistery (*bēth mayyā*) with a prayer and recited another psalm, followed by a presentation of the nature and history of baptism in classical Syriac, which those present may have only partly understood. After the priest recited another psalm, the deacon would then admonish the congregation about repentance and lead them in prayer, especially for the reigning catholicos-patriarch and the metropolitan. A few more prayers and hymns preceded the putting of water in the font, although it was not consecrated at this stage. More set prayers intervened, followed by the reading of 1 Corinthians 10:1–13 and John 2:23–3:8. The order of baptism specifies more prayers, while the priest poured some unconsecrated oil into a bowl and placed it on the altar, covered with a cloth.

With the elements now in place, the consecration of the oil and the water began with the Creed, apparently recited by the congregation.²⁵ The priest then consecrated the oil by reciting a prayer inaudibly, followed by making the sign of the cross upon himself, removing the cloth covering the oil, and making the sign of the cross over the oil, while having a brief call and response exchange with the congregation, who affirmed (in classical Syriac) their mental orientation toward God and the correctness of the ritual. After that affirmation the priest again recited an inaudible prayer, followed by audible prayers and two more signs of the cross over the oil, the second time using previously consecrated holy oil. The Lord's Prayer was then recited, evidently by the congregation,²⁶ and then the priest consecrated the water in the baptismal font with another inaudible prayer and two signs of the cross, once without and once with the old holy oil, announcing afterwards the completion of the water's consecration.

A deacon then presented the recipients of baptism naked to the priest, who marked them with the newly consecrated oil in the sign of the cross using three fingers, making the cross from the top downward and from right to left, before anointing each recipient's whole body with oil. Then the priest immersed each recipient in water three times, after which he laid his hand upon the recipient's head and announced that the recipient

²⁴ Timothy II presumed in his commentary that every time the sign of the cross was made, it should be right to left, in the order opposite to that presented here: Timothy II, *Mystery of Baptism*, 76–79.

²⁵ The order simply says “they add: ‘We believe ...’” (ܘܝܫܝܒ ܘܢܘܨܝܒ) without specifying who is included in the subject: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 114b. In the fourteenth century Timothy II had specified that the congregation recited the Creed together during a normal liturgy: Mingana Syr. 13, f. 123a.

²⁶ The order simply says “they answer: ‘Our Father who is in heaven ...’” (ܘܢܫܝܒ ܘܢܘܨܝܒ) without specifying the subject: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 117a.

“is baptized in the name of the Father, Amen, and the Son, Amen, and the Holy Spirit forever, Amen.”²⁷ While the priest was actively baptizing, the congregation was supposed to be reciting certain hymns “so that they will not be idle.”²⁸ Each recipient was then handed to the deacon and carried (or, in the case of older children and adults, led by the deacon) to the edge of the chancel, where the recipient was entrusted to a sponsor, an adult other than the parents who assumed responsibility for the child’s spiritual progress.²⁹ When all were baptized, they put on new garments. More prayers and hymns followed, and the priest again marked all of the recipients of baptism with the sign of the cross, this time using his thumb, in the direction specified as from above downwards³⁰ and from right to left, and again announced the baptism of each person by name. The recipients of baptism then received their first Eucharist, while a long list of hymns kept the congregation occupied. The ceremony ended with the priest adding the newly consecrated oil to the old holy oil, and deconsecrating the baptismal water by “seizing it violently like one who wrests something from it,” after which the water may be poured out.³¹

Clerical discussions of baptism presented it as the means by which God granted to individual Christians the theological benefits derived from the community’s divine connection. Although a priest performed the necessary ritual actions and prayers, fifteenth-century sources present Christ himself as the agent in baptism. The baptismal service used passive constructions identifying the recipient of each stage of baptism: “(Name) is signed,” “(Name) is anointed,” and “(Name) is baptized.”³² Timothy II made explicit that the reason for the passive voice was to emphasize that “the sign is not of the priest but of his Lord and that he is a mediator who is elected by mercy to serve.”³³ The orientation of the infant being

²⁷ *ἄρχιεπίσκοπος*: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 118b.

²⁸ *ἄρχιεπίσκοπος*: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 118a.

²⁹ Timothy II mentioned that “the sponsors make themselves responsible to the priest for those who are receiving baptism that (the candidates) will be without blemish in their services and in all their conduct” (*ἄρχιεπίσκοπος*): Timothy II, *Mystery of Baptism*, 80–81.

³⁰ Patriarch Timothy II recorded that this third sign of the cross should be bottom upwards: *ibid.*, 72–73. The patriarch explicitly indicated a diversity of practice by mentioning that some people performed this third signing of the recipient of baptism with the forefinger rather than the thumb in the case of children, and in the case of women some used the forefinger (as for children) and others the thumb (as for men): *ibid.*, 74–75.

³¹ *ἄρχιεπίσκοπος*: Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 120b–121a.

³² *ἄρχιεπίσκοπος*: Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 107b, 118b.

³³ *ἄρχιεπίσκοπος*: Timothy II, *Mystery of Baptism*, 82–83.

the Eucharist might communicate baptism's role in granting spiritual life. The understanding of baptism as adoption into the family of God clearly parallels the sponsor's role in place of the parents in receiving the child after baptism. Nevertheless, baptism's role as the gate into the community would be the most readily understood, given the presumably universal practice of baptism among Christians and its necessity in order to participate in the Eucharist and other communal rituals.⁶³

Eucharist: The Body and Blood of Christ

The Eucharist functioned differently from baptism in constituting the membership of the Church of the East. Baptism was to be a one-time experience, and the community used this ritual primarily when welcoming new members into its ranks. The Eucharist, however, occurred every Sunday in many places, and Christians were expected to partake of communion throughout their lives.⁶⁴ While baptism was an all-or-nothing step that qualified recipients for the present and future salvation offered by God in Jesus Christ, the frequency and the complexity of the Eucharistic liturgies might permit different degrees and overlapping forms of communal participation.

According to Timothy II, the Sunday service was typically to be observed in mid-morning.⁶⁵ The clergy put on decorated clothing while the curtain that separated the laity from the chancel, the front section of the sanctuary around the altar, was closed.⁶⁶ After drawing aside the

⁶³ That laypeople might grasp the purificatory and apotropaic effects of baptism without the communal membership is hinted at by the practice of some Muslim parents in Ottoman Syria, who had their children baptized without thereby converting them to Christianity: Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 178. For scholarship on this practice earlier, see citations in Christian C. Sahner, "Swimming against the Current: Muslim Conversion to Christianity in the Early Islamic Period," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 136 (2016): 270. As noted by Sahner, one twelfth-century Syriac Orthodox cleric distinguished between Christian baptism and that given to Muslim children, as a means of preserving the meaning of the ritual for membership in the Church.

⁶⁴ It is unknown how frequently laypeople took communion in the fifteenth century, and it may have varied widely. In the nineteenth century, one British missionary reported that some churches would omit the Eucharist from the Sunday service, potentially for several weeks at a time: Badger, *Nestorians and Their Rituals*, II: 243.

⁶⁵ Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 114b–115a.

⁶⁶ The description of the Eucharistic ritual derives from Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 77a–97a and Timothy II's commentary as found in Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 114a–136a. Timothy II's descriptions of late medieval vestments are the most detailed: Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 115b–117a, 119b.

deacons in turn.⁷⁰ The Creed was recited next, probably by the whole congregation,⁷¹ after which the priest was instructed to enter the chancel in a hurry. Then the deacon would lead the congregation in a litany of prayers, with a set congregational response after each item.

While the litany was going on, the priest would solicit prayers from the other clergy who had joined him around the altar, and would then bow repeatedly before the altar while reciting multiple prayers and kissing the middle and corners of the altar itself. The priest would evidently perform a series of genuflections and would kiss the altar in the middle and on the two near corners, exchange prayers with the other clergy, and then repeat the genuflections and kisses of the altar while the deacon led the congregation in another litany.⁷² The priest was instructed to leave the chancel and interrupt the litany at a certain point, adding his prayers for the acceptability of the Eucharistic sacrifice, after which the priest would return to the chancel, genuflect again, and pray inaudibly until the litany was completed.⁷³ Upon its conclusion he would arise and spread out his hands “a little,” requesting prayers from the other clergy, and then would pray quietly.⁷⁴ After this he would cross himself with his hand spread open toward himself and the congregation behind him,⁷⁵ raising his hand above his forehead until the fingers were visible above his head, and moving his hand from beyond one shoulder to beyond the other. The ritual

⁷⁰ Timothy II mentioned the priest washing his hands before leaving the chancel, although Berlin Sachau 167 does not mention it. The nature of the greeting was also recorded by Timothy II as kissing the priest’s hand: Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 122a–b.

⁷¹ Timothy II made it very explicit that the whole congregation recited the Creed, but Berlin Sachau 167 only uses a singular verb, with the priest as the subject: Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 123a–b; Berlin Sachau 167, f. 82b.

⁷² Timothy II recorded that two deacons should here read the diptychs, a series of prayers for the living and the dead, and for the church hierarchy: Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 124a–b. Berlin Sachau 167 does not mention diptychs, which may indicate the lapse of the practice, as is also suggested by the failure to update the patriarchal lists after the early fifteenth century: Jean M. Fiey, “Diptyques nestoriens du XIVE siècle,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 81 (1963): 375–76.

⁷³ After the litanies’ completion, according to Timothy II, the priest was to distribute to the deacons *makhshānyāthā* (sing. *makhshānūthā*), poles with silver fans on top, to which were attached little bells whose tinkling noises evoked “angels flapping their wings” (ܡܫܟܝܢܝܐ ܩܘܨܝܢܝܐ): Mingana Syr. 13, f. 124b.

⁷⁴ Berlin Sachau 167 records that some priests say this prayer silently, while others pray it loudly so as to be heard by the congregation, but the scribe rejects both: Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 86a–b.

⁷⁵ Berlin Sachau 167, f. 87a, specifies the hand’s direction as “with the face of his hand being to the west” (ܩܕܡܝܐ ܕܝܡܝܢܝܐ ܕܝܡܝܢܝܐ ܕܝܡܝܢܝܐ), coupled with the fact that East Syrian churches were oriented eastward (figure 3). Timothy II wrote that the priest is “not looking toward the people” (ܠܐ ܕܘܩܝܢܝܐ ܕܝܡܝܢܝܐ): Mingana Syr. 13, ff. 126a–b.

instructions indicate that this exaggerated sign of the cross was meant to include the congregation, who then said “Amen” to the priest’s prayer. A set dialogue between the priest and the congregation then followed, and then another litany of prayers led by the deacon during which the priest approached the altar and prayed silently.

After the priest removed the towel covering the Eucharistic elements, another dialogue between priest and congregation repeated the set phrases in classical Syriac, followed by the priest saying a prayer while adding incense to a deacon’s censer. Then he stretched out his hands and prayed inaudibly for a time, but finishing loudly so that the congregation could respond in Syriac, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord almighty, heaven and earth are filled with his praises.” The priest continued with alternately audible and inaudible prayers, making the sign of the cross over the Eucharistic elements at intervals. Finally he would spread out his hands and repeat a prayer three times,⁷⁶ and then lift up a loaf of consecrated bread called *būkbṛā* (“first-born”). The priest prayed for the loaf, kissed it on four sides,⁷⁷ lifted it above his eyes, and broke it into two parts. Setting down the part in his left hand, he made the sign of the cross horizontally over the Eucharistic cup with the part in his right hand, and finally he dipped one-third of the loaf into the wine in the cup. He then used the same piece of bread to make the sign of the cross horizontally over the rest of the bread, and then, picking up both broken pieces of bread, he fit them back together and prayed. He then arranged the bread on the plate again in a shape approximating a cross, after which he made the sign of the cross over the deacons, folded his hands, and prayed, before bowing down to the altar and then kissing it. He made the sign of the cross over himself and then prayed inaudibly while breaking up the consecrated loaf, while the deacon addressed the congregation in classical Syriac.

The Eucharistic elements having now been fully prepared, a loud prayer from the priest preceded the repetition of the Lord’s Prayer by the congregation. The priest then prayed inaudibly, raising his voice for the final “and forever and ever,” during which he made the sign of the cross over himself, and the deacons in the chancel responded with “Amen.” A set dialogue between the priest and the congregation followed. While the congregation sang a hymn, the priest gave the bread to one deacon and the cup to another, whereupon the clergy exited the chancel and the priest

⁷⁶ Berlin Sachau 167, f. 92a records that some say the priest should fold his hands at this point.

⁷⁷ Timothy II specified that the priest kissed the loaf three times: Mingana Syr. 13, f. 129b.

Shbadnāyā's poetry describes the sacrament as the "sprinkling of living blood" and "the sprinkling which purifies and purges."⁹² As in the liturgy, the Eucharist was about forgiveness, in Shbadnāyā's understanding.

But by contrast to the narrow liturgical focus on atonement, Shbadnāyā deployed a wider range of metaphors for the Eucharist. Shbadnāyā's Eucharist also provided spiritual life. Christ gives the Eucharist as the "bread of life that crowns" those who partake of it.⁹³ The image of the Eucharist as the "bread of life" was derived from John 6:35 and 48, according to which Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." This New Testament background is confirmed by Shbadnāyā's echo of John 6:53 when he described communion as "the giving of life in oneself."⁹⁴ Shbadnāyā united this life-giving function with the sprinkling of sacrificial blood as well: "Sprinkling living blood and drinking it causes one to drink life."⁹⁵ A quotation of Yōhannān Penkāyā, included in Shbadnāyā's prose commentary, describes this life-giving function of the sacrament in nutritive terms: "This is the nourishment which the grace of the Spirit feeds you when it gives birth to you: the living body of Christ. And this is the sweet drink which it gives you to drink: the precious blood of our Lord Jesus."⁹⁶ This notion is rare, though not entirely absent, in the liturgical services: one intercession in the Eucharistic consecration referred to the sacrament as "nourishment of the whole world" in addition to the more customary language of atonement.⁹⁷ More than simply the removal of a barrier to spiritual life, the Eucharist was seen to be the source of spiritual life.

Shbadnāyā also expanded upon a minor theme in the Eucharistic prayers which depicted the life granted by the sacrament as eternal life. The epiclesis, or invocation of the Holy Spirit to consecrate the Eucharist, included a prayer that the sacrament would grant "a great hope of the resurrection from the place of the dead, and new life in the kingdom of heaven."⁹⁸ Shbadnāyā picked up the notion of the Eucharist granting eternity: "Spiritual eating and drinking which carries into the Kingdom."⁹⁹ The Eucharist represents the eternal duration of spiritual life: "The

⁹² ذَهَب دَقْدَا بِنْتَا ... دِرَاقَا تَه وَصَدَّقَا وَصَنِيَعَا: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 112a.

⁹³ لَحْمَا سَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 111a.

⁹⁴ سَمَ بَحِيَمَا جَبِيَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 111a.

⁹⁵ ذَهَب دَقْدَا بِنْتَا سَمَ بَحِيَمَا جَبِيَتَا: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 112a.

⁹⁶ سَمَ بَحِيَمَا جَبِيَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا لَحْمَا سَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا. سَمَ بَحِيَمَا جَبِيَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا لَحْمَا سَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا. كَلْبَا سَمَ بَحِيَمَا جَبِيَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا. كَلْبَا سَمَ بَحِيَمَا جَبِيَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 90b.

⁹⁷ دُصْحَلِيَكَا: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 92a.

⁹⁸ كَلْبَا سَمَ بَحِيَمَا جَبِيَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا. كَلْبَا سَمَ بَحِيَمَا جَبِيَتَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 91b, repeated on f. 93b. This recurs in a slightly modified form on f. 95a.

⁹⁹ دُصْحَلِيَكَا دُصْحَلِيَكَا: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 111b.

partly trusted. Shbadnāyā also quoted Yōḥannān Penkāyā's description of the physical as well as spiritual curative properties of the sacrament: "The body of Christ is spiritual medicine ... by which the sufferings and pains of the body and the soul are healed."¹¹⁰ The benefits of the Eucharist could even be described in vague terms, perhaps to encourage readers to fill in many possibilities: it is "the cup of comforts, removing grievous things," and "partaking of it enriches and makes triumphant the one who trusts in it."¹¹¹ Unlike the liturgy, Shbadnāyā presented manifold meanings and benefits of the sacramental body and blood of Christ.

Our sketch of lay concepts of the Eucharist, as with baptism, must remain somewhat tentative. For those who partook of the body and blood of Christ, the emphasis on the forgiveness of sins could be tied to the article of the Creed where Christ "was crucified for us," and the petition for forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer. It is less clear how much the liturgy's insistence on the necessity of God's grace to cover the unworthiness of the priest and the congregation would have communicated to the laity. It seems likely that lay understandings of the Eucharist would have enumerated additional benefits of communion, as did Shbadnāyā, and the association of food with sustaining life could easily lead laypeople to share some of the theologian's ideas regarding the nourishing properties of the mystical meal, even if some of his specific eschatological conceptions would have remained inaccessible. The additional benefits which Shbadnāyā identified, such as strengthening faith and granting healing, might well attach to the Eucharist as the central ritual of Christian communal life.

These meanings did not exhaust the significance of this sacrament for constituting the community, however. The ritual surrounding the Eucharist also opened doors for various definitions of lay membership. As the central communal ritual of the Church of the East, membership could be defined by participation, but participation could come in various forms. Individuals might choose whether, when, and how frequently to receive the Eucharist, or not. Independently of that decision, or sequence of decisions, people might also choose how much to participate in the congregational responses prescribed by the liturgy, other individual pious

¹¹⁰ ܩܘܕܫܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. ܩܘܕܫܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ... ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 117a.

¹¹¹ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ... ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ. Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 111b, 112a.

actions,¹¹² or even at what point before or during the liturgy to arrive. Some people who abstained from the Eucharist might be present and participate more assiduously than others who had received baptism but rarely engaged in religious rituals. Such imbalances might challenge clerical notions about “full membership” in the Church being defined by baptism and regular communion. In other words, the sacraments provided a definition of communal membership, but the complexity of the rituals and congregational participation provide for wide margins of membership and involvement. The liturgical celebration of the Eucharist provided for multiple boundaries of the community which did not necessarily line up, or which could be made to disagree if desired, thus softening the hard edges of sacramental participation into a broader penumbra of communal limits.

FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

The sacraments linked individual believers to the theological understanding of the community, but they were not necessarily the rituals that most deeply impinged upon everyday life, especially for the laity. Additional rituals were prescribed to mark the stages of life, in the form of weddings and funerals, while other rites were tied to annual agricultural and liturgical rhythms. These additional rituals may have concretely defined for laypeople what belonging to the Church of the East meant in practical terms, while also broadening the margins of membership created by the Eucharistic liturgy, enabling additional possibilities for partial involvement in the community.

Birth, sacramentally marked by baptism, was not the only life milestone to be accompanied by communal rituals. Marriages and deaths also required the gathering of the community and specific ritual actions. According to the clergy, the presence of an East Syrian priest and the performance of certain necessary Syriac rites ought to mark marriages and deaths involving members of the Church of the East. The *Nomocanon* of ‘Abdīshō’ of Nisibis stated this explicitly, after listing the required rituals: “Every betrothal which takes place in any other way we consider nullified, because in this way we make a distinction between the betrothal of Christians and that of pagans [i.e. Muslims] and crucifiers

¹¹² A variety of gestures expressing lay piety, observed by two American missionaries in the nineteenth century, were summarized by Murre-van den Berg, “Liturgy in the Church of the East,” 142, 150.

[i.e. Jews].”¹¹³ Priests were thus required, although exceptions could be made for distant lands with no priests available.¹¹⁴ Funerals equally required prayers from the priests, and fifteenth-century clerical manuals imply that clerics officiated at all kinds of burials.¹¹⁵ Grehan similarly noted that, for Ottoman Syria, milestone rituals were distinguished as “Muslim” or “Christian” primarily by their location and the social networks they incorporated.¹¹⁶

Yet people other than the clergy also played necessary functions, such as the best man and the bridesmaid, or those washing the body of the deceased; their presence could challenge attempts to draw tidy communal boundaries.¹¹⁷ The fact that the community would gather for these events would have emphasized the significance of these milestones and their accompanying rituals, perhaps conveying by association the meaning that membership in the Church of the East was a matter of life and death. But some of those present or participating may not have been themselves Christians, or at least not of the same denomination. The law-book of ‘Abdīshō’ specifically condemns Christian women hiring Muslim mourners, which suggests that this could be an option.¹¹⁸ ‘Abdīshō’ of Nisibis specified excommunication as the penalty for having marriage witnesses who were “outsiders” (*barrāyē*, i.e. not East Syrian Christians), although it is unclear how consistently this stricture was applied.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, even he recognized the validity of certain interreligious marriages, provided the husband was Christian.¹²⁰ The incidence of mixed-religion marriages in medieval Iraq is unknown, but, when they occurred,

¹¹³ حد صحوة ديهة بيه اسم ديهون. نيهلن سعتسب له مهك ديهون في كهقعدن لخدم لخدمون ديهةهين. بيه اسم ديهون
 ١١٣: ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brikhā, *The Nomocanon of Abdisho of Nisibis: A Facsimile Edition of MS 64 from the Collection of the Church of the East in Trissur*, ed. István Perczel, 2nd edn. (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009), 63.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 61, 64–65.

¹¹⁵ Mārdīn (Macomber) 35,16 [HMML CCM 221], ff. 90b–107b.

¹¹⁶ Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 192–93.

¹¹⁷ ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brikhā, *Nomocanon*, 62–63, 212–13.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 214. For a discussion of early Muslims’ debates over female wailing, including for pay, see Leor Halevi, *Muhammad’s Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007), 114–42. The role of professional mourners at a later period is discussed in James A. Reilly, “Women in the Economic Life of Late Ottoman Damascus,” *Arabica* 42 (1995): 98, 103, 105. Wailing was not a distinctively Muslim mourning practice, but shared by Christians, as indicated by Halevi, *Muhammad’s Grave*, 141–42; Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 193.

¹¹⁹ ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brikhā, *Nomocanon*, 63–64.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 75–76. Islamic law analogously forbade Muslim women from marrying non-Muslim men: Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion*, 160–93.

Muslim participation in the Friday gathering at the mosque. The fact that these communal gatherings occurred on different weekdays, however, opened the possibility for certain parties to participate in multiple groups, if desired.¹²⁵ While the Islamic lunar calendar and festivals drifted with respect to the seasons, the various Christian groups' solar calendars and holidays maintained seasonal stability. The seasonal fixedness of the Christian solar calendar, evident to Muslim observers as well as to Christians, might occasion participation in the festivals by individuals who were not sacramentally members of a Christian church.¹²⁶

The liturgical seasons, rather than Sunday observance or the agricultural festivals, distinguished the Church of the East from other Christian groups in the region. As indicated at the start of this chapter, in 1492 the difference in liturgical calendars prompted the Syriac Orthodox leader in Mosul to preach against East Syrian Christians "who oppose Mary the God-bearer and do not perform the great Feast of the Annunciation."¹²⁷ This example shows a high-ranking bishop from a rival Christian hierarchy using a ritual discrepancy to warn his own flock against mixing with those he viewed as heretics. Although probably a sixteenth-century interpolation, the ritual for receiving Jacobites and Melkites into the Church of the East concludes with the priest "commanding [the new member] that he should keep taking the Eucharist of us Nestorians."¹²⁸ Such warnings, of course, imply a clerical fear that laypeople might not avoid the religious celebrations of other denominations. That fear was justified: Grehan noted that the Christians and Muslims of Ottoman Syria commonly attended the holidays of any and all religious groups.¹²⁹ Communal membership as defined by festival participation would represent a broader gathering than those recognized as members by the clergy administering the sacraments.

¹²⁵ I have not found examples of this practice in fifteenth-century sources, but earlier Muslim attendance of Christian church services is discussed by Penn, *Envisioning Islam*, 160. Grehan discussed Muslim use of church space and participation in Christian festivals, but not participation in Sunday services: Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 183–85, 187. On the other hand, in the late Ottoman period some village churches seem not to have weekly services, only festivals: Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 146.

¹²⁶ Grehan observed the preference of "agrarian religion" for seasonal festivals over "any religious calendar": Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 105. Yet he did not consider Christian calendars' seasonal stability. The participation of Muslims in Christian shrines and festivals in the early nineteenth-century was noted by Becker, *Revival and Awakening*, 62–63.

¹²⁷ See fn. 4.

¹²⁸ ܡܫܘܠܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܠܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܠܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܠܝܢ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 143b. On the date, see Appendix D.

¹²⁹ He also notes, however, that some festivals were thought to belong particularly to one group or another: Grehan, *Twilight of the Saints*, 183–87, 191.

The role of religious festivals in defining communal membership, and the participation of some Muslims in Christian festivals, was also apparent to medieval Muslim authors. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728 AH / 1328 in Syria) objected:

There is no difference between participating with non-Muslims in a festival and in other [religious actions]. Thus, participation with them in their festivals wholly or partly is synonymous with participation with them in unbelief wholly or partly. Nay, festivals are that which most particularly serves to differentiate one religious law from another and constitute their most prominent symbols.¹³⁰

Thus Ibn Taymiyya identified religious festivals as one of the prime ways of distinguishing religious communities (religious “laws”), and warned Muslims that participating in non-Muslim festivals was tantamount to joining non-Muslim groups. Yet the warnings of the ‘*ulamā*’ failed to deter many Muslims. Ibn Taymiyya’s Syrian contemporary al-Dimashqī (d. 1327) described in detail the elaborate celebrations of Easter in Ḥamā, noting that “Muslims even more than Christians” participated in dying eggs and baking sweets.¹³¹ One might be tempted to conclude that Muslim participation in Christian festivals weakens the role of those gatherings in communal definition. On the contrary, such “cross-attendance” raises the possibility for overlapping notions of belonging. Those who attended the Easter celebration might not be Christians according to the clergy, but they were visibly present as part of the community. The clergy might celebrate the central rituals, but the range of possible ways to participate provided additional categories of communal membership.¹³²

In addition to the community differentiation accomplished by different cycles of communal celebration, the lay experience of annual rituals might also hinder relationships with others who did not participate. The fasting regulations during Lent and other periods, for example, could restrict commensality with outsiders for portions of each year, and would in any event differentiate those who observe East Syrian fasting obligations from other communities who fasted differently. In areas with large Muslim populations, the most marked difference of this kind might be Christians not fasting during the month of Ramaḍān, but other fasting

¹³⁰ Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taimīya’s Struggle against Popular Religion: With an Annotated Translation of His Kitāb Iqtidā’ aṣ-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaquīm Mukhālafat Aṣḥāb al-Jahīm* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976), 206.

¹³¹ Al-Dimashqī, *Cosmographie*, 280.

¹³² That ritual definitions of membership often conflict was pointed out for the early Islamic period by Penn, *Envisioning Islam*, 167.

many ways the lower clergy would resemble their male neighbors, yet they would play more central roles in the religious life of the village or city. Although remaining merely laity in ritual terms, secular elites such as village chiefs also enjoyed a different form of communal belonging than most laypeople, due in part to their patronage of religious institutions.¹⁴¹ The fact that chiefs' sons seem to have been preferred for the priestly position of sacristan suggests that the secular and clerical hierarchies were intertwined.¹⁴² The monastic life offered an alternative gradation of membership, parallel to the clergy and independent of it. Monks would be expected to leave their families to reside in monasteries and, like clergy, would be marked by distinctive clothing even if they were not ordained to participate in the liturgies. Unlike ordination, this option was in theory available to women as well as to men, although it is not clear whether there were in fact communities of nuns in fifteenth-century Iraq. The attested monastic communities seem to have all been male,¹⁴³ yet female monasticism continued to be remembered by certain portions of the Church of the East as an option for lay women to increase religious involvement.

Nevertheless, certain differences of membership remained involuntary. The difference in membership between children and adults was illustrated in the baptismal ritual, which added a verbal renunciation of Satan and profession of faith in the rare case of an adult convert.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, the very rarity of baptizing adults probably required priests to "make it up as they went along" to a greater degree, whereas more frequent rituals were more standardized. This lack of standardization opens a surprising window onto a late medieval range of opinions regarding the membership status of women. Timothy II noted a difference between priests who administered the baptismal rite's final sign of the cross to women in the same way as to children, as opposed to those who administered it to women as they did to men.¹⁴⁵ This difference indicates that some late medieval clergy conceptually assimilated women to juveniles, while others considered adults of either gender to be distinct from children, a significant divergence in notions of gendered membership. Age and gender mutually reinforced each other as distinctions among members of the Church of the East.

¹⁴¹ See Chapter 1, fn. 141.

¹⁴² See Chapter 1, fn. 149.

¹⁴³ See Chapter 1, fnn. 121–26 for a list of monasteries attested in the fifteenth century.

¹⁴⁴ Timothy II, *Mystery of Baptism*, 80–81.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 74–75.

Ritual space also separated men and women when they came to worship. A typical medieval East Syrian church had two separate doors, one for men and one for women (see Figures 7.1–7.2). These led to separate portions of the nave in which men and women were to stand: men closer to the front, women toward the back of the building. On the dividing line stood the *bēmā*, a raised platform to which priests, deacons, and readers came to read the scriptural texts for the service, before processing back to the chancel and consecrating the sacrament there.¹⁴⁶ The gender line

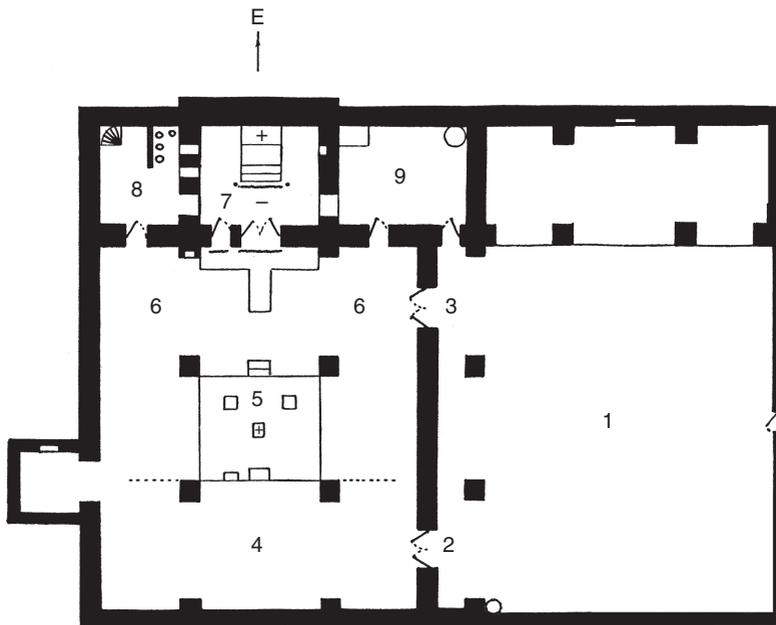


FIGURE 7.1 Fiey’s conception of a “typical” East Syrian church floor-plan.¹⁴⁷ 1: courtyard. 2: women’s door. 3: men’s door. 4: women’s section. 5: *bēmā*. 6: men’s section. 7: chancel. 8: sacristy. 9: baptistry.

¹⁴⁶ Berlin Sachau 167, ff. 77b, 79a. For a discussion of the archeological and liturgical evidence for the *bēmā* in Syrian churches, see Robert F. Taft, “Some Notes on the Bema in the East and West Syrian Traditions,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 34 (1968): 326–59; Robert F. Taft, “On the Use of the Bema in the East-Syrian Liturgy,” *Eastern Churches Review* 3 (1970): 30–39. Taft suggests that the *bēmā* may have disappeared from church architecture in the fourteenth century: Taft, “Some Notes on the Bema,” 337. Given that a new ritual involving the *bēmā* is first attested in Berlin Sachau 167, dated 1807 AG / 1496, it seems more likely that the *bēmā* continued in use at least through the fifteenth century: Taft, “The Use of the Bema,” 32 n. 7.

¹⁴⁷ Adapted from Jean M. Fiey, *Mossoul chrétienne; essai sur l’histoire, l’archéologie et l’état actuel des monuments chrétiens de la ville de Mossoul* (Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1959), pl. II.

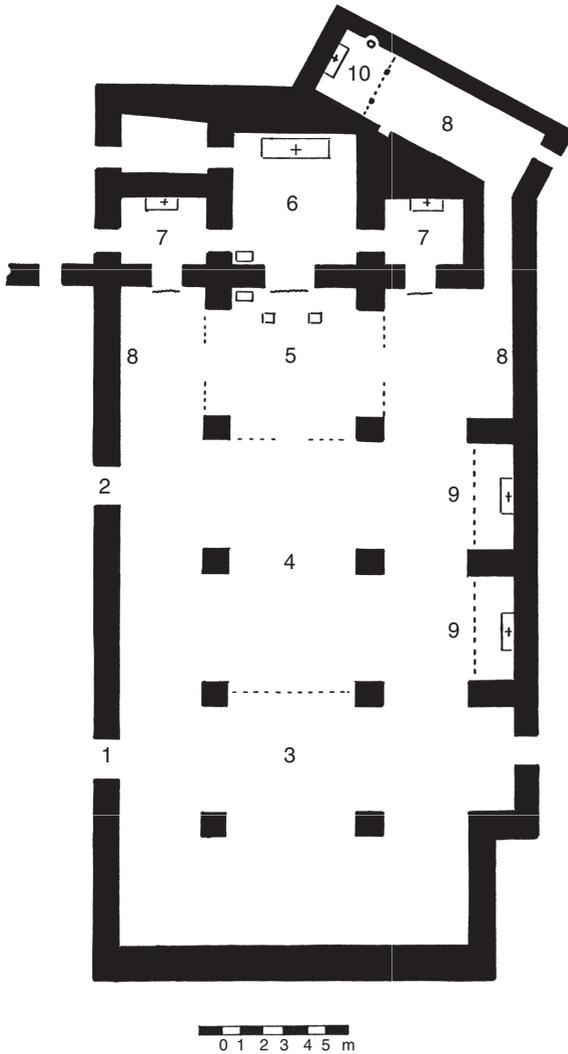


FIGURE 7.2 The twentieth-century plan of the medieval Mārt Meskīntā church in Mosul.¹⁴⁸ 1: women's door. 2: men's door. 3: women's space. 4: men's space. 5: *bēmā*. 6: chancel. 7: modern side chapels. 8: tombs. 9: modern side altars. 10: baptistery. Note that the *bēmā* has been moved to the front of the church through modern European influence.

¹⁴⁸ Adapted from *ibid.*, pl. VI.

was not set in stone, however, as women most likely crossed “male space” in going forward to the chancel gate to receive the Eucharist from the priest and deacon, and in most churches the separation of gendered space was probably structured socially rather than architecturally. The division between male and female members was not simply a question of greater or lesser access to religious rituals, because both groups would have roughly equal access to the scripture readings, and in principle access to partaking in the sacraments. But lay women were put in a back-seat position for the majority of liturgical actions, which took place at the front of the nave. Not even lay men, however, were first-class members: they remained subordinate to the clerical, secular, and monastic leaders of the community.

The gendered orientation of ritual space in the Church of the East was shared with many medieval Muslims, who likewise often located women at the back of mosques. A *ḥadīth* in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* states a principle that women should gravitate to the back of the mosque when the congregation lines up in rows for prayer: “The best row for men is the first, and the worst is the last, but the best row for women is the last and the worst is the first.”¹⁴⁹ Behnam Sadeghi examined different Ḥanafī formulations of what he termed the “adjacency law,” the law that women’s presence invalidated male Muslim prayers if they were praying with any orientation other than women behind men.¹⁵⁰ Late medieval legal scholars progressively discouraged women’s attendance at the mosque, but only the Ḥanafī *madhhab* eventually prohibited women from attending all communal prayers.¹⁵¹ Yet Marion Holmes Katz documents that opposition from the ‘*ulamā*’ had not eliminated late medieval women’s attendance at mosques and participation in Islamic festivals in Iraq and Egypt.¹⁵² In Cairo, women sometimes prayed in an “addition” (*ziyāda*) built outside the mosque, but other women prayed at the back of the mosque itself.¹⁵³ Indeed, the thirteenth-century Syrian Shāfi‘ī scholar al-Nawawī cited the

¹⁴⁹ خَيْرُ صُفُوفِ الرِّجَالِ أَوْلَاهَا. وَشَرُّهَا آخِرُهَا. وَخَيْرُ صُفُوفِ النِّسَاءِ آخِرُهَا. وَشَرُّهَا أَوْلَاهَا. Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1995), al-Ṣalāh 28, #132, vol. I: 273. Regardless of the *isnād*, its occurrence in this collection reveals that the principle was considered normative by some members of the ‘*ulamā*’.

¹⁵⁰ Sadeghi, *Logic of Law-Making*, 50–65.

¹⁵¹ Marion Holmes Katz, *Women in the Mosque: A History of Legal Thought and Social Practice* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2014), 86–87; Sadeghi, *Logic of Law-Making*, 106, 115–20.

¹⁵² Katz, *Women in the Mosque*, 118, 129–30, 132.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 134.

practice of women worshiping behind men to counter the argument of some *fuqahā'* (legal scholars) that the mixing of genders required prohibiting all women from coming to the mosque.¹⁵⁴ While not universal, a gendered orientation of worship space, with women behind men, was shared between East Syrian Christians and many Middle Eastern Muslims.

Membership in the Church of the East also extended beyond those physically present to include members without bodies, including angels and the deceased. Liturgical prayers allege the presence of angels at the worship service participating with the congregation.¹⁵⁵ It is unclear to what degree the laity might have considered angels to be present, or whether they would have been inclined to limit membership to visibly embodied congregants, but the use of incense and the tinkling silver bells on poles (*makhshānyāthā*) might suggest to laypeople as well that there was more involved than met the eye.¹⁵⁶ More importantly, this category of invisible membership included the great saints, whose intercession with God was sought on behalf of the community.¹⁵⁷ Churches and monasteries were dedicated to particular saints, and the most prominent saints had annual commemorations to remind the community of their availability as intercessors. Particular saints were also depicted in icons on the walls of the church sanctuary, signifying their continued presence, or had relics that made the saintly presence concrete in particular congregations. No fifteenth-century icons survive from the Church of the East,¹⁵⁸ but an Arabic treatise by a fourteenth-century East Syrian author from Mosul included a defense of icons, suggesting that icons were probably still part of East Syrian church decoration in the fifteenth

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 54–55.

¹⁵⁵ E.g. Berlin Sachau 167, f. 77a

¹⁵⁶ See fn. 73 above.

¹⁵⁷ The intercession of the saints for the community is discussed in Chapter 9. Becker likewise included the saints among other classes of members in the early nineteenth-century Church of the East: Becker, *Revival and Awakening*, 10.

¹⁵⁸ The first American Protestant missionaries formed the erroneous notion that the “mountain Nestorians” had “always” rejected icons: Justin Perkins, *A Residence of Eight Years in Persia, among the Nestorian Christians: With Notices of the Muhammedans* (Andover, MA: Allen, Morrill & Wardwell, 1843), 21. Herman Teule documented consistently positive references to icons in East Syrian texts up to the fourteenth century: Herman Teule, “The Veneration of Images in the East Syriac Tradition,” in *Die Welt der Götterbilder*, ed. Brigitte Gronenberg and Hermann Spieckermann (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 324–46. The frequent plundering of churches in the fifteenth century is perhaps the most plausible context for this community’s abandonment of icons, due to the cost of continually replacing them.

Church of the East was understood to include invisible as well as visible members.

CONCLUSION

The collective rituals of the Church of the East defined the meaning of membership in this community, linking the spiritual and physical benefits of Christ's saving work in general to particular individuals in specific places at precise times. The sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist formed the central ritual link between theology and the lay Christian, and the liturgies surrounding their celebration communicated the necessity of participating in these rituals for purity, for forgiveness, and for spiritual life. But these liturgies could also complicate the use of these sacraments to delimit an all-or-nothing membership, enabling laypeople to adopt different varieties of participation in a wide penumbra of communal belonging. The liturgical seasons and communal fasts drew communal boundary lines, but could also extend the range of possibilities available to laypeople. Clerical attempts to enforce sacramental boundaries on the community might fail to impose order upon an imprecisely defined membership with inconsistent boundary mechanisms. The result was that membership in the Church of the East, while thematically about spiritual health and life, was not an all-or-nothing affair. The egalitarian bounded model of membership is inapplicable to self-consciously structured premodern societies. Even a hierarchical model, where members are arranged in a finite number of ranks with a definite precedence, breaks down before the reality of independent orders of membership such as ordained clergy, monks, and secular leaders. Varieties of membership might occasionally fall into partial and temporary hierarchies for particular purposes, such as the order of reception of the Eucharist. But the membership in the Church of the East was always textured by the age, gender, rank, embodiment, and level of elective participation of the individual.

1477 asserts that the catholicos “holds the place of Christ,” which, as we shall see, is one among a series of strategies to legitimate the authority of a patriarch who was probably newly elected in a noncanonical fashion.¹⁶ Another colophon, dated 1799 AG / 1488, describes the catholicos as “wearing the ephod of Jesus’ high priesthood, and clothed in the mantle of Simon’s [i.e. Peter’s] chief priesthood.”¹⁷ Even here, however, two different Syriac terms are used for the two priesthoods mentioned: *kūmrūthā* for Christ’s and *kāhnūthā* for the apostles’. Fifteenth-century sources usually identify Christian priests by the latter term or by *qashīshā* (“elder”), only rarely using the former term, a lexical disjuncture that underscores the gap between Christ’s priesthood and contemporary clergy. The fact that nowhere else in the fifteenth century was Christ’s priesthood linked to the church hierarchy is all the more remarkable for its prominence in the discussion of the clergy by Timothy II.

The closest parallel between the clergy and Christ was drawn through the metaphor of the shepherd. As discussed in Chapter 6, the Church was the flock of Christ, the Good Shepherd, and the image of the Good Shepherd was used for different purposes in the liturgy and in Shbadnāyā’s poetry. But Shbadnāyā applied the same pastoral metaphor to the clergy when he prayed to Christ to “glorify and support [the Church’s] chief shepherd,” the catholicos, and to “guard her pastors and her shepherds.”¹⁸ The colophons also repeatedly apply the title “shepherd” to catholicos-patriarch and bishops, often with adjectives emphasizing diligence and vigilance.¹⁹ On the other hand, shepherds were a larger segment of society in late medieval Iraq than in post-industrial Western Europe or North America, so the shepherd metaphor for the clergy would evoke common experience and perhaps personal acquaintances more than Christlikeness. The “diligent shepherd” metaphor expressed no more about church leaders than that they took care of their congregations in some way.

Instead of Christ, the apostles and other nondivine biblical heroes provided the model for the patriarchs according to the accepted rhetoric of the colophons. We have already seen that a scribe in 1488 linked

¹⁶ ܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܘܫܘܪܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ: Vatican sir. 186, f. 240b.

¹⁷ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ: Mārdīn (Scher) 13 [CCM 72], f. 187b.

¹⁸ ܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 220b.

¹⁹ The exact phrases vary widely, but see Paris BN Syr. 184, ff. 125a–b; Berlin orient. quart. 845, f. 179a [quoting the *Vorlage*]; St. Petersburg Syr. 33, f. 316a; BL Add. 7174, f. 214a; Berlin orient. oct. 1313, f. 176b; BL Add. 7177, f. 321a; Berlin Sachau 167, f. 139a; and Paris BN Syr. 345, f. 220b.

these are minor points in Shbadnāyā's grand sweep of theology from the Trinity and the creation through redemption and the final renewal of all things.

What is most striking, however, is that these prayers are almost the only references to Christian clergy in all of Shbadnāyā's writings. Even in his discussion of sacraments and Pentecost, where the liturgical texts are at such pains to connect these topics with the priestly ministry, Shbadnāyā only briefly makes the connection in passing, if at all. His discussion of baptism makes no mention of clergy, and his commentary on the Eucharist remarks only in passing that it "is completed by the mediation of the apostolic priesthood."⁴⁰ In his discussion of the apostles, he defines "pastors" (*'allānē*) as "High priests, apostles, pillars of the Church," and asserts that the apostles "appointed clerics in every clime."⁴¹ Although Shbadnāyā does not mention the clergy explicitly, he probably regarded the ecclesiastical power of his contemporary priesthood as derived from the authority given by Christ to the apostles: "*Hupateia* (leadership) of his Church [Jesus] entrusted to those who were trustworthy."⁴² These brief, elliptical remarks are easily lost in the sea of poetry penned by this author.

The only extended discussion of the clergy in Shbadnāyā's entire corpus was not even his own composition. He quoted a lengthy poem attributed to the tenth-century author Rabban Emmanuel, which lists five patriarchal thrones established by the apostles in Rome, Byzantium, Seleucia-Ctesiphon (the twin capital of the Sasanian Persian Empire), Antioch, and Alexandria, from which "flows" the priesthood.⁴³ In order to drive home the point, the poem adds:

And from there and forever in them and from them all priestly offices
 In other cities, servants of the metropolis,
 From the ends to the ends of the world, all peoples and nations,
 To these thrones, then, are bound and also ordained as priests.⁴⁴

This quotation communicates the clergy's centrifugally hierarchical nature and apostolic origin, yet it is less than one-fifth of the long extract from Rabban Emmanuel's poem, which focused primarily on the apostles'

⁴⁰ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 114b.

⁴¹ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ: Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 180b, 196b. "Clerics" transliterates the Greek word *klērikoi*, which Shbadnāyā glossed, "Heads of the service, chiefs and overseers" (ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ).

⁴² ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 196a.

⁴³ Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 200b–202a.

⁴⁴ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܘܡܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 201b.

days of creation. Yet the earlier text devoted two-thirds of its section on the Church to the heavenly pattern of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, as well as an additional section on the priesthood, sections that have no parallel in Shbadnāyā's theological poetry. Although at least one fifteenth-century scribe copied this work by 'Abdīshō',⁴⁶ Shbadnāyā seems not to have known it, for he never quoted it. Although Shbadnāyā cited both 'Abdīshō' b. Brīkhā and Timothy II as authorities, he did so rarely and only on subjects other than the clergy. The near absence of references to the priesthood in Shbadnāyā's works, even in contexts where the hierarchy would be expected to figure prominently, is so striking as to hint that it was not by accident.

The reasons for Shbadnāyā's near silence on the clergy must remain speculative, but be sought in the context of fifteenth-century disruptions of the clerical structure of the Church of the East. The only date known for Shbadnāyā's life is 1751 AG / 1440, when he composed his three shorter liturgical poems; it is unknown when he composed his largest work.⁴⁷ There were few patriarchs in the mid fifteenth century, likely with long gaps during which there was no catholicos.⁴⁸ Even when there was an ecclesiastical hierarchy, lay Christians could find themselves taken captive without a priest to minister to their spiritual needs. For example, T'ovma Metsop'ets'i reported the steadfastness of Armenians in Samarqand despite a bishop's failure to reach them: "The captured Christians remained firm in the faith in the city of Samarqand. Subsequently there was a bishop [dispatched], but he did not reach that land; instead, he died in Sultaniyeh."⁴⁹ In a context with such evident absences among the clergy, the parallel drawn by 'Abdīshō' b. Brīkhā between the angelic and ecclesiastical hierarchies, or Timothy II's assimilation of the clergy to the omnipresent Christ, may have seemed far-fetched. It is likely that Shbadnāyā considered it necessary to specify the doctrinal content of Christianity and to emphasize the power of the sacraments without requiring too much precision from the confused state of the clergy.

⁴⁶ Vatican sir. 176.

⁴⁷ The date is already found in the oldest extant text of the collection, Krakow Biblioteka Jagiellońska Sachau 178, f. 113a.

⁴⁸ See Appendix C, fnn. 8–10.

⁴⁹ Գերեալ քրիստոնէիցն հաստատութիւն եղև հաստոյ ի Սըմըրղընդ քաղաքի: և եղև եպիսկոպոս յետ ժամանակի, և ոչ հասաւ յաշխարհն այն, այլ մեռաւ ի Սուլթանիա: Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 34; T'ovma Metsop'ets'i, *T'ovma Metsobets'i's History of Tamerlane and His Successors*, trans. Robert Bedrosian (New York, NY: Sources of the Armenian Tradition, 1987), 19.

NEW MEANINGS FOR PRIESTHOOD: THE COLOPHON EVIDENCE

While the liturgical prayers embodied conservatism, only gradually incorporating new texts and neglecting old ideas, the colophons at the end of manuscripts enabled experimentation. Certain aspects of the genre were traditional, but even when tradition specified the general sentiment, it allowed wide leeway as to how to say it, and the many different scribes from diverse localities brought local and personal interests to bear on their colophons.⁵⁰ What these different scribes reveal about conceptions of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is that, although certain components of the older theological and liturgical conceptions continued, the priesthood also increasingly imitated secular authority, especially toward the end of the fifteenth century.

The bulk of the discussion of priesthood found in the colophons is contained in self-deprecations and in praises of other clergy. Such statements are conventional and cannot be taken as neutral descriptions of the individuals named, yet the very conventionality augments their value for revealing what the scribes viewed as normative or ideal for the priesthood. Where praises or self-deprecations acquired a fixed form, they might have been preserved as a fossil from a previous period disconnected from current conceptions of ideal clergy. But since the colophon genre encouraged saying something negative about oneself and something positive about others, without specifying the precise content or wording, then what was said still indicated what was considered positive or negative for the clergy.

Scribal self-deprecations distinguished between the clerical office and the qualities of individual clerics. Several scribes, in addition to the conventional insistence upon their personal sinfulness, asserted that they did not deserve their ecclesiastical rank. Deacon Mas'ūd of Kfarbūrān claimed that he “is not worthy of the name of deacons.”⁵¹ According to his 1489 colophon, a priest named 'Īsā in Mosul was “as far as the east from the west from the rank which was entrusted to him and from the lot which came to his ignorance,”⁵² while another priest 'Īsā in 1496 described himself as “one who, by the grace of our Lord, is a priest even though unworthy.”⁵³ In 1499 a priest Ēlīyā identified himself as someone who “in name is a priest and not by deeds of righteousness.”⁵⁴ These

⁵⁰ On the degree to which colophons were determined by genre, see Carlson, “Formulaic Prose?” 379–98.

⁵¹ ܡܫܘܕ ܕܩܦܪܒܘܪܐܢ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܩܦܪܒܘܪܐܢ: Paris BN Syr. 184, f. 125a.

⁵² ܡܫܘܕ ܕܩܦܪܒܘܪܐܢ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܩܦܪܒܘܪܐܢ: BL Or. 4399, f. 376a.

⁵³ ܡܫܘܕ ܕܩܦܪܒܘܪܐܢ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܩܦܪܒܘܪܐܢ: Berlin Sachau 167, f. 139a.

⁵⁴ ܡܫܘܕ ܕܩܦܪܒܘܪܐܢ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܩܦܪܒܘܪܐܢ: BL Add. 7174, f. 214a.

secular power in its scope, the priesthood is equally in view for victory as well as for salvation. The priest ʿĪsā b. Fakhr al-Dīn b. ʿĪsā of Mosul prayed in 1793 AG / 1482, “May [the catholicos-patriarch] live with all victories and act mightily with all powerful exploits.”⁶⁹ As an extension of prayers for patriarchal victories, the same scribe prayed in a colophon dated 1800 AG / 1489 for the designated patriarchal heir, Metropolitan ʿĪlīyā of Mosul, that “his arm may be strong with strength and victories.”⁷⁰ In the fifteenth century, the ideal patriarch must also be victorious.

On a lexical level, this shift was enabled by overlapping vocabulary and familiar connections linking ecclesiastical and secular leaders. Fifteenth-century Syriac scribes used the noun *rēshānā* (“first, noble, chief”) and its Arabic cognate *raʿīs* to refer primarily to secular leaders such as village chiefs or nobles.⁷¹ Yet the derived noun *rēshānūthā* (“primacy” or “chieftainship”) continued to be used equally of the patriarchate, as it had been during the Mongol period.⁷² The new secular focus of *rēshānā/raʿīs* could import a more political dimension to the ecclesiastical usage. At a lower level of the clergy, the conceptual association between ecclesiastical and secular leadership could be strengthened in those villages where the leading priest was also a member of the chief’s family. Indeed, all known fifteenth-century East Syrian *rēshānē* are mentioned in colophons due to the patronage of a son who served as village priest, with the exception of Chief Denhā of ʿĀlnā, who was himself a priest.⁷³ The priest Hōrmīzd, son of Chief Mattay of Talkēpē, was explicitly designated the primary priest of his village: “this aforementioned priest was sacristan of [the church of Mār Qūryāqōs], and there were in this village people of his craft and his entourage, a multitude of clerics.”⁷⁴ Shifting vocabulary and shared social connections could provide conduits for conceptual slippage.

The adoption of secular notions of leadership, and “victory” in particular, by the patriarchal office was also necessitated by the political reality of instability. In the post-Mongol period, the Church of the East lacked

⁶⁹ ܘܡܝܢ ܗܘܢܐ ܗܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ. Princeton Garrett Syr. 22, f. 97a.

⁷⁰ ܘܡܝܢ ܗܘܢܐ ܗܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ. BL Or. 4399, f. 579a.

⁷¹ See citations in Chapter 1, fnn. 138–41. In the Mongol period, the Syriac term *rēshānā* was occasionally used of clergy as well.

⁷² For example, in Vatican sir. 186, f. 240a. The term *rēshānūthā* was also applied to Metropolitan Timothy of Hiṣn-Kayf and Nisibis in 1741 AG / 1430: Paris BN Syr. 184, f. 125b.

⁷³ See Chapter 1, fn. 141. The exception is mentioned in the colophon at the end of Išoʿdad of Merv, *Commentaries*, V, 1: 180.

⁷⁴ ܘܡܝܢ ܗܘܢܐ ܗܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ. BL Or. 4399, f. 579b.

Church of the East may have regained access to the patriarchal church in Kōkhē, which was perhaps inaccessible under other rulers of Baghdad. It is unknown at what point the traditional patriarchal throne was permanently lost to the Church of the East, but it was probably at some point early in the fifteenth century.

With the loss of the patriarchal church at Kōkhē, the question of patriarchal legitimacy must have presented itself in a sharp form. No catholicos-patriarch is mentioned in extant manuscript colophons from 1448, 1454, 1459, and 1461, which likely implies either that the office was vacant or that the scribes did not consider the current incumbent legitimate.⁸⁷ Catholicos Ēlīyā is mentioned in a single colophon, dated 28 May 1774 AG / 1463, and, as suggested in Chapter 2, it is likely that this patriarch was appointed in 1462 by the Qarāqūyunlū ruler Jahānshāh.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, colophons of 1465, 1474, and 1476 also omit any reference to a patriarch, suggesting that either Ēlīyā's term in office was short or his legitimacy was disputed.⁸⁹ It is not until a colophon composed on 29 November 1789 AG / 1477 that we have evidence for the Catholicos Shem'ōn, who would reign for twenty years. The description in this colophon of the catholicos "putting on the mantle of high-priesthood" likely indicates that his appointment was recent.⁹⁰ It is quite possible that three decades passed in the middle of the fifteenth century out of which a patriarch was on the throne for less than four years, or, if there was a patriarch, his validity was in question. These were desperate times, in which it was prohibitively difficult to consecrate a patriarch in accordance with the canons.

The 1477 colophon reveals deep anxiety over patriarchal legitimacy. The praise accorded to the catholicos in this colophon exceeds that in all other colophons within a century.⁹¹ He is "the most holy tabernacle which the Trinity fixed as its voluntary dwelling upon the earth, and the illuminating resting-place which the eternal Being made a temple for the overshadowing of the power of its might, the spiritual pillar which gives light and

infer the circumstances of their ordinations without knowing when they occurred. See Appendix B.

⁸⁷ See Appendix C, fn. 10.

⁸⁸ See Chapter 2, fn. 38.

⁸⁹ See Appendix C, fn. 10.

⁹⁰ **صلى الله عليه وسلم**: Vatican sir. 186, f. 240b.

⁹¹ The only exception is that much of this colophon was copied verbatim in the colophon of BL Or. 4399, ff. 579a, dated 1800 AG / 1489. Unfortunately, the latter colophon is damaged, so it is unclear precisely how much of the Vatican manuscript's note was included at the end of the British Library manuscript.

legitimate patriarchal rule. The regional perspective on religious authority being transmitted to relatives of the current leader, discussed in Chapter 3, was available as one such option. This broadly shared regional culture, coupled with the breakdown of legitimate patriarchal consecration according to the requirements put forward by the 1318 council of Catholicos Timothy II in the law-book of ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brīkhā, provides a probable context for the Church of the East adopting a hereditary patriarchate in the latter half of the fifteenth century.

The practice of hereditary patriarchal successions was not without its critics, however. These criticisms later came to a head within the Church of the East in 1553, when a monk of the powerful monastery of Rabban Hōrmīzd traveled to Rome and solicited the pope’s consecration as a rival patriarch.⁹⁸ Earlier criticism of hereditary patriarchal succession within the Church of the East has not survived, although we should presume that such a bold change of practice could not have been universally popular. ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brīkhā had earlier contrasted the ancient Jewish priesthood with the Christian clergy in that the former was hereditary while the latter was by ordination based on merit, “and it testifies concerning the perfection of this priesthood and the incompleteness of that one,” since good parents often had bad children and vice versa.⁹⁹ From the perspective of priests trained on the writings of ‘Abdīshō’, the adoption of a hereditary patriarchate would imply a rejection of merit-based consecration. East Syrian criticism of the hereditary patriarchal succession may also be drawn by analogy from arguments proposed by the Syriac Orthodox critics of the practice within their own church. As discussed in Chapter 3, the notion (common to both Syriac churches) that the patriarch should be selected by God was understood by some authors to imply that the office could not be hereditary.¹⁰⁰

East Syrian proponents of a hereditary patriarchal succession may have heard similar complaints within the Church of the East. Such a background would illuminate a scribe’s characterization of the designated patriarchal successor in one of the earliest known references to the office within the Church of the East, a colophon dated 1795 AG / 889 AH / 1484:

in the days ... of Mār Shem’ōn the Catholicos Patriarch ... and in the holiness and reverence of his sister’s son, and in the choice which belongs to the Holy

⁹⁸ For a discussion of this episode, see Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 44–51.

⁹⁹ ܐܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ: ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brīkhā, *Kthābhā d-methqrē margānūthā*, 35.

¹⁰⁰ See Chapter 3, fn. 84.

commonly in the 1540s.¹⁰⁵ But other scribes chose instead to name the designated heir only under his other, more traditional, ecclesiastical title. Between 1477 and 1483, Ēlīyā, the nephew of the Catholicos Shemʿōn, was named in three colophons as the metropolitan of Nisibis, Mārdīn, Amid, Hiṣn-Kayf, and Siʿird.¹⁰⁶ A colophon from 1488, after exorbitantly praising his holiness, only gives him the title “metropolitan,” without specifying his see.¹⁰⁷ Three colophons written between 1489 and 1493 instead refer to Ēlīyā as the metropolitan of the Mosul region, with one manuscript adding “and of all the orthodox believers.”¹⁰⁸ Scribes found other ways of referring to the designated patriarchal heir without emphasizing his anticipated hereditary succession.

Although concrete evidence is lacking, scribes might also silently protest the hereditary patriarchate by refusing to mention the heir. The scribe Gabriel in the Hakkārī village of Bēth Sēlām, who named the designated heir only as a metropolitan in 1490, ten years earlier mentioned only the catholicos.¹⁰⁹ It is not clear whether Metropolitan Ēlīyā in fact survived to inherit from Catholicos Shemʿōn after the latter’s death in 1497: the patriarch’s epitaph was put up instead by an otherwise unknown “Mār Ḥnānīshō’ the youth,” and a colophon composed in 1807 AG / 1496 mentions the catholicos but no metropolitan.¹¹⁰ If Metropolitan Ēlīyā was still alive in 1496, the scribe’s omission of his name may indicate a rejection of his authority. The adoption of an objectionable hereditary

¹⁰⁵ Séert (Scher) 46, Vat syr. 91, Vat syr. 83, a manuscript in Beirut dated 1852 AG / 1541, Mārdīn (Scher) 14, BL Add. 7178, Vat syr. 66, Bāṭnāyā (Ḥaddād) 35, and Mosul (Scher) 80: Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 398–404.

¹⁰⁶ Kirkuk (Vosté) 39 (= Haddād 90), Diyarbakır (Scher) 73, and Mārdīn (Scher) 43: *ibid.*, 395. Diyarbakır (Scher) 73 and Mārdīn (Scher) 43 add “Armenia” to the list. Unfortunately only one of these manuscripts indicates where it was written and by whom: Kirkuk (Vosté) 39 was written in Siʿird by Ḥabīb of Āmid. The fact that these are all western dioceses of the Church of the East raises the possibility that the position was conceived as the ecclesiastical leader for the western half of the Church, a mirror of the Syriac Orthodox maphrianate. For an example of a Syriac Orthodox patriarch appointing a nephew as maphrian in order to designate him as his successor, see Chapter 3, fn. 91.

¹⁰⁷ Mārdīn (Scher) 13 [HMML CCM 72], f. 188a.

¹⁰⁸ The first was written by the same priest ʿĪsā of Mosul who in 1493 used the title *nāṭar kirsyā* for the designated heir, but here he avoided the term: BL Or. 4399, f. 579a. The second was copied in 1490 in a Hakkārī mountain village: Ishoʿdad of Merv, *Commentaries*, V, 1: 179. The third was written at an unknown location in 1493: Cambridge Add. 1965, f. 257b.

¹⁰⁹ Diyarbakır (Scher) 72 [HMML CCM 409], f. 91a.

¹¹⁰ The inscription was edited by Vosté, “Rabban Hormizd,” 283–84. The honorific “Mār” implies that this Ḥnānīshō’ was a bishop or metropolitan, while “the youth” (ܡܪܝܫܘܬܐ)

patriarchate to resolve an otherwise insoluble crisis of legitimacy may also explain the failure to update patriarchal lists into and through the fifteenth century. Shlēmōn of Baṣra's *Book of the Bee* included a list of catholicos-patriarchs that later scribes updated into the fifteenth century, but no further.¹¹¹ The liturgical diptychs commemorating the patriarchs became fossilized in the form under the second successor of Catholicos Denhā II (d. 1382), probably in the early fifteenth century,¹¹² and their continued copying in manuscripts long after that time may suggest a question regarding later patriarchs' legitimacy. The liturgical poem listing the successive catholicos-patriarchs, present in a fifteenth-century manuscript, ended with Timothy II and then a prayer for the current, but unnamed, incumbent.¹¹³ While this may indicate the period of composition, the fact that the poem was not expanded may also indicate doubts as to the legitimacy of the later patriarchs.

CONCLUSION

When Metropolitan Joseph of Erbil was consecrated Catholicos Timothy II in 1318, he and the other metropolitans of the Church of the East evidently felt that a more centralized clergy was needed in the unstable period under the rule of Mongol khans newly converted to Islam. The synod affirmed the validity of the law-book compiled by Metropolitan 'Abdīshō' of Nisibis, which imposed strict requirements for the legitimate consecration of a catholicos-patriarch and the ordination by him of the other ranks of clergy. Moreover, both Timothy II and 'Abdīshō' b. Brīkhā wrote theological treatises emphasizing the centrality of the clergy to the Church. But this clericalist structure of the Church proved untenable in the even greater upheavals following the breakdown of Mongol rule. The liturgy partially preserved and yet narrowed this synthesis in the prayers for the sacramental system. The poetry of Īshāq Shbadnāyā, on the other hand, referred to the clergy only in passing, almost exclusively in prayers, and refrained from suggesting any notion of their necessity

suggests that he was younger than was typical for a man of his office, which may have resulted, for example, if he were the newly designated successor to the patriarch. The colophon is Berlin Sachau 167, f. 139a.

¹¹¹ See Appendix C, fn. 3. On the author and the work, see J. A. Loopstra, "Shlemon of Baṣra," *GEDSH*.

¹¹² See Appendix C, fn. 4.

¹¹³ "Poem on the Catholicoi of the East" in 'Abdīshō' b. Brīkhā, *Kthābhā d-methqrē margānūthā*, 97.

for the Church. The several colophons from the fifteenth century show the piecemeal assimilation of the clergy to the nonecclesiastical chiefs, particularly in prayers for the catholicos-patriarchs to achieve victories. Finally, the adoption of a hereditary patriarchal succession within the Church of the East was most likely motivated by the need to resolve the crisis of legitimacy brought on by the inability to satisfy the requirements of patriarchal succession in the terms required by the law-book of 'Ab-dīshō' b. Brīkhā.

The Power of the Past: Communal History for Present Needs

In the autumn of 1458, a scribe in a village near the Tigris, upon coming to the end of his task of copying, reflected on the epochs of the world.¹ He enumerated the intervals between Adam, the Flood, the Tower of Babylon, the promise to Abraham, the Exodus from Egypt, Joshua b. Nun, the Israelite kings, the Babylonian captivity, the crucifixion of Jesus, the beginnings of the Persian Empire, the Arab conquest, and the scribe's own day, before appending some additional dates for events surrounding the Christ's incarnation. Such a chronology, in broad brush-strokes, reveals the scribe's conceptual map of the past. Jesus looms largest in this conception, but also, and significantly, nothing epochal had happened since the rise of Islam eight centuries earlier.² Indeed, the period between the Arab conquests and the scribe's own day is the longest epoch in the list since the antediluvian era. The fifteenth-century Church of the East had a notion of linear history, but it concentrated its historical attention around Jesus, and there was a large historical blank separating it from its pre-Islamic past.

Even after the East Syrian historiographic tradition came to an end in the fourteenth century, the Church of the East thought of itself as a

¹ This text is contained in Diyarbakır (Scher) 106 [HMML CCM 20], ff. 235a–b. The text is dated 1770 AG, which spans from 1 October 1458 to 30 September 1459, but it also identifies the rule of the Arabs as beginning 862 years earlier, which is far too early unless taken as a Hijrī date. 862 AH spans from mid November 1457 until mid November 1458, leading to the conclusion that the text was composed in October or early November of 1458. I thank Adam McCollum for bringing the text to my attention.

² The thirteenth-century Syriac Orthodox maphrian Bar 'Ebroyo had identified the end of Arab rule with the Mongol Ilkhan Hülegü's capture of Baghdad in 1258 and the death of the 'Abbasid caliph: Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, 1932), I: 431, 433. The fifteenth-century East Syrian scribe seems to be using *Ṭayyāyē* in the broader sense of Muslims, including not only Arabs but also Turks and Mongols, and ignoring the fact that the Mongols were pagans when they conquered.

community with a history. After Ṣalībā b. Yuhannā of Mosul completed his *Kitāb asfār al-asrār* in the 1330s, no subsequent East Syrian authors would continue the historical portion of his work.³ Isolated episodes would occasionally be reported in brief historical notices, usually of not more than a few pages,⁴ and long-dead saints continued to attract the attention of hagiographical poets,⁵ but for centuries no author from the Church of the East undertook to write the history of that community.⁶ Yet the past still played a role in East Syrian community concepts. The theology, liturgy, and hierarchy of the Church of the East were neither uniform nor static, but they were all contemporary, in the sense that they spoke primarily about the community in the present. But East Syrian Christianity had a past as well as a present, and the Church of the East understood itself in light of a particular set of narratives about history.

The absence of more substantial histories must be due in large part to the disturbances caused by raiding armies. The frequent wars of the fifteenth century were accompanied by plundering the sedentary population of anything of value; books were prominent among the items plundered and resold.⁷ In these disturbed times the writing of history was more difficult for everyone, not only for the Church of the East. Only one Armenian history survives between the end of the Mongol Ilkhanate and the early seventeenth century, compared with four histories from the briefer period of Mongol rule.⁸ The vardapet T'ovma Metsop'ets'i, the author of this fifteenth-century text, recorded his frequent relocations to avoid capture by passing armies, sometimes without success.⁹

³ On the *Kitāb asfār al-asrār*, its composition, and its authorship, see Bo Holmberg, "A Reconsideration of the *Kitāb al-Mağdal*," *Parole de l'Orient* 18 (1993): 255–73. Bo Holmberg lists a 1401 manuscript of 'Amr b. Mattā's *Kitāb al-Majdal*, but it is a Copto-Arabic manuscript rather than one from the Church of the East. An edition of the text is in process by Gianmaria Gianazza.

⁴ The most famous episode, concerning the arrival of Christians from India requesting a bishop from the catholicos of the East, was edited by Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, 1: 590–99. Several episodes from later centuries were translated, without an edition, by Addai Scher, "Épisodes de l'histoire du Kurdistan," *Journal Asiatique* Xe série, 15 (1910): 119–39.

⁵ For example, Iṣḥāq Shbadnāyā's and Iṣḥō'yahb b. Mqaddam's poems on Mār Gīwargīs.

⁶ For the lack of interest in history within the Church of the East during the Ottoman period, see Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 252–53.

⁷ For the ransom of plundered books, see Chapter 3, fn. 40.

⁸ The Mongol-era Armenian historians are Grigor of Akants, Kirakos Gandzakets'i, Vardan Arewelts'i, and Step'anos Orbelian, all from the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

⁹ Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 25, 70, 73, 79, 132, 148, 155, 187.

Indeed, T'ovma Metsop'ets'i recognized that his historical narrative was out of order and asked the reader's indulgence: "You must forgive me, for I was old and commenced (writing) at fifty years of age. Therefore I wrote going backward and forward."¹⁰ Syriac Orthodox historiography also declined in the post-Mongol period. After a boom of three major chronicles between the late twelfth and late thirteenth centuries, the only lengthy Syriac Orthodox historical writing of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were anonymous continuations of the chronicles of Bar 'Ebroyo.¹¹ Even the ruling Qarāqūyūnlū dynasty failed to produce or transmit a court history in this period,¹² while the earliest surviving Āqqūyūnlū court history dates from after Uzun Ḥasan finally defeated the Qarāqūyūnlū in 1469 and established a period of relative peace in the region.¹³

The lack of chronicles or other genres of historical writing valued by modern historians presents a problem, but not an insuperable one, for the study of how the fifteenth-century Church of the East understood its own past. Modern Western historians' criteria for historical records were not employed by fifteenth-century Middle Eastern Christians, and late medieval Christians did not divide "history" from "theology" in their reflections upon the past, as modern scholars do. The core of Īshāq Shbadnāyā's *magnum opus* recounts Jesus' life, work, death, and resurrection, and he provided dates to anchor various parts of this narrative in historical time. This narrative extends through the apostolic founding of the Church, understood to be in direct connection with the author's own community. The same work appeals to numerous earlier Christian

¹⁰ րու անմեղադիր լեր, զի ծեր էի եւ յետ Ծ. (50) ամաց սկսայ. վասն այսորիկ յետ եւ յառաջ գրեցի: translation modified from Metsop'ets'i, *History of Tamerlane*, 33; Metsop'ets'i, *Patmagrut'yun*, 65.

¹¹ For a recent discussion of the state of the research on Michael the Syrian, the *Chronicle of 1234*, and the chronicles of Bar 'Ebroyo, see Dorothea Weltecke, "Les Trois Grandes Chroniques syro-orthodoxes des XIIIe et XIIIe siècles," in *L'historiographie syriaque*, ed. Muriel Debié (Paris: Geuthner, 2009), 107–35. More generally, see W. Witakowski, "Historiography, Syriac," *GEDSH*. Briefer historical works from the late fifteenth-century survive in the form of two unedited lives of Patriarch Yūhannon b. Shayallāh (Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, ff. 82a–87b and Vatican sir. 166, ff. 351b–353b) and a very terse Arabic chronicle by Patriarch Nūḥ Pūnīqoyo (Vatican sir. 97, ff. 138a–140a). This last text was edited by Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, II: 469–72.

¹² Some of their internal history may survive in the court chronicle of a branch of the family that fled to India and established a kingdom there: Vladimir Minorsky, "The Qara-Qoyunlu and the Quṭb-Shāhs," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17, 1 (1955): 50–73.

¹³ Ṭihrānī, *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*.

theologians as doctrinal authorities. One of Shbadnāyā's shorter poems recounts the life and martyrdom of St. George, as does a poem by ʾIshō'yahb b. Mqaddam, while another poem of the latter author gives the narrative of the monastic founder Rabban Hōrmīzd. In the fifteenth century, East Syrian authors typically discussed the past in three ways: through a tightly sequenced and dated discussion of the foundation of the Church by Jesus and the apostles; an unordered appeal to previous authors (late antique and medieval) as authorities in exegetical and doctrinal discussions; and the undated veneration of particular saints (mostly late antique) for their benefits to the congregation in the present. In contrast to modern Western views of history, the fifteenth-century Church of the East seems to have regarded its recent past as less important to the present than its ancient past.

THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION

In fifteenth-century East Syrian sources, the bulk of the historical attention, like the bulk of the theological consideration, was directed toward Jesus. This is especially true of the liturgical services that traced the events of Christ's life, death, and resurrection through the winter and spring months, but Shbadnāyā likewise devoted most of his conception of the past to those events. In his prose commentary to his longest poem, he discussed four possible dates for the birth of Christ, in the first case providing also the year of the Annunciation, and supplying for the first two cases the year of Christ's baptism (at age 30) and death (at age 33). He favored the first proposal, attributed to Eusebius and "the synod of the apostles," in which Christ was announced in 305 AG, born in 306 AG, baptized in 336 AG, and died in 339 AG.¹⁴ He then considered the question on which weekday, in which month and on which day Christ's conception was announced, in both the solar and lunar calendars. This question was significant, since Armenians celebrated the Annunciation on 6 April, while Syriac Orthodox celebrated the festival on 25 March. But the Church of the East celebrated the Annunciation as a liturgical season of four weeks

¹⁴ Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 57b. The Seleucid era started in 312 BCE. The other dates considered for Christ's birth were 309 AG, 316 AG, and 308 AG. By contrast, the chronology that opened this chapter dated Christ's birth to 304 AG: Diyarbakır (Scher) 106 [HMML CCM 20], f. 235b. The difference in years between Christ's Annunciation and birth are due to the fact that years begin on 1 October in the Seleucid era.

Greek term *klērikoī* is glossed as “Leaders of the service, chiefs and overseers,” which probably implies the bishops and higher ranks.⁵⁰ Shbadnāyā likewise specified that Christ appointed the apostles over the Church: “*Hupateia* of his Church he entrusted to those who were trustworthy.”⁵¹ Here Shbadnāyā glossed the Greek word *hupateia* with the Syriac *mdab-brānūthā*, which in addition to its reference to divine providence and governance is the abstract noun for the term “directors” (*mdabbrānē*). The latter noun was used for bishops in a poem by Rabban Emmanuel quoted by Shbadnāyā: the apostles “passed on the deposit of grace to the directors and priests.”⁵² The quotation from Rabban Emmanuel went on to narrate the apostolic institution of a pentarchy of patriarchal thrones in Rome, Byzantium, Seleucia-Ctesiphon, Antioch, and Alexandria for the ordination of priests.⁵³ This quotation closes the description of the patriarchates with a restatement of their apostolic origin: “These things the disciples arranged and fixed in the four corners.”⁵⁴

The Pentecost liturgy likewise presented the ecclesiastical hierarchy as the heirs of the apostles, who “finished and completed the deposit which they received, and they passed it on to the teachers and the priests.”⁵⁵ Indeed, according to the liturgy the apostles were the first Christian priests: “Great, glorious, and excellent is the rank of priesthood which the apostles received in the upper room from the hands of the Lord.”⁵⁶ Thus the Church of the East understood the ecclesiastical hierarchy, along with the theology and liturgy, to belong to the apostolic foundation of the Church.

The apostolic history of the community was significant for refuting the polemics of rival Christian denominations.⁵⁷ Shbadnāyā was aware that Armenian and Syriac Orthodox authors accused the Church of the East of being Nestorian heretics, and therefore he added a gloss even to the title of the section “Against heretics” in his largest poem. The

⁵⁰ ܩܠܪܝܩܘܝܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 196b. The final term, *sā'ōrā*, could refer to a chorepiscopus or ecclesiastical “visitor,” an assistant to the bishop.

⁵¹ ܩܠܪܝܩܘܝܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 196a.

⁵² ܩܠܪܝܩܘܝܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 201a.

⁵³ Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 201a–b.

⁵⁴ ܩܠܪܝܩܘܝܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 201b.

⁵⁵ ܩܠܪܝܩܘܝܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 223b.

⁵⁶ ܩܠܪܝܩܘܝܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܡܘܫܐ: BL Add. 7177, f. 229a. The service earlier said that the priesthood was granted to the apostles on Pentecost by the Holy Spirit: BL Add. 7177, f. 226a.

⁵⁷ Murre-van den Berg makes a parallel point for the Ottoman period: Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, 200.

since the apostles, so it simply did not matter when individual authors lived, as long as they expressed the same doctrine from Shbadnāyā's perspective. Although outsiders and modern scholars might construe the quotations of East Syrian authors as revealing a particular path of theological development from early Christianity to the late medieval period, Shbadnāyā saw his authorities as simply so many witnesses to the same unchanging doctrine.

If all true doctrine was already taught by the apostles, doctrinal innovation was by definition heretical, and Shbadnāyā's lengthiest treatment of the post-apostolic history of his community is contained in his catalogue of heretics and the orthodox champions who refuted them. He rejected by name Arius, Eunomius, Bar Daysān, Macedonius, Marcion, Mani, Valentinus, Tatian, Eutyches, Apollinaris, Cyril, and Photinus. His champions of the Church include the standard Greek doctors celebrated in the liturgy, Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Nestorius, as well as other Greek authors such as Polycarp, Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea, John Chrysostom, and Gregory Nazianzen, and the Latin author Ambrose. Surprisingly, he named very few Syriac refuters of heresies: only Ephrem, Narsai, and possibly Aqaq, if that name refers to the fifth-century catholicos of Seleucia-Ctesiphon.⁷³ The fact that most of these are Greek, and all from the fifth century or earlier, probably indicates that this presentation is derived primarily from late antique Greek ecclesiastical histories.

Shbadnāyā's concern was not the pedigree of his catalogue, of course, but how it established the truthfulness of his own community. In addition to complaining of the heretics' opposition to the true doctrine of Christ's incarnation, he indicated their rebellion against the apostles. Just before launching into the various names, he characterized the heretics as "Theopaschites (those who make God suffer) who sprouted in the field which Petros weeded."⁷⁴ Shbadnāyā charged that Cyril of Alexandria, the only heretic in this list condemned uniquely by the Church of the East, "entirely blotted out the humanity which Paul preached."⁷⁵ On the other hand, in his gloss on the Greek word *hairesiōtēs* ("sectarian"), he deflected external complaints against Nestorius to the apostolic authority of Paul: "It is not Nestorius who wrote these things, that you should

⁷³ Cambridge Add. 1998, ff. 103a–104a.

⁷⁴ ܩܘܪܕܢܐ ܕܩܝܪܝܠ ܕܩܝܠܝܕܝܐ (ܩܝܪܝܠ ܕܩܝܠܝܕܝܐ): Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 103a. I assume *thēōpasaiqō* is a transposition error for *thēōpasqūō*. The rare use of the Greek form of the name Peter is due to the rhyme scheme.

⁷⁵ ܩܘܪܕܢܐ ܕܩܝܪܝܠ ܕܩܝܠܝܕܝܐ: Cambridge Add. 1998, f. 103b.

earlier, a scribe has updated it to include Timothy II, Denhā II (1336–1381), Shem‘ōn, Ēlīyā, and Shem‘ōn “of our days.”⁸⁷ The regnal dates of these latter patriarchs are unknown, but likely end in the first half of the fifteenth century.⁸⁸ A fourteenth-century patriarchal list was also included in the diptychs studied by J. M. Fiey. Although Fiey’s concern was to identify the origin of the text, and he convincingly demonstrated that it was promulgated by Catholicos Denhā II in Karamlīsh, all of the witnesses to the text include the further patriarchs Ēlīyā and Shem‘ōn.⁸⁹ After the early fifteenth century, scribes no longer updated patriarchal lists, but they did not need to. To maintain the current patriarch’s claim to be the apostles’ rightful successor, it was sufficient to trace the line of succession only late enough to reach the undisputed predecessors of the present catholicos. From the mid sixteenth century two rival patriarchates would lay claim to the succession from Addai and Mārī through Denhā II, but in the Türkmen period none of the neighboring Christian groups would dispute the claim that Denhā was the predecessor of the current catholicos of the East. The patriarchal lists that extend from the apostles to Denhā II were sufficient, even without being “up to date,” to prove that the hierarchy, and therefore the Church, established by the apostles was identical with the Church of the East in the fifteenth century.

PAST SAINTS AND PRESENT POWER

When East Syrian Christians thought about their community’s past, they thought not only of their apostolic foundation, but also of the saints of a past age.⁹⁰ The major liturgical feasts told the story of Christ and the apostles, but annual commemorations also celebrated individual Christians who were renowned for their sanctity and power. Two of these

⁸⁷ Ibid., 119, ܫܡܘܢ.

⁸⁸ The latest possible date for the updating is 1497, if the Shem‘ōn “of our days” refers to the catholicos of the 1470s and not, as is more likely, of the 1430s.

⁸⁹ In Fiey’s witnesses K and Q, these two names precede that of Denhā, but I agree with his assessment that the precedence represents “une « mise à jour » postérieure et malhabile”: Fiey, “Diptyques nestoriens,” 376. The correct order is given by Fiey’s witnesses “B (et N?)” and the additional manuscript M discussed by Sebastian Brock: Sebastian P. Brock, “The Nestorian Diptychs: A Further Manuscript,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 89 (1971): 179.

⁹⁰ For East Syrian veneration of saints in late antiquity and the pre-Mongol period, reflecting many of the same dynamics discussed here, see Joel T. Walker, *The Legend of Mar Qardagh: Narrative and Christian Heroism in Late Antique Iraq* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006). The earlier period did not, however, practice the exclusion of contemporary saints discussed below.

flock, three times in his poem for St. George's commemoration he referred to it as "your flock" in direct address to the saint.¹³⁴ The role of Christ as the Good Shepherd protecting his sheep, as discussed in Chapter 6, was likewise exercised through the saints to whom the Church of the East turned for present protection. In this economy of supernatural power, communal continuity mattered, as did honoring the memorials and relics of the community's saintly ambassadors to God, but the place of individual saints in particular periods of the community's history was immaterial. The fifteenth-century East Syrian veneration of the saints reveals a notion of their community as characterized throughout history by divine power.

CONCLUSION: DEEP PAST

The fifteenth-century Church of the East had more of a sense of its communal past than its complete lack of recent chronicles might lead us to suspect. Each of the dimensions of its community concept examined in the previous chapters – theology, liturgy, and hierarchy – it regarded as rooted in the apostolic foundation of the Church, which Shbadnāyā especially discussed in great detail. Fifteenth-century East Syrian sources mention more recent Christians primarily to connect the apostolic foundation to the Church of the East specifically. In an environment where every other Christian group also claimed an apostolic origin, and denied that claim by the Church of the East, these intermediate Christians served to make good on the East Syrian claim to be the community founded by the apostles. But these three dimensions need to be supplemented by a fourth aspect of the community concept of the Church of the East, which becomes manifest in the saints: the aspect of divine power. Just as Christ and the apostles performed miraculous acts of supernatural power, so also the saints mediated the power capable of working miracles in their own day.

But in all of these dimensions, there is a historical gap between the figures discussed and the present day. One might naively suppose that a linear view of history would imply that the more recent past would be more important to the present than the distant past. Such was not the case for the Church of the East in the fifteenth century. Although they possessed a linear view of time, it was their communal deep past, preeminently the foundation of the Church by Christ and the apostles,

¹³⁴ ܩܕܝܫ: Berlin orient. fol. 620, ff. 342a–b. He also referred to "your escort" (ܩܕܝܫܐ), "your company" (ܩܕܝܫܐܝܗܘܢ), and "your plantation" (ܩܕܝܫܐܝܗܘܢ): ff. 342b–343a.

that drew the greater part of their historical attention. Relatively few Christians of more recent centuries were cited, and most of these were cited by Shbadnāyā in the field of doctrine, where they were considered merely to have rephrased the truth that was already fully known and unchanging since the apostles. The domain of liturgy provoked almost no discussion of post-apostolic developments, and even the necessary chain of *catholicoi* from the apostolic age came to an end in the early fifteenth century, not to be updated later. The saints who were venerated were ancient saints of the pre-Islamic period, and the miraculous power that they continued from the apostolic age was available, in the fifteenth century, only through their exalted intercessions with God in heaven and through their relics on earth. In all of these areas, there was a chronological gap, but it was the events of fourteen centuries earlier that the Church of the East considered determinative for the character of its community in its own day. In the difficult circumstances of the fifteenth century, they did not have the luxury of writing the entirety of their history, ancient and recent. Forced to choose, they chose the deep past as more relevant to the present.

Conclusion

The Christians of late medieval Iraq and al-Jazīra were part of a larger, and now largely forgotten, religiously diverse society. It was not long before Middle Eastern Christians were reassigned a fictional European-ness. Yōḥannān Sullāqā, from the Rabban Hōrmīzd monastery north of Mosul, arrived in Rome in November 1552 with an unprecedented letter from “the great men, priests, monks, and the rest of the people believing in Christ” who had gathered in Mosul to request that the pope ordain Sullāqā as catholicos of the East.¹ After months of coaching, the Easterner provided a statement on doctrine and the sacraments acceptable to the Vatican, and he was ordained on 28 April of the following year. Soon after Sullāqā returned to the city of Āmid, Shem‘ōn b. Māmā, the earlier catholicos against whom Sullāqā had rebelled, persuaded the ruler of ‘Amadiyya to jail the upstart and kill him in prison, although the newer patriarch had already made arrangements for successors.² The papacy had bolstered its claim to be the truly universal Church against Protestant heretics, and the monk from Iraq had obtained his goal of patriarchal ordination, but at the cost of allying Middle Eastern Christians with Europeans in the minds of local rulers. The subsequent history of East Syrian Christianity would be characterized by rival patriarchates and their relations with the Vatican.³ Western scholarship has typically viewed Iraqi Christianity through lenses tinted by intra-Western ecclesiastical disputes, rather than situating the Christians of the Middle East within their own social and

¹ Sources describing this encounter from both Italian and Iraqi perspectives are provided in Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, I: 523–30.

² *Ibid.*, I: 531–32.

³ Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*.

cultural contexts. The Euro-American study of Islam, and later “Islamic society,” almost by definition excluded such putative pseudo-Europeans.

But before Middle Eastern Christians came to be viewed as somehow out of place by both European visitors and Muslim neighbors, they were an integral component of societies and cultures that scholars today label “Islamic.” Multiple distinct Christian groups shared aspects of culture and society with Muslims, Jews, Mandaean, and Yezidis, even as they practiced their different rituals for distinctive purposes. The integration of such a wide range of religions into a single society challenges the implicit religious delimitation of “Islamic civilization” and the scholarly study thereof.⁴ But it also puts historians of the medieval Middle East in the enviable position of studying a premodern society with several different literate classes, allowing scholars today to triangulate evidence from one set of sources against that of others. As a starting-point, this study has focused on the regions of Iraq and al-Jazīra in the fifteenth century, and primarily on what was perhaps the largest non-Muslim group in those regions, a Christian denomination known as the Church of the East. This setting provides historians with a surprisingly well-documented opportunity to observe how groups lived together, whether peacefully or not, apart from the globally exported culture of European modernity that inflects the dynamics of diversity in the more recent past.

Cultural concepts are as significant as social organization for understanding the experience of Christians in fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra. Expanding and critiquing Benedict Anderson’s insight into the conceptual dimension of communal life, this study has explored the ways in which the Church of the East understood what it meant to be Christian, in terms of theology, ritual, social hierarchy, and communal history. Theology loomed large in the community concept of Middle Eastern Christian groups such as the Church of the East, but not in the ways emphasized by most Syriac specialists. Much scholarship has debated the precise nature of the “Nestorian” Christology of the Church of the East, but for the fifteenth century sectarian theological difference was not as relevant for communal definition as other doctrines largely shared with other Christian groups, especially the Trinity and the Incarnation of Christ. Fifteenth-century East Syrian sources even expressed these

⁴ Compare the remarks by Hodgson, cited in the Introduction, fn. 20. Nevertheless, Hodgson undercut such assertions by insisting that “by the Middle Periods, the other [non-Muslim] communities were felt to be mere relics of the past, not very relevant to real life anyway” and “the ordinary world was all Muslim”: Hodgson, *Venture of Islam*, II: 451, 454.

doctrines primarily in ways shared across Syriac denominational lines and (through translation) with Armenian Christians as well. Not coincidentally, these same beliefs distinguished Middle Eastern Christians from their Muslim, Jewish, and Yezidi neighbors, showing how ideas could function as walls against outsiders (or against conversion out of the community), or alternatively to build bridges to specific other groups. The Church of the East was probably concerned especially by the threat of conversion and therefore assimilation into the dominant Muslim population, yet the emphasis on the life and miracles of Jesus in Islamic teaching as well could provide a bridge to conversion for any Christians who ceased to emphasize the deity of Christ. Ideas matter for the dynamics of religious diversity.

But theological beliefs also functioned in ways other than merely marking boundaries. They also specified the source and means of salvation, and what salvation might look like. In the context of the violence and instability of fifteenth-century Iraq and al-Jazīra, the Church of the East continued seeking salvation, both physical and spiritual, present and future, in its communal relationship to Christ. Individual Christians were thought to benefit from this communal relationship through the mediation of the Holy Spirit, who was especially linked to various categories of Christian leaders, such as saints, higher clergy, and theologians. Thus the Trinity was not only a belief distinguishing the Christians from their Muslim neighbors, but was also expected to be active in the life of the community. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is invisible, and the fifteenth-century Church of the East maintained a conceptual tension regarding the breadth of the beneficiaries of salvation. This ambiguity in the community concept challenged the ability to formulate a theological definition of individual membership in the group, for which the Church of the East used communal rituals instead.

The clergy of the Church of the East emphasized the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist for conferring upon individual Christians the benefits of salvation, along with membership in the community. But the range of communal ritual actions shaped a more complicated membership structure than clerical discourse alone would suggest, in which individual Christians were never merely group members, but were always further categorized based on multiple different features or qualities. As is true of groups in many contexts, membership in the Church of the East was always textured by voluntary features such as differing degrees and varieties of participation, including which liturgical responses one recited and how frequently one received communion, as well as involuntary

characteristics such as age and gender. The range of member categories was partly, but not fully, hierarchical. The rituals constructed not only a tightly woven ecclesiastical center but also a broad penumbra, potentially even including some Muslims or others who did not receive the sacraments, with liminal communal membership through partial participation.

The social structure that was most central to the community concept of the Church of the East was the ecclesiastical hierarchy of patriarch, bishops, and clergy, but this hierarchy bore the brunt of the political instability of fifteenth-century Iraq. At the end of the Mongol period, Metropolitan 'Abdīshō' of Nisibis and Catholicos Timothy II attempted to reform the clerical system, in order to centralize the Church and prevent schisms. But the reformed structure proved to be too brittle during the upheavals following the break-up of Mongol rule. The different pieces of the concept of ecclesiastical hierarchy were picked up by different sources in different ways. The liturgy emphasized the sacramental role of the clergy, but also acknowledged the unworthiness of individual priests. The poetry of Īshāq Shbadnāyā mentions the clergy, but provides little discussion of their nature or purpose, perhaps because the violence of the early fifteenth century reduced laypeople's access to properly qualified East Syrian priests. The colophons experimented with different views of the clergy, and began to assimilate the higher clergy to the image of ideal secular rulers. Most strikingly, the impossibility for fifteenth-century Iraqi Christians to meet the reformers' criteria for a legitimate catholicos-patriarchate of the Church of the East likely forced this community to adopt a measure that had earlier become widespread among other Christian and Muslim groups, the notion of hereditary religious authority. This late medieval multireligious context, under the strain of the continual Türkmen wars and the raids of Kurdish bandits, perhaps explains the development of what modern scholars have erroneously considered a distinctive feature of the Church of the East, the hereditary patriarchate that passed from uncle to nephew or from brother to brother. Although possessing different beliefs and rituals from Muslims, Middle Eastern Christians shared certain values and concepts with their neighbors, and overcame challenges using similar strategies drawn from the broader culture of the diverse Middle East.

Although the Church of the East maintained notions of linear time and historical continuity, fifteenth-century East Syrian authors regarded the community's "deep past" from long ago as more relevant to its present than the events of recent decades or even centuries. In particular, they understood the foundation of the Church by Christ and the apostles to be

determinative for the community's doctrine, liturgy, and structure. The events of the succeeding fourteen centuries seem to have held less interest for the fifteenth-century Church of the East, except as necessary to establish a claim on that apostolic foundation. The most significant awareness of post-apostolic Christians in the Church of the East came in the veneration of the saints, which reveals a concern for the continuity of miraculous divine power within the community. This power was exercised by Christ during his earthly ministry, and afterwards through the apostles and other saints. But even the saints did not fully bridge the chronological gap between the apostles and the fifteenth century, since the Church of the East in that period did not venerate any saint who lived since the rise of Islam, for reasons that remain unclear. Instead, it was the prayers to the saint by the community, and to Christ by the saint, combined with the saints' relics, that made the past power present in the contemporary community. In each of these areas – theology, liturgy, hierarchy, and miraculous power – the deep past was more relevant than recent experiences to the fifteenth-century present.

These cultural dynamics are not unique to the Church of the East. Muslim authors likewise deployed theological ideas to build bridges to other groups (as in Rūmī's poetry) or to erect barriers against them (as in Ibn Taymiyya's polemics). Likewise, other religious groups looked for divine protection in this world as well as the next: in Damascus in 749 AH / 1348, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa witnessed Muslims, Jews, and Christians jointly appealing for divine aid against the Black Death.⁵ As Chapter 7 noted, Ibn Taymiyya shared the view of rituals as constitutive of community membership and therefore opposed Muslim participation in non-Muslim festivals, while Chapter 8 showed how difficult times led the Church of the East to adopt a notion of hereditary religious authority found among Muslims, Jews, and other Christian denominations.⁶ Emphasis on the "deep past" over more recent developments is also not unique to the Church of the East: it appears in the normative value of the *sunna*, as well as the way that late medieval Sufi chains of initiation go back to 'Alī,⁷

⁵ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Rihla*, I: 60–61; Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Travels*, I: 143–144.

⁶ See Chapter 7, fn. 130, and Chapter 8, fn. 97. The evidence for religious succession among other groups is discussed in Chapter 3.

⁷ For the latter, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa recorded his *silsila* in the Suhrawardī order back to 'Alī, and then his editor Ibn Juzayy offered alternatives to a few links in the middle: Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Rihla*, I: 125–126; Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Travels*, II: 297–298. Evidently it was the endpoints of the *silsila*, starting with 'Alī and ending with the present shaykh, that were most essential to have correct.

and likewise underpins medieval Middle Eastern Jewish emphasis on the Davidic dynasty.⁸ Similarity of dynamics, of course, should not blind us to differences of content. While such convergences make beliefs intelligible across group boundaries, the divergences distinguish one group from another. Dynamics such as these need not be explained as “influence” one way or another, but may simply be the cultural affinity of people who inhabit the same society.

This society was religiously very diverse. Even common categorizations such as Muslims, Christians, and Jews exclude (or only debatably include) Druze, Mandaeans, Yezidis, and Zoroastrians. Such broad categories also gloss over sometimes significant differences among the various *madhhabs* of Sunnis, multiple kinds of Shiites, and Khārijīs; among Christian populations of different languages, geographical distributions, histories, and theological confessions; and between Rabbanite and Karaite Jews. How did this diverse society function? This raises a host of questions about the dynamics of religion, difference, and social power. What was the social footprint of religious groups other than the ruling (usually Sunni) Muslim elite? What was the place of religion, including religions other than Sunni Islam, in the cultural life of late medieval Middle Eastern society? Given the political fragmentation of the late medieval Middle East, the answers to these questions often varied widely from one locale to another, from one ruler to a successor, and from one non-Muslim group to another. Keeping in mind specific details about location, ruler, and the internal workings of various groups will enable scholars to present a much more nuanced picture of social change and the dynamics of diversity in the late medieval Middle East.

Some generalizations do emerge, at least for the regions of Iraq and al-Jazīra in the fifteenth century. The continual plundering of the sedentary population, including the Christians, by the nomadic rulers' armies resulted in an irreversible flow of wealth and resources away from the sedentary populations in the region, including Christians and others. The fifteenth century also witnessed a shift in the attitudes of Muslim rulers toward their Christian subjects. Early in the century, Christians in Iraq and Diyār Bakr still profited from the occasionally lavish patronage of Muslim rulers. Later, and especially after the Āqqūyūnlū ruler Uzun Ḥasan finally defeated the Qarāqūyūnlū, there was an increased application of the discriminatory regulations that separated non-Muslims (*ahl*

⁸ The political significance of the “deep past,” specifically biblical genealogy, among medieval Middle Eastern Jews is explored in Franklin, *This Noble House*, 107–30.

al-dhimma) from Muslims. Even here, however, there was a notable exception: the decreased warfare of the last third of the fifteenth century resulted in something of a building boom among all branches of Christianity, despite the prohibition on constructing churches in the Pact of ‘Umar. These data nuance our understanding of the decline of Middle Eastern Christianity from its largest extent under the ‘Abbasid caliphate or the Mongols to its marginalization in the Ottoman Empire: not only did that process extend later than previous scholarship has considered, it was also not one-directional, as building opportunities or *dhimmī* restrictions came and went.

Careful attention to evidence enables scholars to move beyond the stereotyped notions of constant persecution favored by some anti-Islamic polemicists and of *convivencia* favored by some Muslim apologists, to develop more detailed models of past intercommunal interactions. Chapter 3 demonstrated that the diverse groups inhabiting fifteenth-century al-Jazīra and Iraq were not balkanized or strictly segregated. The relations between Muslims and Christians, and between different Christian groups, were passed over in silence by Muslim sources and generally only recorded if negative by Christian sources, yet the records imply positive as well as negative contacts. The evidence hints at standard systems of encounter and economic exchange between groups, systems that were typically peaceful, even if in certain cases (such as tax collection) they could be coercive. These social systems functioned around the depredations of the nomadic armies, which often broke down normal social relations. Such disturbances were frequent enough to redistribute significant quantities of wealth, and to result in standardized systems for the ransoming of captives and plundered goods, but they continued to be considered abnormal. Even though such a mixed society does not match any ideal advocated in late medieval Iraq and al-Jazīra, it was nevertheless the reality that was familiar – not necessarily comfortable – to the people of many different religions who inhabited that region.

This account of a Christian population at home in the Middle East might encourage scholars to reappraise the common view of medieval Europe as coterminous with Christian society.⁹ Middle Eastern Christianity is misunderstood if presented as the exotic “other” to

⁹ For a recent example, an expansively entitled monograph addresses only Christendom and Spain before a final chapter on modernity: Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths*, 12. It justifies this choice by appealing to all three religions’ coexistence in the Iberian peninsula. That fact was not at all unusual for medieval Iraq, Anatolia, and Egypt, which were surprisingly excluded from Nirenberg’s study.

European Christianity's "mainstream." It is unquestionably true that European Christianity is more familiar to modern Western scholars. But it is equally true that the Christians of fifteenth-century Mosul and Cairo did not regard themselves as sectarian divergences from a normative Christianity found elsewhere. As shown in Chapter 5, highlighting "new" theological developments can misrepresent what the historical actors themselves emphasized and deployed for their own purposes. Conversely, differences between European and Middle Eastern Christian thought and culture can reveal what is distinctively European about Latin Christianity. By presenting an alternative in another context, decentering the narrative of European Christianization and Christendom draws scholarly attention to what is surprising in medieval European religious history, even as some of the social and cultural dynamics of religious diversity were also operative in the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim societies of "the West."

But it is in their home society and culture, in the late medieval Middle East, that Iraqi Christians hold the greatest potential to advance modern scholarship. Although the *fact* of religious multiplicity is well known, the dynamics of social and cultural diversity in the medieval Middle East remain little understood, especially during the later stages of Islamization. While the assertion that Middle Eastern Christians shared cultural elements and social structures with their Muslim and non-Muslim neighbors is unsurprising, the precise delineation of which elements and structures permits a more detailed understanding of the functioning of the plural society of late medieval Iraq and al-Jazīra. It is only too easy for the identification of Middle Eastern history with Islamic history to result in the exclusion of this multireligious awareness. The plurality of religious groups and their literate classes between the Nile and the Caspian Sea, throughout the medieval period, offers historians the opportunity to develop a broader, more complex, and more interesting narrative than heretofore. The late medieval Middle East was a surprisingly polyphonic world.

Appendix A

Glossary

- Anaphora*: A fixed series of prayers and dialogues that consecrate the Eucharist.
- Anathema*: An ecclesiastical condemnation of a person, expelling him or her from the Church.
- Archdeacon*: The chief ecclesiastical assistant to a patriarch.
- Baptistery*: A building or room within a church for the performance of baptisms.
- Bēmā*: A raised platform in the middle of a church, from which the scripture passages were read.
- Bey*: A Turkish term for a ruler or leader.
- Catholicos*: A title for the patriarch of certain Middle Eastern Christian denominations, such as the Armenian Orthodox Church or the Church of the East.
- Chancel*: The area around the altar at the front of a church.
- Christology*: The collection of theological ideas pertaining to Christ.
- Colophon*: A note, typically at the end of a manuscript, identifying the circumstances in which the manuscript was copied.
- Deacon*: An ecclesiastical rank below priest, responsible for assisting in the liturgies but not consecrating the sacraments.
- Dhimmī*: An Arabic term for a non-Muslim.
- Diptychs*: A list of saints and ecclesiastical leaders who are invoked in prayer during a church service.
- Doctor*: A “teacher,” an author whose writings were considered authoritative for Christian doctrine.
- Dyophysite*: The notion that Christ possesses two distinct natures, one divine and the other human.
- Ecclesiology*: The collection of theological ideas pertaining to the nature of the Church.
- Economy*: In a theological sense, the system by which God rules creation. See Chapter 5 under the section entitled “The Structure of East Syrian Theology” for more information.
- Emir*: An Arabic title for a military ruler.
- Epiclesis*: The prayer invoking the Holy Spirit to consecrate the Eucharist.

- Eschatological*: Pertaining to the events expected at the end of time.
- Excommunicate*: To exclude someone from participation in the Eucharist, and by extension from social participation in a community.
- Faqīḥ*: An expert in Islamic jurisprudence
- Firman*: A Persian term for a ruler's edict.
- Garshuni*: Arabic text written in Syriac script.
- Ghāzī*: A Muslim raider of non-Muslim foreigners.
- Hagiography*: Texts about saints, typically describing their lives, deaths, and/or miracles.
- Hajj*: The Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.
- Hūdrā*: A liturgical manuscript used in the Church of the East, containing the distinctive prayers for each service throughout the year.
- Humeral veil*: A liturgical vestment draped over the shoulders that can be used to cover the hands to prevent direct contact with sacred objects.
- Ilkhanate*: The Mongol dynasty that ruled Persia from 1258 to 1335.
- Imam*: The leader of a communal Muslim prayer.
- Jizya*: A head-tax assessed upon non-Muslim subjects.
- Khuṭba*: The Friday sermon in a mosque.
- Lectionary*: A manuscript containing scripture passages arranged according to the liturgical calendar.
- Litany*: A series of short prayers, each punctuated by a congregational response of affirmation.
- Liturgy*: A church service, or particularly the text of the prayers to be recited during a church service.
- Lord's Prayer*: The prayer taught by Jesus to the apostles, recorded in Matthew 6:9–13.
- Madhhab* (pl. *madhāhib*): A school of thought regarding the *sharī'a*.
- Maphrian*: The highest-ranking Syriac Orthodox ecclesiastical official in Iraq.
- Mdabbrānūthā*: See *Economy*.
- Metropolitan*: An archbishop.
- Mullah*: A colloquial Arabic term for Muslim religious leaders.
- Nave*: The portion of the interior of a church where the laity stand.
- ʿŌnyāthā* (pl. *ʿōnyāthā*): A genre of Syriac liturgical poetry consisting of verses with lines of a fixed number of syllables.
- Patriarch*: The highest-ranking ecclesiastical official in a Christian denomination.
- Pneumatology*: The collection of theological ideas pertaining to the Holy Spirit.
- Qāḏī*: A judge who gives decisions according to the *sharī'a*.
- Qnōmē*: A Syriac theological term for the persons of the Trinity or (in East Syrian usage) the humanity and deity of Christ.
- Qurbānā*: A Syriac term for the Eucharist or the liturgical service that consecrates it.
- Sacristan*: A priest in charge of the items used in church services.

See: The official residence of a bishop.

Shahāda: The assertion that God is unique and Muḥammad is his messenger.

Shkhāḥtā: The feast of the Finding of the Cross on 13 September.

Suffragan: A subordinate bishop who is under a metropolitan.

Takbt: A Persian term for a throne.

Tamghā (pl. *tamghāwāt*): A tax on commercial transactions.

Theopaschite: Someone holding a theological view that ascribes suffering to God.

‘Ulamā’: Learned Islamic religious leaders.

Vardapet: An Armenian title for a teacher of theology.

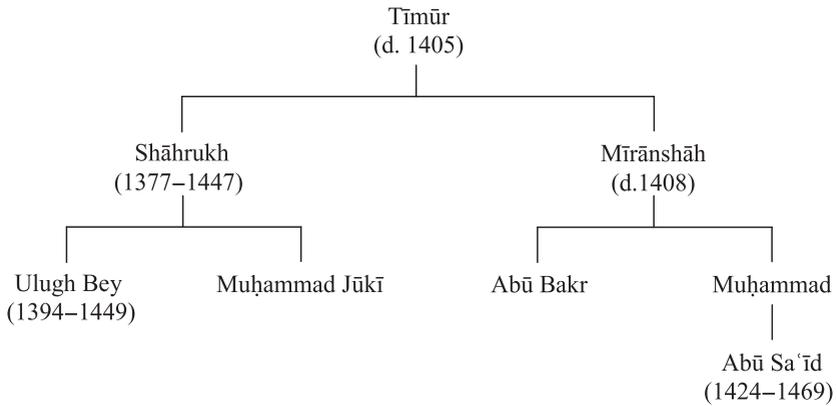
Vestments: Special clothes worn by Christian clergy while celebrating a liturgy.

Vita (pl. *vitae*): An account of the life of a saint.

Appendix B

Lists of Rulers and Patriarchs

Timurids



Mamlūk Sultans of Egypt

- al-Ẓāhir Barqūq (1382–1399)
- al-Nāṣir Faraj (1399–1405, 1405–1412)
- al-Manṣūr ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (1405)
- al-Mustaʿīn (1412)
- al-Muʿayyad Shaykh (1412–1421)
- al-Muẓaffar Aḥmad (1421)
- al-Ẓāhir Ṭaṭār (1421)
- al-Ṣāliḥ Muḥammad (1421–1422)
- al-Ashraf Barsbāy (1422–1438)
- al-ʿAzīz Yūsuf (1438)
- al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq (1438–1453)
- al-Manṣūr ʿUthmān (1453)
- al-Ashraf Īnāl (1453–1460)
- al-Muʿayyad Aḥmad (1460–1461)

al-Zāhir Khushqadam (1461–1467)

al-Zāhir Yalbāy (1467–1468)

al-Zāhir Timurbughā (1468)

al-Ashraf Qā'it Bāy (1468–1495)

al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (1495–1498)

al-Zāhir Qānṣawh (1498–1499)

al-Ashraf Jānbalāt (1499–1501)

Ottoman Sultans

Bāyazīd I Yıldırım (1389–1403)

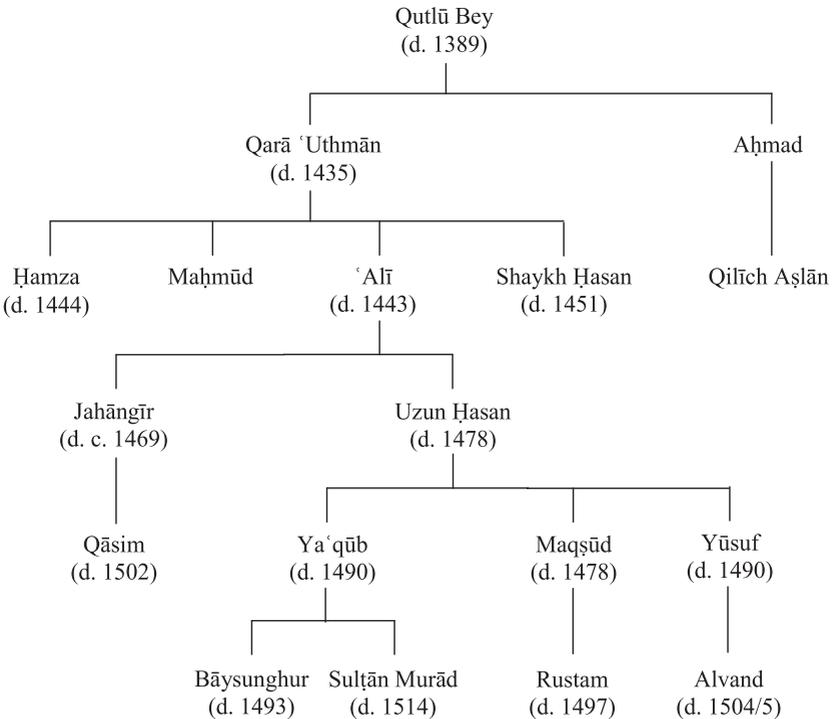
Meḥmed I Chelebi (1413–1421)

Murād II (1421–1444, 1446–1451)

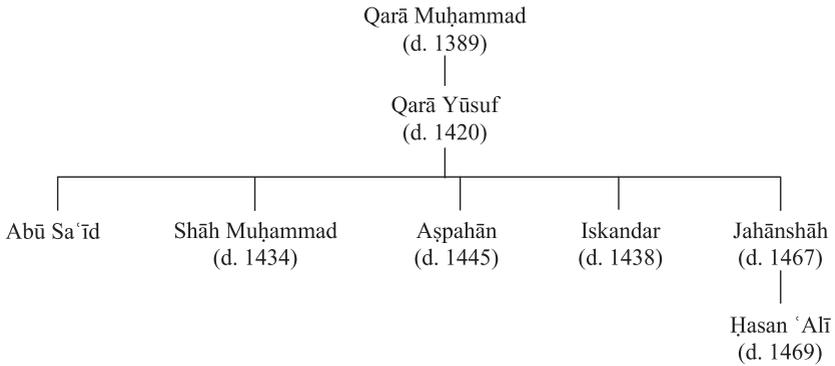
Meḥmed II Fātiḥ (1444–1446, 1451–1481)

Bāyazīd II (1481–1512)

Āqqūyunlū Rulers¹



¹ Simplified from the charts at the back of Woods, *Aqquyunlu*. Death dates not contained on those charts were supplied from indications in the text.

Qarāqūyunlū Rulers**Catholicos-Patriarchs of the East²**

Yahballāhā III (1281–1317)

Timothy II (1318–?)

Denḥā II (1336–1381/2)

(Shem'ōn?)³Ēlīyā⁴

Shem'ōn (attested 1430–1444)

Ēlīyā (attested 1463)

Shem'ōn IV (1477–1497)

Shem'ōn V (1497–1502)

Ēlīyā V (1503–1504)

Shem'ōn VI (1504–1538)

Shem'ōn VII Īshō'yahb b. Māmā (1538/9–1558)

Armenian Catholicoi at Sis⁵

Karapet I (attested 1395–1404)

Yakob II (attested 1411–1414)

Grigor VIII (attested 1417, deposed 1419)

² For the evidence supporting this list, see Appendix C.³ This catholicos is included in one fifteenth-century list but not the other. An alternative reading of the evidence would omit this Shem'ōn, in which case the Ēlīyā following would be included in one list but not the other.⁴ For the possibility that a Denḥā (attested 1427) should be inserted here, probably preceded by an undated Shem'ōn, see Appendix C.⁵ Based on the colophon evidence in Khach'ikyan, *Tashbingerord*.

Pawghos II (attested 1418–1428)
 Kostandin VI (attested 1431–1438)
 Grigor IX (attested 1441–1444)
 Karapet (attested 1446–1467?)
 Stepʿannos (attested 1476, died 1484)
 Hovhannēs (attested 1488–1497)

Armenian Catholicoi at Aghtʿamar

Zakʿaria II (d. 1393)
 Dawitʿ III (attested 1395–1431)
 Zakʿaria III (attested 1419, died 1464)
 Stepʿannos IV (1464–1489)
 Zakʿaria IV (attested 1490, died 1495)
 Atom (attested 1496–1507)⁶

Armenian Catholicoi at Ējmiatsin

Kirakos (attested 1442–1444)
 Grigor X (attested 1441, deposed 1462, attested 1468)
 Zakʿaria III of Aghtʿamar (1462–1464)
 Aristakēs II (19 February 1465, attested 1473)
 Sargis II (attested 1473–1478)
 Hovhannēs VII (attested 1475–1481)
 Sargis III (attested 1480–1500)

Catholicoi of Aghwān at Gandzasar

Karapet (attested 1402–1423)
 Matʿēos (attested 1423)
 Yohanēs (attested 1428)
 Matʿēos (attested 1432–1436)
 Ohanēs (attested 1456–1468)
 Tʿumay (attested 1466–1471)
 Nersēs (attested 1476)
 Aṛakeal (attested 1497–1499)

⁶ Akinean, *Gawazanagirkʿ katʿoghikosatsʿ Aghtʿamaray*, 122; Frédéric Macler, “Le ‘liber pontificalis’ des catholicos d’Althamar,” *Journal Asiatique* 202 (1923): 56.

Syriac Orthodox Patriarchs of Shām⁷

Ignatius Mīkhā'īl Bar Şawmo (November 1292–December 1312)

Mīkhā'īl II Īshō' b. Shūshan (1313–1349)

Basil Gabriel (1349–1387)

Philoxenus the Scribe (1387–1421)

Basil Shem'un Man'amoyo (1421–1445)

Syriac Orthodox Patriarchs of Mārdīn

Ignatius I Bar Wahīb b. Badarzhakhē (1293–1333)

Ignatius II Īwānīs Ismā'īl al-Majd (1333–1366)

Ignatius III Shahāb (1366–1381)

Ignatius IV Abrohom b. Garīb b. (1381–1412)

Ignatius V Basil Behnam Ḥedloyo (1412–1455)

Ignatius VI Khalaf Ma'dnoyo (1455–1484)

Ignatius Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh (1484–1493)

Ignatius Nūḥ Pūnīqoyo (1494–1509)

Syriac Orthodox Patriarchs of Ṭūr 'Abdīn

Ignatius I Sobho Şalaḥoyo (1364–1389)

Ignatius II Īshū' b. Mūto (1390–1418, d. 1421)

Ignatius III Mas'ūd Şalaḥoyo (1418–1420)

Ignatius IV Ḥenūkh 'Īnwardoyo (1421–1445)

Ignatius V Qawmē Sbhīrīnoyo (1446–1455)

Ignatius VI Īshū' 'Īnwardoyo (1455–1460)

Ignatius VII 'Azīz b. Sabhto (1460–1482)

Yūḥannon 'Īnwardoyo (1482–1493)

Mas'ūd Zazoyo (1493–1494, d. 1512)

Syriac Orthodox Maphrians

Mattay b. Ḥannō (1317–1345)

Ya'qūb b. Qaynoyo (1360–1361)

Athansius Abrohom (1364–1379)

Basil Behnam Ḥedloyo (1404–1412)

⁷ The lists of Syrian Orthodox patriarchs and maphrians are based on Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*.

Dioscorus Behnam Arboyo (1415–1417)
Basil Bar Şawmo Maʿdnoyo (1422–1455)
Cyril Yūsuf b. Nīsān⁸
Basil ʿAzīz (1471–1487)
Nūḥ Pūnīqoyo (1490–1494)
Basil Abrohom (1496–1507)

⁸ Mentioned without any dates in *ibid.*, 302–3. He was consecrated after 1455, and died “shortly afterward,” sometime before 1471. He did not travel to the East like the others, but stayed in Ḥimş.

Appendix C

The Patriarchal Succession of the Church of the East

The patriarchal succession of the Church of the East remains unclear after Catholicos Denḥā II, who is mentioned in the continuation of Bar ʿEbroyo’s ecclesiastical chronicle under the year 1676 AG / 1365.¹ According to a marginal note added to an East Syrian manuscript, Catholicos Denḥā died in 1693 AG / 1382.² Two lists of patriarchs extend beyond Denḥā II, but provide no dates. An anonymous scribe updated Shlēmōn of Baṣra’s *The Book of the Bee* in the fifteenth century, extending the original list of catholicos-patriarchs included in that work to end with Denḥā, Shemʿōn, Ēlīyā, and the scribe’s contemporary Shemʿōn.³ All of the witnesses to the diptychs studied by J. M. Fiey include Ēlīyā and Shemʿōn after Denḥā II.⁴ On the basis of these two lists, it seems most likely that the diptychs omitted reference to the Shemʿōn who immediately succeeded Denḥā II.⁵

¹ Bar Hebraeus, *Ecclesiastical Chronicle*, 488–89. J. F. Coakley has argued convincingly that the traditional uninterrupted list given in current scholarship is based on a compounded misreading of the data presented by Assemani, who in fact knew of no patriarchs between 1364 and 1477: J. F. Coakley, “The Patriarchal List of the Church of the East,” in *After Bardaisan: Studies on Continuity and Change in Syriac Christianity in Honour of Professor Han J. W. Drijvers*, ed. Gerrit J. Reinink and A. C. Klugkist (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1999), 77; Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, 1: 620. In light of this conclusion, I have not revised the received scholarly list, but have created a new list based on a fresh inspection of the available evidence.

² Mingana Syr. 561, f. 43a. Thanks are due to David Wilmshurst for directing my attention to this note.

³ Solomon of Akhlat, *Book of the Bee*, 119. Budge follows Assemani’s identification of the last Shemʿōn with the catholicos who reigned 1504–1538, following the Shemʿōn who died in 1502 and the Ēlīyā who died in 1504. But this is most unlikely, since there were earlier patriarchs with these names.

⁴ Fiey, “Diptyques nestoriens,” 376; Brock, “Nestorian Diptychs,” 179.

⁵ Alternatively, it is possible that the scribal update to *The Book of the Bee* omitted Ēlīyā and begins instead with the Shemʿōn of the diptychs, while concluding with a later Shemʿōn.

Our only other evidence for fifteenth-century catholicos-patriarchs of the Church of the East consists of manuscript colophons and a funerary inscription.⁶ East Syrian manuscripts are particularly sparse in the fifteenth century; between the death of Denḥā II and 1425 only one manuscript colophon survives, from 1395, which probably originally named a catholicos, but damage to the codex has obliterated the reference.⁷ One series of manuscripts names a Catholicos Shemʿōn in the 1430s,⁸ and another collection names a Catholicos Shemʿōn from 1477 to the end of the century.⁹ Between these two ranges of dates, a single manuscript from 1463 mentions a Catholicos Ēlīyā, although other manuscripts from the mid fifteenth century do not mention any patriarch.¹⁰ We are on

⁶ A certain Ēlīyā is named as the current catholicos in an anonymous poem in Berlin Sachau 188, f. 218a, col. 1, but Sachau's identification of that Ēlīyā with a certain "Patriarch Elias (IV) ... der von 1435–1463 regierte" is contrary to the manuscript evidence for a catholicos-patriarch named Shemʿōn in the late 1430s and 1444: Sachau, *Verzeichniss der syrischen Handschriften*, 234. Sachau's assertion of the existence of a Catholicos Ēlīyā who reigned 1435–1463 is based on the falsified data that Coakley exposed, and his agreement with a 1463 colophon mentioning Catholicos Ēlīyā is most likely coincidental. Furthermore, since the manuscript is dated 15 April AD 1882, the Ēlīyā in question may be a catholicos-patriarch of a later century.

⁷ Diyarbakır (Scher) 91 [HMML CCM 419], ff. 271a–b. The bottom of the folio is missing, but the second page begins "the Lord their lives for long times and extended years," clearly a prayer for the ecclesiastical hierarchy, usually the catholicos and the bishop.

⁸ Paris BN Syr. 184, f. 125b (dated 27 March 1741 AG / 1430), the *Vorlage* (dated 1750 AG / 1439) of Berlin orient. quart. 845, f. 179a, and the probably lost Si'ird (Scher) 119 (dated 6 June 1748 AG / 1437): Scher, *Catalogue*, 86. According to Paris BN Syr. 369, f. 106a, a Catholicos Shemʿōn was in office on 7 May 1755 AG / 1444, when the text contained in the manuscript was composed.

⁹ Wilmshurst lists Kirkuk (Vosté) 39, Diyarbakır (Scher) 73, Diyarbakır (Scher) 72, Si'ird (Scher) 3, Mārdīn (Scher) 43, BM Syr (Rosen-Forshall) 33 (= BL Add. 7177), Mārdīn (Scher) 1, Mārdīn (Scher) 13, BL Or. 4399, Leningrad Syr 33, Cambridge Add. (Wright) 1965, Dawrā Syr 318, Berlin Syr 38 (= Sachau 167), Mosul (Scher) 15, BM Syr (Rosen-Forshall) 30 = BL Add. 7174, and Diyarbakır (Scher) 102: Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 395–97. To this list must be added Vatican sir. 186 (dated 29 November 1789 AG / 1477), Berlin orient. oct. 1313 (dated 31 July 1792 AG / 1481), and Princeton Garrett Syr. 22 (dated end of August 1793 AG / 1482).

¹⁰ Mārdīn (Macomber) 35,16 [HMML CCM 221], f. 88a. No catholicos is named in other manuscripts between 1444 and 1477: Diyarbakır (Scher) 54 [HMML CCM 308] (from 1448), Mingana Syr. 98 (from 1454), Diyarbakır (Scher) 106 [HMML CCM 20] (from 1459), Cambridge Add. 616 (from 1461), Berlin orient. quart. 801 (Syr. 67; from 1465), Jerusalem Greek Patriarchate Syr. 11 (from 1474), and Vat. sir. 176 (from 14 February 1787 AG / 1476). I have been unable to consult Si'ird (Scher) 50 (dated 17 July 1772 AG / 1461), Si'ird (Scher) 81 (dated 1784 AG / 1473), and Mosul (Maqdisi) 3 (dated 1785 AG / 1474). According to Scher's catalogue, Vatican Borgia sir. 52 is dated 24 April 1779 AG / 1468, but correspondence with the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana indicated that the manuscript bearing that code does not match the description given by Addai Scher, "Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques du Musée Borgia aujourd'hui à la Bibliothèque vaticane," *Journal Asiatique* 10, 13 (1909): 262.

firmer ground with a funeral inscription for a Catholicos Shem'ōn dated 20 February 1808 AG / 1497, which separates the Catholicos Shem'ōn named before 1497 from his successor, also named Shem'ōn, mentioned after 1497.¹¹ According to a letter written by Christian leaders in India, this last Shem'ōn died in 1813 AG / 1502.¹²

What these diverse reports add up to is not clear. It is just possible that the catholicos-patriarch of the 1430s was the Shem'ōn who succeeded Denhā II without intermediary (with a very long reign beginning in 1395 or earlier), that Ēlīyā succeeded as catholicos-patriarch after 1444, and that the final Shem'ōn added to *The Book of the Bee* was the catholicos-patriarch in office 1477–1497. This would suggest that the anonymous scribes who updated the lists in the diptychs and *The Book of the Bee* both lived in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, but it would imply that the Shem'ōn of the 1430s was already in office by 1395, to be mentioned in the damaged colophon of that year. It would be curious for such a long-reigning catholicos to be omitted from the diptychs. If, as seems most likely, the diptychs omit the Shem'ōn listed immediately after Denhā II in the updated *Book of the Bee*, this might suggest that the overlooked Shem'ōn had a brief tenure or controversial legitimacy, rather than a reign of half a century recognized from Kfarbūrān in Tūr 'Abdīn to Erbil in northern Iraq.¹³ It is more likely that Denhā was succeeded at unknown dates by Shem'ōn and then Ēlīyā, and the final Shem'ōn in *The Book of the Bee* was the catholicos-patriarch of the 1430s.¹⁴ This Shem'ōn was followed, probably after an interval of over a decade, by another Ēlīyā (attested only in 1463), and then probably in 1477 a Shem'ōn succeeded as catholicos, who died in 1497 and was followed by another patriarch of the same name.

¹¹ Vosté, "Rabban Hormizd," 283–84. Wilmshurst lists BM Syr (Rosen-Forshall) 30 (= BL Add. 7174), Diyarbakır (Scher) 102, and Beirut (St. Joseph's) 23 as mentioning this Shem'ōn: Wilmshurst, *Ecclesiastical Organisation*, 397–98.

¹² The text is edited in Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, 1: 591.

¹³ Paris BN Syr. 184, f. 125a, identifies the scribe as Mas'ūd of Kfarbūrān, although it does not indicate where he made the copy. The reference to Catholicos Shem'ōn reigning in 1755 AG / 1444 in Paris BN Syr. 369, f. 106a (from fifty years later) is attached to the composition of the grammar of Metropolitan Īshō'yahb b. Mqaddam of Erbil, and the Paris manuscript claims to be a copy of Īshō'yahb's autograph.

¹⁴ Addai Scher described a sixteenth-century manuscript that mentioned an otherwise unknown Catholicos Denhā in 1738 AG / 1427: Scher, "Manuscripts syriaques dans la bibliothèque de Mardin," 83–84. I have been unable to locate the manuscript itself. If Scher's reading is correct, there are three possibilities: (1) the sequences of the diptychs and the continuation of *The Book of the Bee* both predate 1427; (2) this Catholicos Denhā was not recognized as legitimate by those scribes; or (3) the sixteenth-century scribe of this text mistakenly attached the name of the famous fourteenth-century catholicos-patriarch to the early fifteenth-century text. Without access to the manuscript, it is difficult to evaluate these possibilities.

Appendix D

Dating the Ritual for Reception of Heretics

Cambridge Add. 1988, ff. 142a–143b contain a ritual used to welcome into the Church of the East “Jacobites and Melkites when they become Christian.”¹ Dating this ritual is important, not least because it is the only possibly fifteenth-century East Syrian text to refer to the community from within as “Nestorians.” In this appendix I argue that the ritual itself must be from before 1504, possibly as early as the twelfth century, but the use of the term “Nestorians” is probably due to the scribe of the manuscript in the middle of the sixteenth century.

There are few clues to the period of the composition of the ritual. The manuscript itself was completed on Friday, 7 October 1870 AG / 1558. The only other historical datum is that the ritual is ascribed to “Mar Ēlīyā, the Catholicos-Patriarch of the East.” Ēlīyā was a very popular name for East Syrian catholicoi starting with Ēlīyā VII (r. 1558–1591), but the colophon indicates that the manuscript was completed while his predecessor Shemʿōn VII b. Māmā (d. 1558) still lived. The ritual must be due to an earlier Ēlīyā. There were three catholicoi of that name between 1381 and 1504: one who died in 1504, one attested in a colophon dated 1463, and one undated, mentioned in the East Syrian diptychs that fossilized in the early fifteenth century. On the other hand, nothing in the ritual prevents it from having been composed by an earlier patriarch of the same name, such as Ēlīyā III Abū Ḥalīm (d. 1190), who had other texts incorporated into the East Syrian liturgy. Unless an earlier manuscript of the text should come to light, the ritual as a whole can be dated no more precisely than to before 1504.

Even if the date for the ritual as a whole eludes definition, there are reasons to consider the reference to the community as “Nestorians” as a later addition. The term is only used in an admonition at the very end,

¹ *ܩܘܿܪܿܬܐ ܕܰܩܰܒܰܠܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܡܰܠܰܟܰܝܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܕܰܘܰܠܰܐܰܝܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܡܰܠܰܟܰܝܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܕܰܘܰܠܰܐܰܝܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܩܰܒܰܠܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܩܰܒܰܠܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܩܰܒܰܠܰܬܰܐ*: f. 142a.

1554, in response to the threat posed by Yōḥannān Sullāqā's new hierarchy, and the book of rituals was copied in 1558 in the early years of the divergence. In such a context, it is easy to see why the scribe would be particularly worried about a borderline member taking the Eucharist from a rival party, and why, in the absence of a good word to distinguish his own group from the new rivals, the scribe might resort to the polemical label used by the opponents, for specificity's sake.

It therefore seems most plausible that the body of the ritual dates from 1504 or earlier, perhaps as early as the late twelfth century, but that the exhortation to take the communion "of us, the Nestorians" is a later addition from the middle of the sixteenth century.

Bibliography

MANUSCRIPT CATALOGS

- Assemani, Giuseppe Simone, and Stefano Evodio Assemani. *Bibliothecæ apostolicæ vaticanæ codicum manuscriptorum catalogus in tres partes distributus in quarum prima orientales, in altera Græci, in tertia Latini, Italici aliorumque Europæorum idiomatum*. Paris: Maissonneuve frères, 1926.
- Chabot, Jean Baptiste. “Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques conservés dans la bibliothèque du patriarcat grec orthodoxe de Jérusalem.” *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1894): 92–134.
- Forshall, Josiah. *Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum Orientalium qui in Museo Britannico Asservantur*. London: Impensis Curatorum Musei Britannici, 1838.
- Ḥaddād, Buṭrus, and Jāk Ishāq. *Al-Makḥṭūṭāt al-suryāniyya wa-l-‘arabiyya fī khizānat al-rabbāniyya al-kaldāniyya fī Baghdād*. Baghdad: al-Majma‘ al-‘ilmī al-‘Irāqī, 1988.
- Mingana, Alphonse. *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts now in the Possession of the Trustees of the Woodbrooke Settlement, Selly Oak, Birmingham*. Vol. I. Cambridge: W. Heffer, 1933.
- Sachau, Eduard. *Verzeichniss der syrischen Handschriften der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*. Berlin: A. Asher, 1899.
- Scher, Addai. *Catalogue des manuscrits syriaques et arabes conservés dans la bibliothèque épiscopale de Séert*. Mosul: Imprimerie des pères dominicains, 1905.
- “Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques et arabes conservés à l’archevêché chaldéen de Diarbékir.” *Journal Asiatique* 10 (1907): 331–62, 385–431.
- “Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques et arabes conservés dans la bibliothèque de l’évêché chaldéen de Mardin.” *Revue des Bibliothèques* 18 (1908): 64–95.
- “Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques du Musée Borgia aujourd’hui à la Bibliothèque vaticane.” *Journal Asiatique* 10, 13 (1909): 249–84.
- Wright, William, and Stanley Arthur Cook. *A Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*. Cambridge University Press, 1901.

PRIMARY SOURCES I: MANUSCRIPTS

- ‘Abdallāh of Jazīra. Colophon. Mārdīn (Scher) 13 [HMML CCM 72], ff. 187a–189b.
- ‘Abdīshō’ of Nisibis. Dedication note. Jerusalem Greek Patriarchate Syr. 12, f. 1a.
- ‘Aṭāyē b. Faraj b. Marqōs of Alqōsh. Colophon. Vatican sir. 83, ff. 574b–576a.
Colophon. BL Add. 7178, ff. 464b–465b.
- Colophon. Berlin orient. oct. 1313, f. 176b.
- Colophon. Berlin orient. quart. 801, f. 48b.
- Colophon. Cambridge Add. 616, ff. 108b–109a.
- Colophon. Diyarbakır (Scher) 73 [CCM 427], ff. 186b–189a.
- Colophon. Diyarbakır (Scher) 106 [HMML CCM 20], ff. 234a–235a.
- Colophon. Mārdīn (Scher) 43 [HMML CCM 406], ff. 127b, 132a.
- Colophon. Mingana Syr. 98, f. 100b.
- Colophon. Vatican sir. 592, ff. 92b–94a.
- Da-mshamshānā men Mashkelg qriṯhā d-‘al gebh Arbēl da-sṯā men ‘urhā trīṯā wa-nphaq la-sbbhīlā.* Paris BN Syr. 181, ff. 75a–78b.
- Darwīsh b. Ḥannā b. ‘Īsā b. Shāmēh. Colophon. Diyarbakır (Scher) 38 [HMML CCM 139], ff. 494b–496a.
- Dā’ūd b. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī. *Rawḍat al-alibbā’ fī tāriḫ al-aṭibbā’.* Berlin orient. quart. 1068.
- Dāwīd b. Hōrmīzd b. Kānōn of ‘Ālyābād. Colophon. Berlin orient. quart. 845, ff. 179a, 180a.
- Ēlīyā ‘Alā’ al-Dīn bar Saypāyē of Mosul. Colophon. BL Add. 7174, ff. 206a, 212b–215a.
- ‘Elthā d-Bā’ūthā.* Princeton Garrett Syr. 22, ff. 2b–3a.
- Emmanuel b. Dāwīd b. Ahrōn b. Baršōmō. Colophon. Paris BN Syr. 345, ff. 210a, 220a–221b.
- Funerary manual. Mārdīn (Macomber) 35,16 [HMML CCM 221], ff. 90b–107b. Gabriel. Colophon. Cambridge Add. 1965, f. 257b.
- Gabriel of Bēth Sēlām. Colophon. Diyarbakır (Scher) 72 [HMML CCM 409], ff. 91a–b.
Colophon. Vatican sir. 176, ff. 128a–129a.
- Gazzā. BL Or. 4399.
- Gospel Lections for Sundays, Feast Days, and Funerals. BL Add 7174, ff. 212b–213b.
- Hūdrā.* BL Add. 7177.
- Hūdrā.* Trichur 27.
- Hūdrā.* Vatican sir. 83.
- Ibn Malak, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. *Sharḥ Majma’ al-Baḥrayn.* Princeton Garrett Islamic 3673Y.
- Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd Allah b. Behnām. Colophon. Diyarbakır (Scher) 91 [HMML CCM 419], ff. 271a–b.
- ‘Īsā. Colophon. Berlin Sachau 167, f. 139a.
- ‘Īsā b. Fakhr al-Dīn b. ‘Īsā b. Mattā Bēth Sukbāj. Colophon. BL Or. 4399, ff. 376a, 377a, 579a–b.
Colophon. Princeton Garrett Syr. 22, ff. 96b–97b.

- ‘Īsā b. Īshāq b. Mas‘ūd b. Ba‘rūbhā of Tellā. Colophon. Vatican sir. 186, ff. 240a–241b.
- Īshāq Shbadnāyā. [*‘Ōnūthā d-‘al Mār Gūwargīs*]. Berlin orient. fol. 620, ff. 337b–343a.
- ‘*Ōnūthā d-‘al mdabbrānūthā d-‘allāhā d-men brāshūth wa-‘dāmā l-‘ālam*. Berlin orient. fol. 1201.
- ‘*Ōnūthā d-‘al mdabbrānūthā d-‘allāhā d-men brāshūth wa-‘dāmā l-‘ālam*. Cambridge Add. 1998.
- [*‘Ōnūthā*] d-Bā‘ūthā. Cambridge Add. 1983, ff. 71a–73a.
- ‘*Ōnyāthā*. BL Or. 4062, ff. 122b–143b.
- ‘*Ōnyāthā*. Krakow Biblioteka Jagiellońska Sachau 178, ff. 113a–133a.
- Īshāq [Shbadnāyā]. ‘*Ūnāyā ‘al mashlmānē w-thūrkāyē da-khmā nesyōnē w-shūnāqē mshahlpay znayyā masblīn la-khresyānē meskēnē wa-msaybrīn lhōn wa-m‘azēn b-‘āgōnhōn*. Bodl. Syr. c.9, ff. 128a–129b.
- Īshō‘ b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Mubārak Bēth Bakshō. Colophon. BL Add. 7177, ff. 320b–321a.
- Īshō‘yahb b. Mqaddam. *Madrāshē*. Berlin orient. quart. 547, ff. 109a–111b. [*Madrāshē*]. Mingana Syr. 570, ff. 77a–79a.
- Mār Gūwargīs. BL Or. 4399, ff. 430a–433a.
- Rabban Hōrmīzd*. Berlin orient. fol. 619, ff. 101a–107b.
- Rabban Hōrmīzd*. Berlin Sachau 222, ff. 318b–325b.
- Īshō‘yahb of Nisibis, Mārdīn, and Armenia. Colophon. Cambridge Add. 1988, ff. 166b–169a.
- [*Life of Yūhannon b. Shayallāb*]. Vatican sir. 166, ff. 351b–353b.
- Marqōs of Mār Mīkhā‘īl Monastery. Colophon. Cambridge BFBS 446, ff. 252a–253a.
- Mas‘ūd of Kfarbūrān. Colophon. Paris BN Syr. 184, ff. 124b–125b.
- Mawd‘ānūthā d-sākhā da-shnayyā d-men Ādām wa-‘dāmā l-yawmānā*. Diyarbakır (Scher) 106 [HMML CCM 20], ff. 235a–b.
- Nīsān of Erbil. Colophon. Diyarbakır (Scher) 54 [HMML CCM 308], ff. 220a–b. Note. Mingana Syr. 561, ff. 44a–43b.
- Nūh Pūnīqoyo. *Mīmār qāluhu Nūh fī al-Mawṣil min ajli mu‘ānidīn Maryam wālidat Allah wa-lam ya‘malūn ‘īd al-bashāra al-majīd*. Vatican sir. 97, ff. 142a–143b.
- Tawārīkh al-‘anbiyā’ wa-l-mursalīn wa-l-salāṭīn ...* Vatican sir. 97, ff. 138a–140a.
- Nuskhat amānat al-naṣārā al-mashāriqa al-urthādūksiyyīn al-mulaqqabīn bi-l-Nuṣṭūr*. Diyarbakır (Scher) 152 [HMML CCM 453], ff. 149a–152b.
- Rabban Mūshē of Mār Sargīs monastery. Redemption note. Cambridge BFBS 446, f. 255a.
- Sabrīshō‘ b. Ya‘qōbh b. ‘Īsā b. Garībh of Ḥiṣn-Kayf. Colophon. Paris BN Syr. 369, ff. 105b–107a, 114b.
- Sabrīshō‘ of Ḥiṣn-Kayf. Note. Berlin Sachau 330, f. 84a.
- Shem‘ōn of Mār Āwḡēn. Colophon. Mārdīn (Scher) 1 [HMML CCM 31], f. 206b–207b.
- Takhsā d-kāhnē*. Berlin Sachau 167.
- Takhsā d-khīrūtōnyē āwkēth da-syāmīdhē*. Cambridge. Add. 1988.

- Takhsā d-meshtamash 'al ya'qūbāyē w-malkāyē d-hāwēn krestyānē.* Cambridge Add. 1988, ff. 142a–143b.
- Tash 'īthā da-tblīthay ṭūbhē lbbīsh l-'allāhā abhūn Mār Īgnāṭiūs Patriārkiš mshabbhā d-Anṭūkhēya d-Sūrēya, d-hū mnāhā Yūhannon bar mḡaddshoyo Shayallāh.* Cambridge Dd. 3.8¹, ff. 82a–87b.
- Timothy II. *'Ellāthā d-'rāzē 'ēdtānāyē.* Mingana Syr. 13.
- Yawsep. Colophon. Mārdīn (Macomber) 35,16 [HMML CCM 221], ff. 88a–b.
- Yōhannān b. Yōnān. Colophon. Jerusalem Greek Patriarchate Syr. 11, f. 103b.

PRIMARY SOURCES II: EDITED TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

- 'Abdīshō' bar Brīkhā. *Kthābhā d-methqrē margānūthā d-'al shrārā da-krestyānūtā.* Edited by Yosip d-Qelayta. 2nd edn. Mosul: Mṭabba'tā Athrōrayta d-'ēdtā 'attīqtā d-madhnhā, 1924.
- The Nomocanon of Abdisho of Nisibis: A Facsimile Edition of MS 64 from the Collection of the Church of the East in Trissur.* Edited by István Perczel. 2nd edn. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009.
- Akinean, Nersēs. *Gawazanagirk' kat'oghikosats' Aght'amaray: Patmakan usumnasirut'ūwn.* Vienna: Mkhīt'arean tparan, 1920.
- Assemani, Giuseppe Simone. *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana.* 3 vols. Rome: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1719–1728.
- Bar Hebraeus, Gregory. *The Chronography of Gregory Abū'l Faraj, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, Commonly Known as Bar Hebraeus.* Translated by E. A. Wallis Budge. London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1932.
- The Ecclesiastical Chronicle: An English Translation.* Translated by David Wilmschurst. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2016.
- Barkan, Ömer Lûtfi. *XV ve XVI İnci Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Zirai Ekonominin Hukukî ve Malî Esasları.* Istanbul: Bürhaneddin Matbaası, 1943.
- Brock, Sebastian P. “The Nestorian Diptychs: A Further Manuscript.” *Analecta Bollandiana* 89 (1971): 177–85.
- Carlson, Thomas A. “Şalībā b. Yuḡannā al-Mawşilī: *Asfār al-asrār* ('Books of Mysteries').” In *Texts on Byzantine Art and Aesthetics*, vol. III: *Visual Arts, Material Culture, and Literature in Later Byzantium*, Foteini Spingou (volume ed.) and Charles Barber (series ed.), section I.1.8. Cambridge University Press, in press.
- Chabot, Jean Baptiste, ed. *Synodicon orientale ou recueil de synodes nestoriens.* Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1902.
- Cöln, Franz. “Die anonyme Schrift ‘Abhandlung über den Glauben der Syrer.’” *Oriens Christianus* 4 (1904): 28–97.
- Dawson, Christopher, ed. *Mission to Asia.* Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 8. University of Toronto Press, 1980.
- al-Dimashqī, Shams al-Dīn Muḡammad b. Abī Ṭālīb. *Cosmographie de Chems-ed-Din Abou Abdallah Mohammed ed-Dimichqui.* Edited by C. M. Fraehn and A. F. Mehren. Saint Petersburg: Académie impériale des sciences, 1866.

- Manuel de la cosmographie du Moyen Âge*. Translated by A. F. Mehren. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzel, 1874.
- Fiey, Jean M. "Diptyques nestoriens du XIVe siècle." *Analecta Bollandiana* 81 (1963): 371–413.
- al-Ghīyāth, 'Abd Allah b. Faṭṭ Allah. *al-Tārīkh al-Ghīyāthī: al-faṣl al-khāmis min sanat 656 ilā 891 H./1258–1486 M*. Edited by Ṭāriq Nāfi' al-Ḥamdānī. Baghdad: Maṭba'at As'ad, 1975.
- Gonzalez de Clavijo, Ruy. *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403–1406*. Translated by Guy Le Strange. London: G. Routledge, 1928.
- Guillaumont, Antoine. "Justinien et l'église de Perse." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23–24 (1969): 39–66.
- al-Harawī, 'Alī b. Abī Bakr. *A Lonely Wayfarer's Guide to Pilgrimage: 'Alī ibn Abī Bakr al-Harawī's Kitāb al-Ishārāt ilā Ma'rifat al-Ziyārāt*. Translated by Josef W. Meri. Studies in late antiquity and early Islam 19. Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 2004.
- al-Ḥaṣkafī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī, and Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Tamartāshī. *al-Durr al-mukhtār sharḥ Tanwīr al-abṣār*. Edited by 'Abd al-Mun'im Khalīl Ibrāhīm. Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 2002.
- Howard, George, ed. *The Teaching of Addai*. Texts and Translations 4. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981.
- Ibn 'Arabshāh, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad. *'Ajā'ib al-maqdūr fī nauā'ib Tīmūr*. Edited by 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar. Cairo: Maktabat al-Anjū al-Miṣriyya, 1979.
- Ibn 'Asākir, 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan. *al-Tārīkh al-kabīr*. Edited by 'Abd al-Qādir Badrān. 5 vols. Damascus: Maṭba'at Rawḍat al-Shām, 1911.
- Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Muḥammad. *Riḥlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭa al-musammāh Tuḥfat al-nuzzār fī gharā'ib al-amṣār wa-'ajā'ib al-asfār*. Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya al-Kubrā, 1958.
- Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, AD 1325–1354*. Translated by H. A. R. Gibb and C. F. Beckingham. Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society, 2nd ser., nos. 110, 117, 141, 178, 190. Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1958–2000.
- Ibn Kammūna, Sa'd b. Maṣṣūr. *Ibn Kammūna's Examination of the Three Faiths; a Thirteenth-Century Essay in the Comparative Study of Religion*. Translated by Moshe Perlmann. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1971.
- Sa'd b. Maṣṣūr. *Ibn Kammūna's Examination of the Inquiries into the Three Faiths; a Thirteenth-Century Essay in Comparative Religion*. Edited by Moshe Perlmann. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967.
- Ibn Munqidh, Usāma. *The Book of Contemplation: Islam and the Crusades*. Translated by Paul M. Cobb. London: Penguin, 2008.
- Ibn Nujaym, Zayn al-Dīn b. Ibrāhīm, and 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Nasafī. *al-Baḥr al-rā'iq sharḥ Kanz al-daqa'iq*. Edited by Zakariyā 'Umayrāt. 9 vols. Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 1997.
- Ibn Taghribirdī, Abu al-Maḥāsin Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf. In *History of Egypt, 1382–1469 AD*. Translated by William Popper. 7 vols. University of California Publications in Semitic Philology 13–14, 17–19, 22–23. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1954–1963.
- al-Manhal al-ṣāfi wa-al-mustawfā ba'd al-wāfi*. Edited by Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn. Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriyya al-'Āmma lil-Kitāb, 1984.

- Isho'dad of Merv. *The Commentaries of Isho'dad of Merv, Bishop of Hadatha (c. 850 AD) in Syriac and English*. Edited by Margaret Dunlop Smith Gibson. Cambridge University Press, 1911.
- Israel of Alqosh and Joseph of Telkepe. *A Story in a Truthful Language: Religious Poems in Vernacular Syriac (North Iraq, 17th Century)*. Edited by Alessandro Mengozzi. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, vols. DLXXXIX–DXC; Scriptorum Syri, vols. CCXXX–CCXXXI. Louvain: Peeters, 2002.
- Khach'ikyan, L. S. *Tasnhingerord dari hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranmer*. Yerevan: Haykakan S. S. R. Gitut'yunneri Akademiayi Hratarakzut'yun, 1955.
- Khan, Muhammad Muhsin. *The Translation of the Meanings of Sahih Al-Bukhari: Arabic-English*. 9 vols. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 1997.
- Khondkaryan, Ed., ed. *Mkrkich' Naghash*. Yerevan: Haykakan S. S. R. Gitut'yunneri Akademiayi Hratarakzut'yun, 1965.
- Khunji-Ishfahanī, Faḍlullāh b. Rūzbihān. *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi Amīnī*. Edited by John E. Woods, translated by Vladimir Minorsky. London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1992.
- Macleay, Arthur John. *East Syrian Daily Offices*. London: Rivington, Percival, & Co., 1894.
- Macler, Frédéric. "Le 'liber pontificalis' des catholicos d'Althamar." *Journal Asiatique* 202 (1923): 37–69.
- Macomber, William F. "The Oldest Known Text of the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari." *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 32 (1966): 335–71.
- Mainz, Ernest. "The Credo of a Fourteenth-Century Karaite." *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 22 (1953): 55–63.
- Manandean, Y., and H. Achaean. *Hayots' Nor Vkanerē (1155–1843)*. Vagharshapat: Ejmiatsin, 1903.
- al-Maqrīzī, Ahmad b. 'Alī. *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-ma'rifat duval al-mulūk*. Edited by Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāh 'Āshūr. Cairo: Maṭba'at Dār al-Kutub, 1972.
- Metsop'ets'i, T'ovma. *Patmagrut'yun*. Edited by Levon Khach'ikyan. Yerevan: Magaghat, 1999.
- T'ovma Metsobets'i's History of Tamerlane and His Successors*. Translated by Robert Bedrosian. New York, NY: Sources of the Armenian Tradition, 1987.
- Mudarrisī-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Husayn. *Farmānhā-yi Turkumānān-i Qarā Qūyūnlū va Āq Qūyūnlū*. Qum: Chāpkhānah-i Hikmat, 1973.
- Muslim b. al-Hajjāj al-Qushayrī. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1995.
- al-Nābulusī, 'Uthmān b. Ibrāhīm. *The Sword of Ambition: Bureaucratic Rivalry in Medieval Egypt*. Edited by Luke B. Yarbrough. New York University, 2016.
- Özkuş, Ahmet, Ali Coşkun, Abdullah Sivridağ, and Murat Yüzbaşıoğlu, eds. *998 numaralı muhāsebe-i Vilāyet-i Diyār-i Bekir ve 'Arab ve Zū'l-Kādirīyye defteri (937/1530)*. Defter-i hākānī dizisi 4. Ankara: T. C. Başbakanlık, Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, 1998.
- Pognon, H. "Chronique syriaque relative au siège de Mossoul par les Persans en 1743." In *Florilegium; ou, Recueil de travaux d'érudition dédiés à Monsieur le marquis Melchior de Vogüé à l'occasion du quatre-vingtième anniversaire de sa naissance. 18 octobre 1909*, 489–503. Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1909.
- Qāḍī Khān, al-Ḥasan b. Maṣṣūr al-Ūzjandī al-Farghānī. *Kitāb Fatāwā Qāḍī Khān*. 3 vols. Cairo: Maṭba'at Muḥammad Shāhīn, 1865.

- Rubruck, William of. *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke, 1253–1255*. Translated by Peter Jackson and David Morgan. London: Hakluyt Society, 1990.
- Sanjian, Avedis K., trans. *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1301–1480*. Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies 2. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969.
- Scher, Addai. “Épisodes de l’histoire du Kurdistan.” *Journal Asiatique* Xe série, 15 (1910): 119–39.
- Schiltberger, Johannes. *The Bondage and Travels of Johann Schiltberger: A Native of Bavaria, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, 1396–1427*. London: Hakluyt Society, 1879.
- al-Shābūshī, ‘Alī b. Muḥammad. *Kitāb al-Diyārāt*. Edited by Kūrķīs ‘Awwād. Al-Ṭab‘ah 2. Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthannā, 1966.
- Solomon of Akhlat. *The Book of the Bee*. Edited by E. A. Wallis Budge. Anecdota Oxoniensia, Semitic Series, vol. I, part 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886.
- Ter-Davtyan, Knarik. *Новые Армянские Мученики (1155–1843)*. Yerevan: Izdatel’stvo “Nairi,” 1998.
- Ṭihrānī, Abū Bakr. *Kitāb-i Diyārbakriyya*. Edited by N. Lugal and F. Sümer. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1962.
- Timothy II. *The Mystery of Baptism: The Text and Translation of the Chapter “On Holy Baptism” from The Causes of the Seven Mysteries of the Church of Timothy II, Nestorian Patriarch (1318–1332)*. Translated by Paul Blaize Kadicheeni. Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1980.
- Ulug Beigus. *Epochæ Celebriores Astronomis, Historicis, Chronologis, Chataiorum, Syro-Græcorum, Arabum, Persarum, Chorasmiorum, Usitatæ Ex traditione Ulug Beigi, Indiæ citra extraque Gangem Principis*. Edited by Johannes Gravius. London: Jacob Fleisher, 1650.
- van Helmond, B. L. *Mas‘oud du Tour ‘Abdin: Un mystique syrien du XVe siècle, étude et texte*. Bibliothèque du Muséon 14. Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon, 1942.
- Vosté, Jacques. “Les Inscriptions de Rabban Hormizd et de N.-D. des Semences près d’Alqoš (Iraq).” *Le Muséon* 43 (1930): 263–316.
- Warrāq, Muḥammad b. Hārūn. *Anti-Christian Polemic in Early Islam: Abū ‘Isā Al-Warrāq’s “Against the Trinity.”* Edited by David Thomas. University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 45. Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Wyngaert, Anastasius van den. *Sinica Franciscana*. Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi-Florence): apud Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1929.
- Yazdī, Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī. *The Zafarnāmah*. Edited by Muḥammad Ilahdād. Bibliotheca Indica 100. 2 vols. Calcutta: Thomas, 1887–1888.

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Aka, İsmail. *İran’da Türkmen Hakimiyeti: Kara Koyunlular Devri*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2001.
- Album, Stephen. “A Hoard of Silver Coins from the Time of Iskandar Qarā-Qoyūnlū.” *Numismatic Chronicle* 136 (1976): 109–57.

- Iran after the Mongol Invasion*. Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean 9. Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2001.
- Marsden's *Numismata Orientalia Illustrata*. New York, NY: Attic Books, 1977.
- Alfeyev, Hilarion. *The Spiritual World of Isaac the Syrian*. Cistercian Studies 175. Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2000.
- Ames, Christine Caldwell. *Medieval Heresies: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam*. Cambridge Medieval Textbooks. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. edn. London: Verso, 2006.
- Asad, Talal. "The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category." In *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, 27–54. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, 1994.
- Badger, George Percy. *The Nestorians and Their Rituals: With the Narrative of a Mission to Mesopotamia and Coordistan in 1842–1844, and of a Late Visit to Those Countries in 1850*. 2 vols. London: Joseph Masters, 1852.
- Baer, Gabriel. "Guilds in Middle Eastern History." In *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East: From the Rise of Islam to the Present Day*, edited by M. A Cook, 11–30. London: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Balog, Paul. *The Coinage of the Mamlūk Sultans of Egypt and Syria*. New York, NY: American Numismatic Society, 1964.
- Baršawm, Ighnāyūs Afrām. *al-Lu'lu' al-manthūr fī tārikh al-'ulūm wa-l-ādāb al-Suryāniyya*. al-Ṭab'ah 3. Baghdad: Majma' al-Lugha al-Suryāniyya, 1976.
- Bartusis, Mark C. *Land and Privilege in Byzantium: The Institution of Pronoia*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Bat Ye'or. *The Decline of Eastern Christianity under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude: Seventh–Twentieth Century*. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996.
- Baum, Wilhelm, and Dietmar W. Winkler. *The Church of the East: A Concise History*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.
- Baumer, Christoph. *The Church of the East: An Illustrated History of Assyrian Christianity*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2006.
- Baumstark, Anton. *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur, mit Ausschluss der christlich-palästinensischen Texte*. Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Weber, 1922.
- Becker, Adam H. *Revival and Awakening: American Evangelical Missionaries in Iran and the Origins of Assyrian Nationalism*. University of Chicago, 2015.
- Berend, Nora. *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims, and "Pagans" in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000–c. 1300*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th ser., no. 50. Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Berkey, Jonathan Porter. *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600–1800*. Themes in Islamic History, vol. II. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Boyar, Ebru. "Ottoman Expansion in the East." In *The Ottoman Empire as a World Power, 1453–1603*, edited by Suraiya Faroqhi and Kate Fleet, 74–140. Cambridge History of Turkey 2. Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Broadbridge, Anne F. *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

- Brock, Sebastian P. "The Bridal Chamber of Light: A Distinctive Feature of the Syriac Liturgical Tradition." *The Harp* 18 (2005): 179–91.
- "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries: Preliminary Considerations and Materials." In *Aksum-Thyateira: A Festschrift for Archbishop Methodios of Thyateira and Great Britain*, edited by G. Dragas, 125–42. London: Thyateira House, 1985.
- "The 'Nestorian' Church: A Lamentable Misnomer." *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 78 (Autumn 1996): 23–35.
- Brock, Sebastian P., and David G. K. Taylor, eds. *The Hidden Pearl: The Syrian Orthodox Church and Its Ancient Aramaic Heritage*. Rome: Trans World Film Italia, 2001.
- Bruns, Peter. "Das sogenannte 'Nestorianum' und verwandte Symbole." *Oriens Christianus* 89 (2005): 43–62.
- Bryer, Anthony. "Greeks and Türkmens: The Pontic Exception." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 29 (1975): 113–48.
- Bulliet, Richard W. *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Burak, Guy. *The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Burn, Richard. "Coins of Jahān Shāh Kārā Ḳoyūnlū and Some Contemporary Rulers." *Numismatic Chronicle* 5th ser., no. 18 (1938): 173–97.
- Cahen, Claude. "Contribution à l'histoire du Diyār Bakr au quatorzième siècle." *Journal Asiatique* 243 (1955): 65–100.
- "Y a-t-il eu des corporations professionnelles dans le monde musulman classique? Quelques notes et réflexions." In *The Islamic city: A Colloquium*, edited by A. H. Hourani and S. M. Stern, 51–63. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, 1970.
- Carlson, Thomas A. "A Light from 'the Dark Centuries': Iṣḥāq Shbadnaya's Life and Works." *Hugoye* 14 (2011): 191–214.
- "Formulaic Prose? Rhetoric and Meaning in Late Medieval Syriac Manuscript Colophons." *Hugoye* 18 (2015): 379–98.
- Choksy, Jamsheed K. *Conflict and Cooperation: Zoroastrian Subalterns and Muslim Elites in Medieval Iranian Society*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- Coakley, J. F. "The Patriarchal List of the Church of the East." In *After Bardaisan: Studies on Continuity and Change in Syriac Christianity in Honour of Professor Han J. W. Drijvers*, edited by Gerrit J. Reinink and A. C. Klugkist, 65–83. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 89. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1999.
- Cohen, Amnon. *Jewish Life under Islam: Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- Cohen, Mark R. *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages*. 2nd edn. Princeton University Press, 2008.
- "What Was the Pact of 'Umar? A Literary-Historical Study." *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 23 (1999): 100–57.

- Dadoyan, Seta B. *The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World, Paradigms of Interaction: Seventh to Fourteenth Centuries*. 3 vols. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2011–2014.
- DeWeese, Devin A. *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Türkles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.
- Diler, Ömer. *Islamic Mints*. Edited by Emine Nur Diler, J. C. Hinrichs, and Garo Kürkman. 3 vols. Istanbul: Spink, 2009.
- Donner, Fred McGraw. *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.
- Duffy, Eamon. *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c.1400–c.1580*. 2nd edn. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005.
- Egger, Vernon. *A History of the Muslim World to 1405: The Making of a Civilization*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004.
- el-Leithy, Tamer. “Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo, 1293–1524 AD.” PhD diss., Princeton University, 2005.
- Fattal, Antoine. *Le Statut légal des non-musulmans en pays d’Islam*. Recherches publiées sous la direction de l’Institut de lettres orientales de Beyrouth, vol. X. Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1958.
- Fiey, Jean M. *Assyrie chrétienne, contribution à l’étude de l’histoire et de la géographie ecclésiastiques et monastiques du nord de l’Iraq*. Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1965–1968.
- Chrétiens syriaques sous les Mongols (Il-Khanat de Perse, XIIIe–XIVe s.)*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 362; Subsidia, 44. Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1975.
- Mossoul chrétienne; essai sur l’histoire, l’archéologie et l’état actuel des monuments chrétiens de la ville de Mossoul*. Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1959.
- Nisibe: Métropole syriaque orientale et ses suffragants des origines à nos jours*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 388; Subsidia 54. Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1977.
- “Le Sanctoral syrien oriental d’après les Évangéliaires et Bréviaires du XIe au XVIIIe s.” *L’Orient Syrien* 8 (1963): 21–54.
- “Saint ‘Azzīza et son village de Zērīni.” *Le Muséon* 79 (1966): 429–33.
- “Une Page oubliée de l’histoire des églises syriaques à la fin du XV–début du XVI siècle.” *Le Muséon* 107 (1994): 124–33.
- Ford, Dana, and Mohammed Tawfeeq. “Jonah’s Tomb Destroyed, Officials Say.” CNN, July 25, 2014. www.cnn.com/2014/07/24/world/iraq-violence/index.html.
- Franklin, Arnold E. *This Noble House: Jewish Descendants of King David in the Medieval Islamic East*. Jewish Culture and Contexts. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, 2013.
- Friedmann, Yohanan. *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Garcin, Jean-Claude. “The Regime of the Circassian Mamlūks.” In *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, edited by Carl F. Petry, 290–317. The Cambridge History of Egypt 1. Cambridge University Press, 1998.

- Geertz, Clifford. "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States." In *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, edited by Clifford Geertz, 105–57. New York, NY: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963.
- Gil, Moshe. *A History of Palestine, 634–1099*. Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Jews in Islamic Countries in the Middle Ages*. Études sur le judaïsme médiéval 28. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- Goitein, S. D. *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*. 6 vols. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967.
- Grehan, James. *Twilight of the Saints: Everyday Religion in Ottoman Syria and Palestine*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Griffith, Sidney H. *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam*. Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World. Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Gündüz, Ahmet. *Osmanlı idaresinde Musul (1523–1639)*. Elazığ: Fırat Üniversitesi Basımevi, 2003.
- Halevi, Leon. *Muhammad's Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007.
- Hamdani, Abbas. "The *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa'* and the Controversy about the Origin of Craft Guilds in Early Medieval Islam." In *Money, Land and Trade: An Economic History of the Muslim Mediterranean*, edited by Nelly Hanna, 157–73. London: I. B. Tauris, 2002.
- Hewsen, Robert H. "The Meliks of Eastern Armenia: A Preliminary Study." *Revue des Études Arméniennes* n.s. 9 (1972): 285–329.
- Hinz, Walther. "Das Steuerwesen Ostanatoliens im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert." *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 100 (1950): 177–201.
- Hodgson, Marshall G. S. *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*. 3 vols. University of Chicago Press, 1974.
- Hoexter, Miriam. "Qāḍī, Muftī, and Ruler: Their Roles in the Development of Islamic Law." In *Law, Custom, and Statute in the Muslim World: Studies in Honor of Aharon Layish*, edited by Ron Shaham, 67–85. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Holmberg, Bo. "A Reconsideration of the Kitāb Al-Mağdal." *Parole de l'Orient* 18 (1993): 255–73.
- Hutchinson, John, and Anthony D. Smith, eds. *Ethnicity*. Oxford Readers. Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Ilisch, Ludger. "Geschichte der Artuqidenherrschaft von Mardin zwischen Mamluken und Mongolen, 1260–1410 AD." PhD diss., Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, 1984.
- James, Boris. "Ethnonymes arabes ('ağam, 'arab, badw, turk, ...): Le cas kurde comme paradigme des façons de penser la différence au Moyen Âge." *Annales Islamologiques* 42 (2008): 93–125.
- Katz, Marion Holmes. *Women in the Mosque: A History of Legal Thought and Social Practice*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2014.

- Kaufhold, Hubert. "Der Bericht des Sargīs von Hāh über seine Pilgerreise nach Jerusalem." In *Christsein in der islamischen Welt: Festschrift für Martin Tamcke zum 60. Geburtstag*, edited by Sidney H. Griffith and Sven Grebenstein, 371–87. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015.
- Khoury, Dina Rizk. *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540–1834*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilisation. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Kouymjian, Dickran. "Armenia from the Fall of the Cilician Kingdom (1375) to the Forced Emigration under Shah Abbas (1604)." In *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, vol. II: *Foreign Dominion to Statehood: The Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth Century*, edited by Richard G. Hovannisian, 1–50. New York, NY: St Martin's Press, 1997.
- Kreyenbroek, Philip G. *Yezidism—Its Background, Observances and Textual Tradition*. Texts and Studies in Religion, vol. LXII. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995.
- Lane-Poole, Stanley. *Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum*. Edited by Reginald Stuart Poole. 10 vols. London: British Museum, 1875.
- La Porta, Sergio. Review of *The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World: Paradigms of Interaction, Seventh to Fourteenth Centuries*, vol. III: *Medieval Cosmopolitanism and the Images of Islam, Thirteenth to Fourteenth Centuries*, by Seta B. Dadoyan. *American Historical Review* 120 (2015): 1144–45.
- Levy-Rubin, Milka. *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: From Surrender to Coexistence*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- "Shurut 'Umar and Its Alternatives: The Legal Debate on the Status of the Dhimmīs." *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 30 (2005): 170–206.
- Lewis, Bernard. *The Jews of Islam*. Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Lichtenstadter, Ilse. "The Distinctive Dress of Non-Muslims in Islamic Countries." *Historia Judaica* 5 (1943): 35–52.
- Lindner, Rudi Paul. "Anatolia, 1300–1451." In *Byzantium to Turkey, 1071–1453*, edited by Kate Fleet, 102–37. Cambridge History of Turkey 1. Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Luisetto, Frédéric. *Arméniens et autres Chrétiens d'Orient sous la domination Mongole: l'Ilkhanat de Ghâzân, 1295–1304*. Paris: Geuthner, 2007.
- MacEvitt, Christopher. *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East: Rough Tolerance*. The Middle Ages Series. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.
- Macleay, Arthur John. *Grammar of the Dialects of Vernacular Syriac, as Spoken by the Eastern Syrians of Kurdistan, North-West Persia and the Plain of Mosul, with Notices of the Vernacular of the Jews of Azerbaijan and of Zakhu near Mosul*. Cambridge University Press, 1895.
- Manz, Beatrice Forbes. *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- "Tamerlane and the Symbolism of Sovereignty," *Iranian Studies* 21 (1988): 105–22.

- Masters, Bruce. *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- McCall, Richard D. *Do This: Liturgy as Performance*. University of Notre Dame, 2007.
- McClymond, Michael. "Origenes Vindicatus vel Rufinus Redivivus? A Review of Ilaria Ramelli's *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis* (2013)." *Theological Studies* 76 (2015): 813–26.
- Melikian-Chirvani, Assadullah S. "The Iranian Painter, the Metaphorical Hermitage, and the Christian Princess." *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, n.s. 16 (2006): 37–52.
- Memon, Muhammad Umar. *Ibn Taimīya's Struggle against Popular Religion: With an Annotated Translation of His Kitāb Iqtidā' aṣ-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaquīm Mukhālafat Aṣḥāb Al-Jahīm*. Religion and Society 1. The Hague: Mouton, 1976.
- Miller, Timothy. "The Basilika and the Demosia: The Financial Offices of the Late Byzantine Empire." *Revue des Études Byzantines* 36 (1978): 171–91.
- Minorsky, Vladimir. "The Aq-Qoyunlu and Land Reforms." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17, 3 (1955): 449–62.
- "The Qara-Qoyunlu and the Quṭb-Shāhs." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17, 1 (1955): 50–73.
- Murre-van den Berg, Heleen L. "The Church of the East in the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century: World Church or Ethnic Community?" In *Redefining Christian Identity: Cultural Interaction in the Middle East since the Rise of Islam*, edited by Jan J. van Ginkel, Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg, and Theo M. van Lint, 301–20. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 134. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2005.
- "Let us partake, all who believe in Christ': Liturgy in the Church of the East between 1500 and 1850." In *Christliche Gotteslehre im Orient seit dem Aufkommen des Islams bis zur Gegenwart*, edited by Martin Tamcke, 139–53. Beirut: Ergon Verlag, 2008.
- "The Patriarchs of the Church of the East from the Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries." *Hugoye* 2, 2 (1999): 235–64.
- Scribes and Scriptures: The Church of the East in the Eastern Ottoman Provinces (1550–1850)*. *Eastern Christian Studies* 21. Leuven: Peeters, 2015.
- "The Unexpected Popularity of the Study of Middle Eastern Christianity." In *Christsein in der islamischen Welt: Festschrift für Martin Tamcke zum 60. Geburtstag*, edited by Sidney H. Griffith and Sven Grebenstein, 1–11. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015.
- Newman, Andrew J. *Safavid Iran: Rebirth of a Persian Empire*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2006.
- Nirenberg, David. *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today*. University of Chicago, 2014.
- Palmer, Andrew. "John Bar Ṣayallāh and the Syrian Orthodox Community under Aqquyunlu Rule in the Late Fifteenth Century." In *Christians and Muslims in Dialogue in the Islamic Orient of the Middle Ages*, edited by Martin Tamcke, 187–205. *Beiruter Texte und Studien* 117. Beirut: Ergon Verlag, 2007.

- Pamuk, Şevket. *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Papademetriou, Tom. *Render unto the Sultan: Power, Authority, and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman Centuries*. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Paul, Jürgen. "Local Lords or Rural Notables? Some Remarks on the Ra'īs in Twelfth-Century Eastern Iran." In *Medieval Central Asia and the Persianate World: Iranian Tradition and Islamic Civilisation*, edited by A. C. S. Peacock and D. G. Tor, 174–209. London: I. B. Tauris, 2015.
- "Zerfall und Bestehen: Die Ğaun-i Qurban im 14. Jahrhundert." *Asiatische Studien* 65 (2011): 695–733.
- Penn, Michael Philip. *Envisioning Islam: Syriac Christians and the Early Muslim World*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.
- Perkins, Justin. *A Residence of Eight Years in Persia, among the Nestorian Christians: With Notices of the Muhammedans*. Andover, MA: Allen, Morrill & Wardwell, 1843.
- Ramelli, Ilaria. *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Eriugena*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Reilly, James A. "Women in the Economic Life of Late Ottoman Damascus." *Arabica* 42 (1995): 79–106.
- Reinink, Gerrit J. "Tradition and the Formation of the 'Nestorian' Identity in Sixth- to Seventh-Century Iraq." *Church History and Religious Culture* 89 (2009): 217–50.
- al-Rubay'ī, Wā'il. "Dāqūq: tārikhhā, al-tanqīb wa-l-šiyāna fihā." *Sūmir* 12 (1956): 38–89.
- Rustow, Marina. *Heresy and the Politics of Community: The Jews of the Fatimid Caliphate*. Conjunctions of Religion and Power in the Medieval Past. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008.
- Sachau, Eduard. *Reise in Syrien und Mesopotamien*. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1883.
- Sadeghi, Behnam. *The Logic of Law-Making in Islam: Women and Prayer in the Legal Tradition*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Sahner, Christian C. "Christian Martyrs and the Making of an Islamic Society in the Post-Conquest Period." PhD diss., Princeton University, 2015.
- "Swimming against the Current: Muslim Conversion to Christianity in the Early Islamic Period." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 136 (2016): 265–84.
- Sanjian, Avedis K. "Catholicos Aristakēs II's Encyclical of AD 1475." *Revue des Études Arméniennes* n.s. 18 (1984): 147–71.
- Seleznyov, Nikolai N. "Nestorius of Constantinople: Condemnation, Suppression, Veneration, with Special Reference to the Role of His Name in East-Syriac Christianity." *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 62 (2010): 165–90.
- Shahar, Ido. "Legal Pluralism and the Study of Shari'a Courts." *Islamic Law and Society* 15 (2008): 112–41.
- Shils, Edward. *Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology*. University of Chicago Press, 1975.

- Simonsohn, Uriel I. *A Common Justice: The Legal Allegiances of Christians and Jews under Early Islam*. Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.
- Sinclair, Thomas A. "The Use of the Colophons and Minor Chronicles in the Writing of Armenian and Turkish History." *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 10 (2000): 45–53.
- Subtelny, Maria. *Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran*. Brill's Inner Asian Library 19. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Sümer, Faruk. *Kara Koyunlular: Başlangıçtan Cihan-Şah'a kadar*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1967.
- Taft, Robert F. "On the Use of the Bema in the East-Syrian Liturgy." *Eastern Churches Review* 3 (1970): 30–39.
- "Some Notes on the Bema in the East and West Syrian Traditions." *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 34 (1968): 326–59.
- Talmon-Heller, Daniella. "Graves, Relics and Sanctuaries: The Evolution of Syrian Sacred Topography (Eleventh–Thirteenth Centuries)." *ARAM* 18–19 (2006–2007): 601–20.
- Tannous, Jack B. V. "Syria between Byzantium and Islam: Making Incommensurables Speak." PhD diss., Princeton University, 2010.
- Targaç, Iskender, and Şevket Dönmez. "Duribe Van." *Türk Nümismatik Derneği Bülteni* 37–38 (2002): 15–27.
- Teule, Herman. "The Veneration of Images in the East Syriac Tradition." In *Die Welt der Götterbilder*, edited by Brigitte Gronenberg and Hermann Spieckermann, 324–46. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007.
- Tieszen, Charles L. *Cross Veneration in the Medieval Islamic World: Christian Identity and Practice under Muslim Rule*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2017.
- Al-Tikriti, Nabil. "Ottoman Iraq." *Journal of the Historical Society* 7 (2007): 201–11.
- Trépanier, Nicolas. *Foodways and Daily Life in Medieval Anatolia: A New Social History*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2014.
- Tritton, A. S. *The Caliphs and Their Non-Muslim Subjects*. London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1930.
- Van den Oudenrijn, M. A. "Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie. 1. L'Union de Qrnay 1330." *Oriens Christianus* 40 (1956): 94–112.
- "Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie. 2. Le nouvel athénée." *Oriens Christianus* 42 (1958): 110–33.
- "Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie. 3. La congrégation des Uniteurs." *Oriens Christianus* 43 (1959): 110–19.
- "Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie. 4. Les adversaires de l'union." *Oriens Christianus* 45 (1961): 95–108.
- "Uniteurs et Dominicains d'Arménie. 5. Les Dominicains de Naxijewan." *Oriens Christianus* 46 (1962): 99–116.
- Walker, Joel T. *The Legend of Mar Qardagh: Narrative and Christian Heroism in Late Antique Iraq*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006.
- "From Nisibis to Xi'an: The Church of the East in Late Antique Eurasia." In *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, edited by Scott F. Johnson, 994–1052. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012.

- Weber, Max. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. 2 vols. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978.
- Weltecke, Dorothea. "Les Trois Grandes Chroniques syro-orthodoxes des XIIIe et XIIIe siècles." In *L'Historiographie syriaque*, edited by Muriel Debié, 107–35. Études Syriaques 6. Paris: Geuthner, 2009.
- Wilmshurst, David. *The Ecclesiastical Organisation of the Church of the East, 1318–1913*. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 582; Subsidia 104. Leuven: Peeters, 2000.
The Martyred Church: A History of the Church of the East. London: East & West, 2011.
- Wing, Patrick. *The Jalayirids: Dynastic State Formation in the Mongol Middle East*. Edinburgh University Press, 2016.
- Winkler, Dietmar W. *Ostsyrisches Christentum: Untersuchungen zu Christologie, Ekklesiologie und zu den ökumenischen Beziehungen der Assyrischen Kirche des Ostens*. Munster: Lit, 2003.
- Woods, John E. *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire*. Rev. edn. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1999.
- Yarbrough, Luke. "Islamizing the Islamic State: The Formulation and Assertion of Religious Criteria for State Employment in the First Millennium AH." PhD diss., Princeton University, 2012.
- Zambaur, Eduard Karl Max von. *Die Münzprägungen des Islams: Zeitlich und örtlich geordnet*. Edited by Peter Jaeckel. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1968.
- Zinger, Oded. "Women, Gender and Law: Marital Disputes According to Documents of the Cairo Geniza." PhD diss., Princeton University, 2014.
- Ziya, Ahmet. *Meskûkat-i İslâmiye takvimi*. Istanbul: Matbaa-yi Amire, 1910.

Index

- ‘Abd al-Masīh, physician, 36, 55
 ‘Abdīshō’ b. Brīkhā of Nisibis, 121, 128,
 134, 135, 156, 163, 181, 182, 196,
 197, 198, 200, 203, 204, 206, 207,
 209, 213, 214, 216, 217, 220, 221,
 235, 273
 ‘Abdīshō’, Metropolitan of Nisibis (1458),
 33, 36, 38
 Abraham, 222
 Abrāhām, chief, 37
 Abū Sa‘īd b. Qarā Yūsuf, 17
 Abū Sa‘īd, Ilkhan, 14
 Abū Sa‘īd, Timurid sultan, 21
 Adam, 152, 169, 222
 Addai, 9, 108, 111, 122, 123, 153, 242
 Ādharbayjān, 7, 14, 17, 18, 23, 67, 72
 Aght‘amar, 26, 34, 52, 54, 59, 60, 66, 74,
 76, 77, 86, 87, 266
 Aghwān, 47, 50, 266
 Aleppo, 3, 14
 Alexandria, 205, 233
 ‘Alī al-Harawī, 2
 ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, 256
 ‘Alī b. Qarā ‘Uthmān, 17
 ‘Alī Pāshā, Mongol emir, 214
 Alqōsh, 30, 35, 68, 105, 106
 Alvand b. Yūsuf b. Uzun Ḥasan, 23
 ‘Amadiyya, 252
 Ambrose, 238
 Amid, 8, 15, 17–20, 22, 23, 25, 33, 34,
 36–39, 46, 47, 56, 57, 58, 60, 62,
 63, 65, 66, 68, 73, 74, 90, 100, 252
 Anaphora of Addai and Mārī, 108, 111,
 123, 153
 Anatolia, 2, 6, 13–17, 20, 76, 102
 angels, 108, 109, 110, 154, 192, 206
 Ankara, 13, 14, 15, 79
 Antichrist, 49, 120
 Antioch, 205, 233
 Apollinaris, 238
 apostles, 112, 119, 123, 146, 147, 156,
 159, 183, 193, 197, 198, 199, 201,
 205, 206, 225, 228–36, 237, 238,
 241, 242, 244, 245, 246, 249, 250,
 251
 apostolicity, 111, 112
 Aqāq, 238
 Āqqūyunlū Türkmēn, 8, 15–19, 20–24, 33,
 41, 43, 46–49, 51, 54, 56–59, 61, 62,
 63, 65, 66, 69, 73, 75, 76, 77, 87,
 95, 96, 100, 101, 106, 148, 195,
 210, 213, 224, 264
 Arabic, 1, 7, 9, 47, 114, 128, 144, 165,
 192, 211
 Arabs, 1, 7, 24, 53, 74, 90, 103, 222
 Ararat, 27
 Arbū, 54
 Archēsh, 66, 74, 80
 Arghanī, 56, 66
 Aristotle, 116, 125, 132, 138
 Arius, 238
 Armenia, 8, 26, 27, 29, 33, 72, 212
 Armenian Catholics, 26, 27, 48, 82
 Armenians, 22, 26, 29, 34, 41, 46–49, 51,
 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 65,
 66, 67, 72, 74–80, 82, 83, 86, 87,
 90, 91, 96, 104, 114, 124, 207,
 209, 216, 225, 233, 265, 266

- Artuqid dynasty, 15, 18, 19
 Aṣṣahān b. Qarā Yūsuf, 59
at'orakal, 87
 Athanasius, 238
 Āthēl, 32, 39
 Ayyubid dynasty, 15, 16, 18, 19, 51, 52, 74
 'Azīz, Maphrian, 86
- Baghdad, 8, 9, 13, 15, 25, 36, 55, 56, 59,
 83, 84, 99, 128, 214, 215
 baptism, 79, 109, 114, 120, 122, 123, 154,
 157, 158, 161, 162, 163, 172, 173,
 179, 180, 181, 187, 194, 197, 203,
 205, 206, 225, 227, 228, 231, 232,
 239, 254
 Bar Daysān, 238
 Bar Ṣawmo Ma'dnoyo, Maphrian, 34, 59,
 86
 Bar Ṣawmo Shashū'o Man'amoyo, 76
 Barsbāy, al-Ashraf, 18, 19
 Basil of Caesarea, 238
 Bāṭnāyā, 35, 36
 Bā'ūthā d-Nīnwāyē, 153, 186, 204, 239,
 240
 Bāyazīd I Yıldırım, 13
 Bāysunghur b. Ya'qūb, 58
 Bāz, 77
 Bedouin, 77
 believers, 114, 116, 157, 158, 193
bēmā, 173, 189, 190
 Bēth Qōqā (Mār Sabrīshō'), monastery, 35,
 248
 Bēth Shhīrīno, 34, 67, 83, 106
 Bēth Sēlām, 149, 183, 219
 beys, 23, 95, 260
 Bidlīs, 18, 34, 48, 59
 bishops, 26, 28, 30–35, 51, 54, 55, 57, 59,
 60, 82, 144, 193, 196, 199, 214,
 220, 233, 246
 Bōrb, 39
 boundary maintenance, 143, 243, 254
- Caiaphas, 244
 Cairo, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 97, 191
 captives, 71, 77, 78, 79, 84, 119
 catholicity, 111
 catholicoi, 9, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34,
 52, 54, 60, 75, 82, 85–88, 104,
 111, 113, 158, 162, 166, 196, 197,
 199–204, 207, 209–16, 219, 220,
 221, 238, 241, 242, 246, 251, 252,
 260, 265, 266, 269–73
- Caucasian Albania, 46, 50, 60, 75, 86, 87
 Chalcedon, 26, 84, 134, 136
 Chaldiran, 14
 Chamishgazak, 19
 chiefs, 28, 29, 37, 38, 39, 104, 105, 188,
 211, 216, 221
 Christians, 1, 8, 47, 62, 73, 81, 106, 116,
 123, 125, 128, 129, 131, 132, 135,
 142, 226, 254, 256, 257
 Christology, 9, 25, 81, 115, 120, 132–36,
 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 145, 203,
 236, 260
 Church, 108, 109, 111, 112, 123, 145,
 146, 154, 164, 196, 197, 199, 241,
 250
 Church of the East, 3, 47, 48, 82, 83, 84,
 91, 98, 104, 106, 252, 272
 communal relationship to Christ,
 143–60
 ecclesiastical hierarchy, 111, 195–21,
 230, 232–33, 241–42
 rituals of, 108–9, 161–94, 226–28, 230,
 231–32, 239–41
 social structure, 27–39
 theology of, 109–11, 113–42, 229,
 230–31, 235–39
 views on history, 112, 222–51
 Cilicia, 26
 Claudius Caesar, 232
 clergy
 absence in Shbadnāyā's theology, 204,
 205, 206, 207, 220, 241, 255
 adherence to defines community, 10, 97,
 195, 234
 concepts of, 159, 177, 196–210, 213,
 216, 217, 220, 221, 230, 232,
 233
 extortion from, 55
 functions, 161, 165–67, 172–77, 182,
 183, 185, 202, 214
 hierarchical structure, 31, 38, 162, 188,
 194, 195, 196, 198, 200, 204, 207,
 220, 233, 255
 in society, 28, 29, 38, 39, 40, 46, 50, 57,
 73, 118, 148, 187, 188, 191, 195,
 203, 208, 211, 216
 perspectives on community structure, 11,
 162, 163, 164, 167, 169, 170, 176,
 181, 183–86, 188, 194
 perspectives shape sources, 28, 29, 81,
 83, 118, 170, 171, 201
 rulers' patronage of, 25, 56, 57

- scarcity, 119, 195, 207
 taxation, 55, 58, 59, 60, 75
 theological literacy, 115, 116, 117, 119
 views on conversion, 78, 79
 clericalist reform and its consequences,
 195, 196, 213, 220, 255
 coins, 18, 19, 20, 22, 57, 71, 97
 colophons, 11, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 62,
 68, 72, 88, 103, 104, 105, 208,
 210, 215, 221, 260
 communion. *See* Eucharist
 community concept, 12, 92, 93, 94,
 96–103, 106, 107, 109, 111, 112,
 115, 143, 144, 162, 223, 229, 250,
 253, 254, 255
 Constantine I, 210, 232
 Constantinople, 13, 15, 20, 21, 205, 233
 construction of churches, 56, 63, 65–68,
 74, 75, 258
 conversion, 57, 78, 79, 116, 142, 165,
 187, 244, 254
convivencia, 12, 43, 88, 258
 Copts, 82
 Council of Ephesus (431 CE), 132
 Creed. *See* Nicene Creed
 cultural integration, 7, 192, 255, 257, 259
 Cyprus, 32
 Cyril of Alexandria, 237, 238, 239

 Damascus, 25, 26, 256
 date formulae, 21, 22, 29
 Dā'ūd b. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī, 73, 106
 Dawit' III, catholicos of Aght'amar, 86
 “deep past”, 235, 250, 251, 255, 256,
 See also history, communal
 defters, 8
 Denḥā (Epiphany), 123, 153, 226,
 227, 232, *See also* liturgy:Denḥā
 (Epiphany)
 Denḥā II, Catholicos, 30, 214, 220, 242,
 269, 270, 271
 Denḥā of Tālnā, 211
 Despoina Khātūn, 95
dhimmī regulations, 10, 42, 43, 44, 61,
 63, 65, 68, 69, 70, 73, 74, 88, 258,
 260
dīlāyāthā, 126, 127
 al-Dimashqī, 185
 Diodore of Tarsus, 111, 134, 236, 238
 Dioscorus Behnam Arboyo, Maphrian, 86
 diptychs, 220, 242, 260, 269, 271, 272

 diversity, 1, 3, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14, 24, 27, 40,
 94, 253, 254, 257, 259
 divine attributes, 114
 Diyār Bakr, 17, 18, 58, 68
 doctrine, 26, 81, 112, 114–17, 119, 120,
 122–25, 127–30, 132, 137, 139–45,
 152, 156, 157, 196, 206, 230, 231,
 234–39, 241, 251, *See also* theology
 Doquz Khātūn, 9
 Druze, 257
 dyophysite Christology, 25, 48, 81, 260

 East Syrian. *See* Church of the East
 Egypt, 8, 13, 14, 19, 21, 26, 56, 57, 78,
 82, 87, 191, 222
 Ējmiatsin, 27, 52, 54, 60, 266
 Ēlīyā 'Alā' al-Dīn b. Saypāyē of Mosul,
 149, 200
 Ēlīyā d-Badmeh, 227
 Ēlīyā III Abū Ḥalīm, Catholicos, 272
 Ēlīyā VII, Catholicos, 272
 Ēlīyā, Catholicos (1463), 50, 215, 270,
 271, 272
 Ēlīyā, Catholicos (unknown which), 26,
 242, 269
 Ēlīyā, metropolitan of Mosul, 31, 33, 209,
 211, 215, 218, 219
 Emmanuel b. Dāwīd b. Ahrōn b. Baršōmō,
 39
 Ephrem, 237, 238
 epiclesis, 178, 260
 Erbil, 2, 20, 32, 35, 94, 200, 271
 Erzincan, 18, 19, 23, 34, 61, 62, 64, 65,
 74, 77
 ethnicity, 3, 6, 24, 90, 91, 93, 94, 99, 103,
 154
 Eucharist, 108, 120, 135, 157, 162, 163,
 164, 171–81, 183, 187, 193, 194,
 197, 202, 231, 232, 254, 261, 274
 Eunomius, 238
 Euphrates, 8, 14, 34, 57, 212
 Eurocentrism, 6, 7, 259
 Eusebius of Caesarea, 225
 Eutyches, 238
ex opere operato, 177
 excommunication, 82, 83, 182

 faith, 108, 156, 179, 180, 188
 Fakhr al-Dīn, nephew of Ignatius II of
 Mārdīn, 85
faqīhs, 66, 192, 261

- Fārs, 102
 firmans, 29, 46, 47, 50, 54, 59, 75, 86, 261
 flock of Christ, 149, 249
- Gabriel of Bēth Sēlām, 137, 149, 183, 219
 Gandzasar, 47, 266
 gender, 162, 187, 188, 189, 194, 255
 Genghis, 9, 100
 Georgia, 16, 27, 29, 72, 84
 Ghāzān Khān, 101
 Ghazar of Bidlīs, 80
ghāzī, 95, 261
 Gīwargīs of Shanqlabad, 200
 Glak, monastery of, 57
 God, 10, 109, 110, 124, 125, 129, 132, 167, 209, 251
 governance, 6, 15–24, 39, 44, 45, 48, 50, 51, 65, 69, 70, 95
 Greeks, 27, 95, 132, 238
 Gregory Nazianzen, 238
 Gregory the Illuminator, 27, 50
 Grigor Khlar'ets'i, 76, 79, 80
 Grigor X, catholicos of Eǰmiatsin, 50, 52
- Ḥabīb of Āmid, 36
hadīth, 41, 191
 hagiography, 56, 223, 261
 Ḥajj, 52, 261
 Ḥajjī Togāy, 214
 Hakkārī, 25, 32, 35, 36, 65, 105, 137, 219
 Ḥamā, 185
 Ḥanaftī, 60, 65, 191
 Ḥannō b. Īshō', 106
 Ḥasan 'Alī b. Jahānshāh, 46, 56, 60, 67
 Ḥasan-Jalalids, 86
 heaven, 79, 152, 178, 179, 197, 244, 251
 Helena, Constantine's mother, 232
 hell, 79, 151, 152
 Herat, 14, 15, 16, 20, 78
 hereditary patriarchate, 25, 31, 84–88, 196, 213, 216–21, 255
 heresy, 6, 137, 234, 237
 Ḥiṣn Ziyād, 66
 Ḥiṣn-Kayf, 15, 16, 32, 33, 46, 51, 52, 54, 55, 74, 126, 219
 history, communal, 90, 95, 222, 250, 253
 Ḥnānīshō', Catholicos, 120
 "Mār Ḥnānīshō' the youth", 219
 holiness, 109, 110, 111, 219
- Holy Spirit, 109, 110, 119, 123–26, 144, 156–60, 163, 168, 169, 178, 201, 218, 232, 235, 254, 261
 Ḥōrmīzd, son of Chief Mattay of Talkēpē, 211
 Hovhannēs, monk, 75
 Hovhannēs, vardapet, 75, 79
 Hūlegü Ilkhan, 9, 101
hūthāmā, 135
- Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 2, 4, 256
 Ibn Kammūna, Sa'd b. Manṣūr, 128
 Ibn Taymiyya, 185, 256
 Ibrāhīm Bey, Sultan of Mārdīn, 51, 53, 55
 Ignatius Abrohom b. Garībh, 51, 85
 Ignatius Bar Wahībh Badarzhakhē, 85
 Ignatius Basil Ḥedloyo of Mārdīn, 82
 Ignatius II Īwānnīs Ismā'īl al-Majd of Mārdīn, 85
 Ignatius III Mas'ūd Ṣalahoyo, 52, 76
 Ignatius III Shahāb, 85
 Ignatius VI Khalaf Ma'dnoyo of Mārdīn, 51, 85, 86
 Ilkhans, Mongol rulers of Persia, 14, 22, 25, 61, 101, 223, 261
 imperial, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 43, 59
 India, 35, 271
 Iran, 8, 15, 16, 24, 43, 57, 72, 96, 101, 103
 Iraq, 1, 2, 3, 6–16, 18, 20, 23–27, 34, 39, 40, 42–46, 48, 50, 56, 58, 68, 69, 72, 73, 84, 87, 88, 90, 91, 99, 102, 103, 105, 107, 116, 142, 143, 144, 161, 162, 163, 182, 188, 191, 199, 216, 271
 'Īsā b. 'Abd al-'Azīz of Mosul, 113
 'Īsā b. Fakhr al-Dīn b. 'Īsā b. Mattā of Mosul, 38, 126, 208, 211, 218
 'Īsā b. Malko, chief of Bēth Sbhīrīno, 37
 Īshāq Shbadnāyā, 11, 90, 91, 92, 94, 96, 97, 98, 102, 103, 105, 117, 119, 121, 127, 136, 156, 206, 207, 220, 224, 225, 243, 250
 Īshō' of Hakkārī, 36
 Īshō' of Mosul, 148, 149, 183, 209, 210, 218
 Īshō' dād of Merv, 109, 139, 171, 243
 Īshō'yahb b. Mqaddam of Erbil, 11, 83, 94, 103, 198, 202, 225, 240, 243, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249

- Ishō'yahb III, Catholicos, 227, 239, 241
 Iṣhū' b. Mūto of Tūr 'Abdīn, 52
 Iṣhū' 'Inwardoyo, 51
 Iskandar b. Qarā Yūsuf, 15, 17, 19, 22, 48, 49, 64, 82
 Islam. *See dhimmī* regulations; *faqīhs*; *ghāzī*; *hadīth*; Ḥajj; *khuṭba*; *madbhabs*; *qāḍīs*; Qur'ān; Ramaḍān; *shabada*; *sharī'a*; Shiites; Sufis; *summa*; Sunnis; '*ulamā'*
 Islamization, 6, 259
 'Izz al-Dīn Shīr, 21, 66, 76
 Jacobites. *See* Syriac Orthodox
 Jahāngīr b. 'Alī b. Qarā 'Uthmān, 18, 20, 22, 62, 66
 Jahānshāh b. 'Alī b. Qarā 'Uthmān, 77
 Jahānshāh b. Qarā Yūsuf, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 46, 50, 51, 52, 56, 59, 60, 62, 63, 66, 71, 77, 80, 87, 215
 Jalayirid dynasty, 15, 18
 Jazīra (city), 18, 30, 35, 67, 137
 al-Jazīra (region), 7, 9, 10, 12–16, 18, 20, 24, 26, 27, 32, 39, 40, 42–46, 48, 50, 56, 69, 73, 79, 84, 87, 88, 90, 91, 98, 102, 105, 116, 142, 144, 162, 216
 Jerusalem, 21, 58, 75, 82, 145, 146
 Jesus Christ, 10, 24, 25, 90, 109, 110, 111, 115, 116, 119–25, 131, 132, 133, 136, 137–42, 143–53, 160, 161, 167, 170, 178, 180, 183, 197, 198, 199, 207, 222, 224–28, 233, 234, 235, 241–44, 247, 249, 250, 253, 254
 Jews, 2, 3, 4, 24, 47, 62, 73, 75, 84, 87, 88, 91, 106, 111, 114, 115, 121, 123, 128, 129, 130, 132, 140, 141, 142, 183, 226, 253, 254, 256, 257
 Jīlū, 35, 77
jizya, 44, 45, 58, 60, 73, 187, 261,
See also taxes
 John Chrysostom, 238
 Jonah, prophet, 1, 136, 240
 Jordan River, 109, 120, 226
 Josephus, 237
 Kamākh, 62, 63, 65, 66, 74
 Karamlīsh, 25, 242
 Kerala, 32
 Kfarbūrān, 113, 118, 126, 202, 271
 Khadīja bt. 'Alī b. Qarā 'Uthmān, 87
 Khaṛābast, monastery, 34
kharāj, 59, 61
 Kharput, 21, 66
khil'a, 50, 51
 Khīzān, 66
 Khlat', 48, 71
 Khōja Mirak', 41, 54, 80
 Khurāsān, 23
 Khushqadam, 19
khuṭba, 97, 261
 kingship, 22, 29, 144, 145, 147, 148, 150, 210
 Kirkuk, 240
 Kōkhē, 214, 215, 216
 Konya, 16
 Ktuts', island, 66
kuffār, 95, 96
 Kurdistan, 8
 Kurds, 10, 15, 18, 24, 52, 53, 56, 66, 73, 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 90, 103, 165
kyānā, 125, 132, 133
 laity, 28, 29, 36, 117, 164, 165, 171, 172, 180, 181, 188, 192, 193, 198
 Lake Ūrmī, 36
 Lake Van, 22, 26, 34, 52, 66, 71, 77
 Lala Miranshēs, 59
 Latins, 9, 26, 27, 98, 132, 177, 238
 law, 42, 43, 68, 69, 70, 146, 191,
See also dhimmī regulations
 Lebanon, 27
 lectionary, 27, 33, 38, 173, 261
 Lent, 123, 185, 186, 239, 240
 liturgy, 11, 25, 97, 108, 109, 118, 122, 123, 128, 129, 136, 139, 152, 156, 159, 165, 173, 180, 199, 203, 209, 220, 230, 233, 234, 237–41, 251, 272, 273, *See also* rituals
 baptismal, 157, 164, 203
 Denhā (Epiphany), 111, 122, 130, 131, 138, 151, 154
 Eucharistic, 172, 176, 178, 180, 181
 Good Friday, 145, 147, 151, 153
 Holy Saturday, 138, 141, 147, 151, 153
 Pentecost, 108, 112, 135, 145, 146, 156, 157, 159, 200, 201, 231, 233, 244, 247, 249
 Qyāmtā (Easter), 108, 109, 111, 141, 151, 152, 153, 154, 158, 210

- Sullāqā (Ascension), 153, 198
 Yaldā (Nativity), 108, 110, 111, 112,
 114, 119, 130, 135, 138, 139, 145,
 151, 153, 154, 156
 local rulers, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 40, 44,
 45, 53, 62, 70, 104, 252
 Lord's Supper. *See* Eucharist
- Macedonius, 238
 Ma'dan, 53
madbhabs, 47, 191, 257, 261
madrāshā, 198, 202
 Maḥmūd b. Qarā 'Uthmān, 61, 62
 Maḥmūd Bey, 50, 56
makhshānithā, 192
 Mākū, 27, 48, 67, 82
 Malik Ashraf, Chūbānid ruler, 49
 al-Malik Khalaf, Ayyubid sultan of Ḥiṣn-
 Kayf, 51
 al-Malik al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh, Mamlūk
 Sultan, 97
 Malik Muḥammad b. 'Izz al-Dīn Shīr, 21, 66
 Malko of Bēth Sbhīrmo, 37
 Mamlūks, 8, 13–19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 56,
 58, 82, 87, 97, 263
 Mandaeans, 253, 257
 Mani, 238
 maphrians, 34, 59, 81, 82, 86, 261, 267
 Mār Ābā, 108, 109
 Mār Āwgēn, monastery, 30, 35, 36, 218
 Mār 'Azzīzā, 35
 Mār Dādā, 35, 36, 83
 Mār Gabriel, monastery, 35
 Mār Khūdhāhwī, monastery, 35
 Mār Pethyōn, church in Āmid, 33, 37, 38,
 39
 Mār Qūryāqōs, 35, 36, 39, 211
 Mār Sargīs, monastery, 35
 Mār Ya'qōbh the Recluse, monastery, 35
 Mār Yōhannān the Egyptian, monastery, 35
 Mār Yōhannān, monastery near Nisibis, 35
 Marāgha, 25
 Marcion, 238
 Mārdīn, 15, 20, 25, 26, 33, 34, 46, 51, 53,
 54, 62, 65, 66, 67, 74, 75, 83, 85,
 86, 219, 267
 Mardirōs, monk, 86
 Margaray of Aghbak, 124, 125
 Mārī, 9, 108, 111, 122, 123, 153, 242
 Maria Komnene, 95
 Maronites, 27
 marriage, 163, 179, 181, 182, 186, 187
 Mārt Meskīntā, 190
 Mary, mother of Jesus, 82, 123, 135, 139,
 161, 162, 184
 Mas'ūd of Kfarbūrān, 113, 200, 202, 208,
 210
 Mas'ūd Zazoyo of Tūr 'Abdīn, 54, 55, 121,
 124, 125, 128
 Mātiyōs, 87
 Mattay of Talkēpē, 211
mdabbrānūthā, 118–23, 131, 138, 141,
 151, 233, 261
 Mehmed II, 16
 Melk'iser', 209
 Melkites, 26, 82, 165, 184, 272, 273
 membership, 106, 109, 161–64, 171, 172,
 177, 180–95, 249, 254, 255, 256
 Metsop', 34
 miaphysite Christology, 25
 miracles, 243–47, 249, 250
 Mīrānshāh b. Tīmūr, 21, 54
 Mkrkich' Naghash of Āmid, 34, 47, 56, 65,
 66, 74, 90
 Mongols, 9, 14, 22, 25, 61, 98, 99, 101,
 117, 214, 220, 223
 monks, 28, 35, 36, 47, 53, 60, 83, 84, 188,
 194, *See also* nuns
 Monophysites. *See* Syriac Orthodox
 Mor Behnam, monastery, 34
 Mor Gabriel, monastery, 34
 Mor Ḥnanyo, monastery, 34
 Mor Ya'qūb Ḥbishoyo, monastery, 34
 Mosul, 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 25, 26, 30–33,
 35, 36, 38, 67, 68, 81, 105, 106,
 107, 137, 158, 161, 162, 184, 192,
 219
 Muḥammad Jūkī b. Shāhrukh, 17
 Musefir, 80
 al-Musta'ṣim, 99
 al-Mutawakkil, 42
- Nādir Shāh, 2
nā'ib, 56
 Narsai, 237, 238
nāṭar kūrsyā, 31, 85, 209, 212, 218
 al-Nawawī, 191
 Nestorianism, 9
 Nestorians. *See* Church of the East
 Nestorius of Constantinople, 9, 132, 134,
 234, 236, 238, 239
 new birth, 170

- Nicene Creed, 108, 109, 112, 135, 166, 174, 180
- Nīsān of Erbil, 36
- Nisibis, 25, 30, 32–37, 65, 66, 67, 83, 84, 117, 202, 213, 218, 219
- Nomocanon of ‘Abdīshō’ of Nisibis, 181, 182, 196, 213, 216, 217, 220, 221
- Nūh Pūnīqoyo of Mārdīn, 51, 54, 81, 161
- numismatics. *See* coins
- nuns, 28, 29, 35, 188, *See also* monks
- Ohanēs, Catholicos, 46, 47, 50, 60
- ’ōnīthā*, 133, 149, 261
- Orbelian family, 29
- Origen, 155
- orthodoxy, 6, 112, 116, 132, 135, 136, 137
- Ostan, 21, 48, 59, 60, 66, 74, 76
- Ottomans, 2, 8, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 50, 51, 58, 182, 184, 264
- Pact of ‘Umar. *See* *dhimmī* regulations
- paršōpā*, 125, 127, 133, 134, 147
- pastoralism, 95, 96
- patriarchal succession, 45, 53, 55, 69, 82, 85, 86, 88, 196, 199, 214, 217, 218, 221, 269
- patriarchates, 25, 26, 27, 30, 51, 52, 53, 57, 76, 82, 83, 87
- patronage, 9, 25, 29, 37, 38, 45, 55, 56, 57, 69, 74, 171, 188, 211, 257
- pentarchy, 233
- Pentecost, 119, 122, 123, 146, 159, 205, 206, 228, 235, *See also* liturgy:Pentecost
- Persia, 2, 9, 14, 212
- Persian language, 165
- Persians, 24, 54, 57, 74, 79, 80, 83, 84
- Pīr Bey, 76
- political instability, 9, 16, 69, 220, 255
- Polycarp, 238
- power, miraculous, 112, 147, 159, 177, 242–51, 256
- protection, 75, 147–50, 160, 163, 171, 204, 213, 249, 250, 256
- Protonike, 232
- Qādī Šafī al-Dīn ‘Īsā, 101
- qādīs*, 53, 66, 75, 87, 97, 101, 261
- Qarā ‘Uthmān, 15, 17, 18, 19, 47, 49, 56, 66, 77, 95
- Qarā Yūsuf, 15, 18, 49, 80, 97
- Qaraqorum, 117
- Qarāqūyunlū Tūrkmen, 8, 15–23, 27, 29, 36, 45–52, 54–59, 62, 65, 68, 71, 77, 87, 97, 100, 101, 148, 195, 214, 215, 224, 265
- Qartmīn, 34
- Qāsim b. Jahāngīr Āqqūyunlū of Mārdīn, 23, 51, 54
- Qībchāq, 95
- Qilīch Ašlān b. Aḥmad, 77
- qnōmā*, 110, 116, 124–27, 132, 133, 134, 136–41, 145, 156, 234, 261
- Qur’ān, 57, 114, 128, 141, 226
- Qutlū Bey, 95
- Qyāmtā (Easter), 123, 153, 185, *See also* liturgy:Qyāmtā (Easter)
- Rabban David of Salmās, 36
- Rabban Emmanuel, 152, 205, 206, 231, 233, 244
- Rabban Hōrmīzd, 35, 83, 103, 225, 240, 243
- Rabban Hōrmīzd, monastery, 30, 35, 36, 68, 105, 106, 217, 252
- ra’īs*. *See* chiefs
- Ramaḍān, 185
- ransom, 55, 71, 77, 78, 84
- redemption, 130
- refugees, 29, 119
- rēshānā*. *See* chiefs
- rituals, 90, 97, 160–63, 172, 181–88, 191, 194, 232, 254, 255, 274, *See also* liturgy; sacraments
- Roman Catholics, 273
- Rome, 2, 205, 217, 233, 252
- Ruhā, 17, 22, 117
- rulership. *See* governance
- Rūmī, 256
- Rustam b. Maqšūd, 46, 54
- Rustam Ibn Tarkhan, 62
- Sabrīshō’ of Ḥiṣn-Kayf, 33, 163, 209
- Sabrīshō’ of Karkā d-Bēth Slōkh, 240
- sacraments, 121, 159, 161, 163, 177, 181, 183, 184, 186, 191, 194, 196, 197, 198, 200–203, 205, 207, 230, 231, 232, 254, 255, *See also* baptism; Eucharist; rituals
- sacristan, 39, 80, 173, 188, 211, 261
- Safavid dynasty, 10, 14, 16

- Şafawiyya, 73, 87
Şaḥīḥ Muslim, 191
 saints, 9, 10, 56, 110, 111, 144, 159, 192, 193, 223, 225, 234, 242, 243, 245, 246, 248–51, 256
 Şalah, 34
 Şalībā b. Yuḥannā of Mosul, 223
 Salmās, 25, 32, 36, 105
 Salmō, 37
 salvation, 131, 144, 147, 150–56, 157, 160, 161, 162, 168, 172, 176, 204, 210, 211, 226, 254
 Samarqand, 3, 13, 20, 48, 207
 Sartaq, 98
 Sasanian Persian Empire, 9, 128, 205, 222
 Satan, 151, 152, 169
 seasons, 122, 123, 181, 183, 184, 194
 sectarianism, 24, 47, 48, 72, 81, 83, 84, 132, 136, 141, 161, 184, 233, 238
 Seleucia-Ctesiphon, 9, 205, 233, 238
 self-deprecations, 208, 209
 Selim I, 14, 19
 Shāfi ʿ, 65, 191
 Shāh Ismāʿīl, 10, 14, 16
 Shāh Muḥammad b. Qarā Yūsuf, 36, 55, 56, 57, 214
shahāda, 57, 262
 Shāhrukh b. Tīmūr, 14, 15, 17–22
 Sharaf of Bidlis, 56
sharīʿa, 70, 101
 Shaykh ʿAdī, 2
 Shaykh Ḥasan b. Qarā ʿUthmān, 23, 62, 65, 74
 Shaykh Ḥaydar, 73, 87
 Shaykh Junayd, 87
 Shēmawon, Armenian vardapet, 46, 60
 Shēmawon, Catholicos, 60
 Shem ʿon IV, Catholicos, 30, 31, 35, 38, 53, 67, 133, 195, 200, 212, 213, 215, 217, 219, 270, 271
 Shem ʿon Shanqlāwāy, 228
 Shem ʿon VII b. Māmā, Catholicos, 252, 272, 273
 Shem ʿon, Catholicos (1430s), 210, 214, 242, 269, 270, 271
 Shem ʿon, monk of Mār Āwgēn, 218
 Shem ʿun of Gargar, 82
 Shiites, 24, 257
 Shim ʿon Khalifa, 86
 Shkhāhtā (“the Finding of the Cross”), 3, 119, 126, 129, 133, 136, 145, 147, 151, 204, 230, 239, 262
 Shlēmōn of Baṣra, 220, 241, 269
shuruʿ Umar. *See dhimmī* regulations
 Sīdōs, 35, 36
 Siʿird, 18, 25, 33, 36, 219
 Siwnikʿ, 29, 60, 63
 social integration, 7, 185, 259
 sovereignty, 20, 95, 101, 144
 St. George, 33, 145, 147, 149, 159, 204, 225, 239, 240, 243, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250
 St. Theodore, church in Āmid, 66
 Stepʿannos II, 86
 Stepʿannos IV, 86
 Subbārā (Advent/Annunciation), 122, 162
 Sufis, 87, 256
 Sulaymān Bey, 21
 Sulaymān, Ayyubid sultan of Ḥiṣn-Kayf, 52
 Sullāqā (Ascension), 123, 153, *See also* liturgy:Sullāqā (Ascension)
 Sulṭān Ḥamza b. Qarā ʿUthmān, 18, 47, 56, 57, 66, 73, 74
 Sulṭān Murād b. Yaʿqūb b. Uzun Ḥasan, 24
 Sunday, 122, 132, 140, 172, 177, 183, 184
sunna, 256
 Sunnis, 24, 47, 98, 257
 Sūryāyē/Sūryoyē, 51, 103
 Syria, 2, 7, 8, 26, 27, 72, 82, 182, 184, 185, 191
 Syriac, 24, 25, 27, 118, 243
 Syriac Orthodox, 25, 26, 27, 29, 34, 36, 37, 46, 47, 51–54, 59, 65, 67, 74, 75, 76, 78, 81–87, 113, 114, 121, 124, 125, 128, 132, 140, 161, 165, 184, 216, 217, 224, 225, 233, 267, 272, 273
 Tʿovma Metsopʿetsʿi, 22, 34, 48, 56, 57, 66, 75, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 207, 223, 224
 Tabriz, 8, 14, 15, 17, 22, 25, 35, 36, 41, 43, 46, 50, 53, 59, 61, 63, 79, 83, 96, 100, 101
Takhsā d-Kāhmē, 165
takbt, 22, 262
 Tal Zqīpā, 38, 105
 Talkēpē, 39, 105, 137
tamghā, 59, 60, 101, 262
Tāriḫ-i ʿālam-ārāyi Amīnī, 73
 Tatʿew, 34, 54, 60
 Tatian, 238
 taxes, 24, 44, 45, 49, 55, 58, 59, 60, 61, 69, 75, 78, 101

- textured membership. *See* membership
- Theodora Komnene, 95
- Theodore b. Kūnāy, 157, 169
- Theodore of Mopsuestia, 9, 111, 135, 155, 170, 236, 237, 238
- theology, 113, 114, 115, 117–25, 128, 129, 131, 132, 133, 136–40, 141–44, 156, 158, 167, 181, 204, 205, 224, 225, 230, 236–39, *See also* doctrine
- theopaschite theology, 236, 238, 262
- theōsis*, 110
- Tigris, 1, 7, 32, 212, 222
- Ṭihṛānī, Abū Bakr, 73, 76, 77, 95, 101
- Timothy II, Catholicos, 114, 163, 167, 169, 170, 171, 172, 188, 193, 195–200, 203, 204, 207, 209, 213, 214, 217, 220, 237, 242
- Timothy, Metropolitan of Ḥiṣn-Kayf and Nisibis, 33
- Ṭimūr Lang, 1, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 75, 100
- Timurid dynasty, 3, 13, 15–21, 48, 71, 263
- Trebizond, 27, 57, 95
- Trinity, 90, 110, 114, 115, 116, 119–25, 127, 128, 129, 135, 136, 138, 141, 142, 156, 231, 235, 253, 273
- Ṭūr ‘Abdīn, 25, 26, 34, 37, 54, 58, 67, 76, 83, 84, 106, 113, 216, 267, 271
- Türkmen, 8, 10, 15, 23–27, 39, 41, 48, 50, 52, 55, 56, 57, 59, 65, 68, 71, 76, 77, 91, 95, 104, 209, 213, 242
- Turks, 74, 90, 99, 103
- al-Ṭurtūshī, 43
- ‘*ulamā*’, 4, 6, 9, 10, 42, 57, 62, 65, 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 80, 85, 101, 185, 191, 262
- Ulugh Bey b. Shāhrukh, 3, 20, 48
- Unity of God, 124, 125
- Ūrmī, 32, 43
- Uzun Ḥasan b. ‘Alī, Āqqūyunlū ruler, 15, 16, 18, 21–24, 33, 43, 45, 46, 56, 57, 58, 60, 63, 67, 68, 69, 76, 77, 84, 87, 95, 101, 224
- Vagharshapat, 27, 52
- Valentinus, 238
- vardapets, 54, 76, 79, 80, 223, 262
- vestments, 39
- violence, 10, 16, 40, 44, 45, 69, 72, 74, 76, 81, 88, 89, 95, 144, 148, 195, 213
- war. *See* violence
- al-Warrāq, Abū ‘Īsā Muḥammad b. Hārūn, 128
- William of Rubruck, 98, 117
- women, 29, 182, 188, 189, 191, 192
- Yakob Ovsannats‘i, 80
- Yaldā (Nativity), 123, 127, 130, 132, 140, 153, 154, 162, 226, 227, *See also* liturgy: Yaldā (Nativity)
- Ya‘qūb b. Qarā ‘Uthmān, 66
- Ya‘qūb b. Uzun Ḥasan, 16, 24, 41, 46, 53, 54, 57, 60, 63, 68, 75, 86, 95, 96, 101, 210, 212, 213
- Yezidis, 2, 24, 115, 130, 142, 253, 254, 257
- Yōḥannān of Zō‘bī, 235
- Yōḥannān Penkāyā, 133, 138, 152, 157, 170, 178, 180
- Yōḥannān Sullāqā, 31, 252, 273, 274
- Yūḥannon b. Shayallāh of Mārdīn, 37, 53, 65, 67, 68, 75, 84
- Yūsuf, Persian convert, 79, 80, 83, 84
- al-Zāhir Jaqmaq, Mamlūk Sultan, 22
- Zak‘aria I, catholicos of Aght‘amar, 86
- Zak‘aria II, catholicos of Aght‘amar, 86
- Zak‘aria III, catholicos of Aght‘amar, 50, 52, 56, 59, 74, 76, 86
- Zarnī, 35
- zīj of Ulugh Bey b. Shāhrukh, 3
- Zoroastrians, 4, 141, 257

Other Titles in the Series

- Agricultural Innovation in the Early Islamic World: The Diffusion of Crops and Farming Techniques, 700–1100*, Andrew M. Watson
- Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Hadith*, G. H. A. Juynboll
- Social History of Timbuktu: The Role of Muslim Scholars and Notables 1400–1900*, Elias N. Saad
- Sex and Society in Islam: Birth Control before the Nineteenth Century*, B.F. Musallam
- Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: Trade, Crafts and Food Production in an Urban Setting 1520–1650*, Suraiya Faroqhi
- Unlawful Gain and Legitimate Profit in Islamic Law: Riba, Gharar and Islamic Banking*, Nabil A. Saleh
- Men of Modest Substance: House Owners and House Property in Seventeenth-Century Ankara and Kayseri*, Suraiya Faroqhi
- Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law: The Origins of the Islamic Patronate*, Patricia Crone
- Economic Life in Ottoman Jerusalem*, Amnon Cohen
- Mannerism in Arabic Poetry: A Structural Analysis of Selected Texts (3rd Century AH/9th Century AD – 5th Century AH/11th Century AD)*, Stefan Sperl
- The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*, Beatrice Forbes Manz
- Popular Culture in Medieval Cairo*, Boaz Shoshan
- Early Philosophical Shiism: The Ismaili Neoplatonism of Abu Ya‘qub Al-Sijistani*, Paul E. Walker
- Indian Merchants and Eurasian Trade, 1600–1750*, Stephen Frederic Dale
- Palestinian Peasants and Ottoman Officials: Rural Administration around Sixteenth-Century Jerusalem*, Amy Singer
- Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period*, Tarif Khalidi
- Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Ilkhanid War, 1260–1281*, Reuven Amitai-Preiss
- Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350*, Michael Chamberlain
- The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlis*, Jane Hathaway
- Hierarchy and Egalitarianism in Islamic Thought*, Louise Marlow
- Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire: A Cultural History of Islamic Textiles*, Thomas T. Allsen
- State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540–1834*, Dina Rizk Khoury
- The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society*, Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann (eds.)
- The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History*, Peter Jackson
- European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: The Merchants of Genoa and Turkey*, Kate Fleet
- The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul*, Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters

The Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran: Silk for Silver, 1600–1730, Rudolph P. Matthee

The Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam: From Polemic to History, G. R. Hawting

A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire, Şevket Pamuk

Classical Arabic Biography: The Heirs of the Prophets in the Age of Al-Ma'mun, Michael Cooperson

Empire and Elites after the Muslim Conquest: The Transformation of Northern Mesopotamia, Chase F. Robinson

Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam: Mamluk Egypt, 1250–1517, Adam Sabra

Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia, Thomas T. Allsen

Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism, Bruce Masters

Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily: The Royal Diwan, Jeremy Johns

Law, Society and Culture in the Maghrib, 1300–1500, David S. Powers

Revival and Reform in Islam: The Legacy of Muhammad al-Shawkani, Bernard Haykel

Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition, Yohanan Friedmann

Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire, Gábor Ágoston

Marriage, Money and Divorce in Medieval Islamic Society, Yossef Rapoport

The Empire of the Qara Khitai in Eurasian History: Between China and the Islamic World, Michal Biran

Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World, Ruby Lal

Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran, Beatrice Forbes Manz

Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World, Adam J. Silverstein

Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds, Anne F. Broadbridge

Justice, Punishment and the Medieval Muslim Imagination, Christian Lange

The Shiites of Lebanon under Ottoman Rule, 1516–1788, Stefan Winter

Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire, Madeline Zilfi

The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World, Baki Tezcan

The Legendary Biographies of Tamerlane: Islam and Heroic Apocrypha in Central Asia, Ron Sela

Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: From Surrender to Coexistence, Milka Levy-Rubin

The Origins of the Shi'a: Identity, Ritual, and Sacred Space in Eighth-Century Kufa, Najam Haider

Politics, Law, and Community in Islamic Thought: The Taymiyyan Moment, Ovamir Anjum

The Power of Oratory in the Medieval Muslim World, Linda G. Jones

Animals in the Qur'an, Sarra Tlili

The Logic of Law Making in Islam: Women and Prayer in the Legal Tradition, Behnam Sadeghi

Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World, Kaya Şahin

Law and Piety in Medieval Islam, Megan H. Reid
Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam, Asma Sayeed
The New Muslims of Post-Conquest Iran: Tradition, Memory, and Conversion,
Sarah Bowen Savant
The Mamluk City in the Middle East: History, Culture, and the Urban Landscape,
Nimrod Luz
Disability in the Ottoman Arab World, 1500–1800, Sara Scalenghe
The Holy City of Medina: Sacred Space in Early Islamic Arabia, Harry Munt
Muslim Midwives: The Craft of Birthing in the Premodern Middle East, Avner
Giladi
*Doubt in Islamic Law: A History of Legal Maxims, Interpretation, and Islamic
Criminal Law*, Intisar A. Rabb
*The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Hanafi School in the Early Modern
Ottoman Empire*, Guy Burak
Sexual Violation in Islamic Law: Substance, Evidence, and Procedure, Hina Azam
Gender Hierarchy in the Qur'an: Medieval Interpretations, Modern Responses,
Karen Bauer
*Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran: Sharaf al-Din 'Ali Yazdi and the Islamicate
Republic of Letters*, Ilker Evrim Binbaş
*Authority and Identity in Medieval Islamic Historiography: Persian Histories
from the Peripheries*, Mimi Hanaoka
The Economics of Ottoman Justice: Settlement and Trial in the Sharia Courts,
Metin Coşgel and Boğaç Ergene
*The Mystics of al-Andalus: Ibn Barrajan and Islamic Thought in the Twelfth
Century*, Yousef Casewit
Muhammad's Heirs: The Rise of Muslim Scholarly Communities, 622–950,
Jonathan E. Brockopp
The First of the Modern Ottomans: The Intellectual History of Ahmed Vasif,
Ethan Menchinger
*Non-Muslim Provinces under Early Islam: Islamic Rule and Iranian Legitimacy
in Armenia and Caucasian Albania*, Alison Vacca
Women and the Making of the Mongol Empire, Anne F. Broadbridge
Slavery and Empire in Central Asia, Jeff Eden

