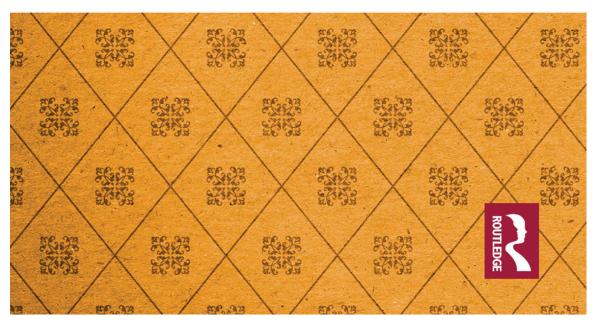# MEMORIES OF UTOPIA

THE REVISION OF HISTORIES AND LANDSCAPES IN LATE ANTIQUITY

Edited by
Bronwen Neil and Kosta Simic

Memories of Utopia

These essays examine how various communities remembered and commemorated their shared past through the lens of utopia and its corollary, dystopia, providing a framework for the reinterpretation of rapidly changing religious, cultural, and political realities of the turbulent period from 300 to 750 CE.

The common theme of the chapters is the utopian ideals of religious groups, whether these are inscribed on the body, on the landscape, in texts, or on other cultural objects. The volume is the first to apply this conceptual framework to Late Antiquity, when historically significant conflicts arose between the adherents of four major religious identities: Graeco-Roman 'pagans'; newly dominant Christians; diaspora Jews, who were more or less persecuted, depending on the current regime; and the emerging religion and power of Islam. Late Antiquity was thus a period when dystopian realities competed with memories of a mythical Golden Age, variously conceived according to the religious identity of the group. The contributors come from a range of disciplines, including cultural studies, religious studies, ancient history, and art history, and employ both theoretical and empirical approaches. This volume is unique in the range of evidence it draws upon, both visual and textual, to support the basic argument that utopia in Late Antiquity, whether conceived spiritually, artistically, or politically, was a place of the past but also of the future, even of the afterlife.

Memories of Utopia will be of interest to historians, archaeologists, and art historians of the later Roman Empire and those working on religion in Late Antiquity and Byzantium.

Bronwen Neil, FAHA, is Professor of Ancient History at Macquarie University, Australia, and Research Associate of the Department of Biblical and Ancient Studies at the University of South Africa. She is director of the Centre for Ancient Cultural Heritage and Environment (CACHE) at Macquarie University. Her publications on Late Antiquity include studies of letter-writing, gender, bishops of Rome, dream interpretation, and hagiography.

Kosta Simic (PhD Australian Catholic University, 2018) is a sessional lecturer and postdoctoral researcher in the School of Theology at the Australian Catholic University, Brisbane. He has published two books and several articles on Byzantine hymnography.

Routledge Monographs in Classical Studies

For more information on this series, visit: www.routledge.com/classicalstudies/series/RMCS

Memories of Utopia

The Revision of Histories
and Landscapes in Late Antiquity

**Edited by Bronwen Neil
and Kosta Simic**

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

LONDON AND NEW YORK

Contents

9 Two foreign saints in Palestine

Responses to religious conflict in the fifth to seventh centuries

Pauline Allen and Kosta Simic

Narratives of religious conflict during the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries are mostly dominated by debates between adherents and opponents of the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE) (Frend 1972; Menze 2008). In other words, these narratives are concerned broadly speaking with utopian or dystopian ideas of the religious past. Miracle stories abound in this literature, as do hagiographical works either in favour of or against the controversial Council. One of the salient components of this literature is the attention paid to the Theotokos—in fact we could say that mariology (the study of Mary) came to the fore in Christological debate particularly in the sixth and seventh centuries (Brubaker and Cunningham 2001). Another feature of the literature of this period is the debates about Judaism, and monastic literature, particularly from Palestine. In this period Palestine is mostly anti-Chalcedonian, with some notable exceptions, such as the *lives* of Chalcedonian monastics written by Cyril of Scythopolis (Schwartz 1939; Price 1991) and John Moschus (Nissen 1938: 351–76; Wortley 1992),[1] and to a lesser extent the early seventh-century *Life* of George of Choziba (House 1888: 95–144, 336–59; Vivian and Athanassakis 1994: 35–92).

Of the two hagiographical works under discussion in this chapter, one, that of Peter the Iberian, has an anti-Chalcedonian agenda (Horn and Phenix 2008: 2–281),[2] which harks back to the perceived unifying utopian force of the Council of Nicaea, while the second, that of Anastasius the Persian, concerns the conflict between Christianity and Zoroastrianism in Palestine in the first part of the seventh century, and is thus concerned with the dystopian attitudes of Persian converts to Christianity (Flusin 1992; Horn and Phenix 2008: 15 n.7). In neither of these hagiographies do we find advocacy of the cult of Mary, but there are references to Jews, ranging from the banal to the surprising. In addition, the Cross of Christ features prominently, particularly in the account about Anastasius, which can be explained on historical grounds, as we shall see.

The hagiographers

Let us consider first the authors of these two works. The *Life* of Peter the Iberian was ostensibly composed by a close associate of the saint, John Rufus, who would have been ordained priest in Antioch before 476. He was apparently a native of

Arabia, of which Roman province the *Life* exhibits detailed knowledge (Steppa 2002: 58, 164; Menze 2008: 104, 160, 229–30, 233–4; Horn and Phenix 2008: ix–xcii). Another anti-Chalcedonian work is attributed to him, namely the *Plerophoriae* or *Assurances* (*CPG* 7507), which is a collection of miracle stories intended to demonstrate the wrongs perpetrated by the Council of 451. It is supposed that Peter died in 491 and his *Life* was composed by his supposed episcopal successor, John Rufus (Steppa 2002: 58), to commemorate the first anniversary of the saint's death. Otherwise concrete details are scarce.

We turn next to the author of one of the accounts of the martyrdom of Anastasius the Persian, composed by an intimate of this saint, possibly a fellow monk in the Palestinian monastery where Anastasius finally engaged in the monastic life. This author has many concrete details about the martyr at his disposal, which indicate his relationship with the martyr and the fact that he too, like Anastasius, suffered under the Persian occupation of Palestine in the first quarter of the seventh century. This document probably dates from shortly after the martyr's death on 22 January 628.

Let us turn now to the contents of these two hagiographical works, in which travel plays an important part in their responses to conflict, as can be seen from the list of their major destinations in the appendix to this chapter (Ellis and Kidner 2004; Gorce 1925; Cribiore 2013: 34).

The Life *of Peter the Iberian*

According to the hagiographer, Peter was born in Georgia, a country which, like Armenia, at the time rejected the Council of Chalcedon, although after 583 the Council gained acceptance in Peter's native land. Peter's birth name was Nabarnugios (ch. 5; 7), and he was a Christian prince of the realm of Georgia. Even as a child, according to the hagiographer, he effected miracles, but this did not stop him from being hidden in the care of a pious woman so that he could escape the Persians, who, because of his rank, wanted him as a hostage (ch. 9; 11). When Nabarnugios was about twelve years old, his father, Bosmarios, the king of Georgia, sent the boy to Constantinople to the court of Theodosius II because he 'preferred the friendship of the Romans as Christians rather than the assistance of the impious Persians,' that is, those who practised Zoroastrianism (ch. 24; 31). Peter then grew up as a hostage of the imperial family and embraced the ascetic life in private from this early age. In his bedroom in the palace, we are told, he had a shrine of relics belonging to Persian martyrs, before which he would sleep and honour the martyrs with incense, lights, and prayers (ch. 26; 35). At a later date (438 CE) these relics were deposited by Cyril of Alexandria in a *martyrion* on the Mount of Olives. Although Peter was kept under guard lest he escape and thereby damage relations between Georgia and Byzantium (ch. 29; 41), he managed to make his way to Jerusalem in his pursuit of the ascetic life. From Jerusalem he went to Gaza (ch. 54; 77), where eventually he was to build his own monastery in Maiuma. However, at this juncture reprisals against anti-Chalcedonians became so severe that they were forced to go to Egypt (ch. 62; 91), which had become a

haven for those opposed to the Council of 451 and continued as such well into the sixth century, as we can see from the large numbers of bishops, clergy, and monastics who ended up there after the Chalcedonian restoration by Emperor Justin I in 518. As Peter's biographer relates, 'the city of Alexandria became heaven in those days' (ch. 96; 145). After about twenty years in Egypt, where he visited many monasteries as well as Alexandria and Oxyrhynchus, Peter returned from Alexandria to Ashkelon in Palestine (ch. 105; 157), and from there he went to Arabia to restore his health in two hot springs or *onsen* after a life of punishing asceticism (ch. 113–18; 167–77), working many miracles along the way. Still in Arabia he travelled to Madaba before returning to Jerusalem (chs. 127–30; 187–93), only to go to Gaza again (ch. 137; 201), from where he went on to Phoenicia (ch. 141; 207). Subsequent travels took Peter and his companions to Tripoli, Beirut, Tyre, Caesarea, Ptolemaïs, and Jamnia, where he eventually died in 491. According to the account of the hagiographer, Peter's whole life was a series of miracles which demonstrated the evil and dystopia embodied in the Council of Chalcedon.

There are several sub-themes in John Rufus's depiction of Peter's responses to the religious conflict caused by the Council of 451. One of these is the significant role played by the monks of the anti-Chalcedonian movement, particularly in Palestine and Egypt, whose networks were extensive. Peter's responses to the conflict were in fact more comprehensive in Egypt than in Palestine because of the demise of anti-Chalcedonianism in Palestine, particularly in monastic circles, and the more homogeneous character of Egyptian monasticism. His continual travelling in order to connect with monastic communities was another feature of his response (Horn 2004). Another sub-theme in the hagiographer's report is the importance of the Cross, a feature that we shall also find even more pronounced in the hagiography of Anastasius the Persian from the seventh century. In the *Life* of Peter there are so many references to the Cross that in the recent edition and translation of this work it is asserted that the Cross became a characteristic of anti-Chalcedonian monks, whether it referred to the fact that they were taking up the Cross in a symbolic way to follow Christ or to a part of their monastic dress (Horn and Phenix 2008: 24 n.3; Horn 2006: 338–42). On their travels Peter and his companions took with them a relic of the Cross, which effected miracles as they went along (ch. 34; 47). Much is made in the *Life* of Helena's discovery of the Cross (ch. 56; 80–1), which enables the hagiographer to give a retrospective account of Peter's life in the imperial family, where he was given a small part of the relic:

> He covered it in a [little bit of] wax, which he wrapped up in a clean cloth to keep it secure with honour, and placed it in a golden box. Every Sunday and especially on solemn feasts, he would take it out, and having blessed himself with it and kissed it, he would return it again to its place.
>
> (ch. 57; 83)

Not surprisingly for a saint who spent much of his time in Palestine, Peter had encounters with the indigenous populations of Jews and Samaritans. Sometimes John Rufus reports in banal fashion the effrontery of the Jews against Christ

(ch. 55; 79) and their godlessness (ch. 77; 111), but in another part of the *Life* (ch. 154; 227) Peter is credited with having converted a Jewish girl to Christianity (presumably of the anti-Chalcedonian variety), and eventually to the ascetic vocation. Elsewhere (ch. 170; 247–9) Peter is said to have cast out demons not only from believers but also from Jews and Samaritans. In the same episode the saint is said to have exorcised a demon from a Jew by making the sign of the cross on his stomach, after which the man, restored to health, became a Christian. According to his *Life*, the saint continually worked miracles during his travels, which in a utopian way proved the orthodoxy of Nicaea and of the anti-Chalcedonians, as opposed to the evil ways of the proponents of the Council of 451.

The **Martyrdom** *of Anastasius the Persian*

From 581, several acts of the *Martyrdom* of Anastasius the Persian were composed (Flusin 1992/1: 9). The one we are dealing with here was seemingly written by one of the monks in the monastery outside Jerusalem where Anastasius eventually embraced the ascetic life. The hagiographer claims to have been commissioned to write the work (ch. 5; 45–7), which significantly opens with a summary of the Nicene creed, rather than the creed of Chalcedon. From the narrative it appears that Anastasius, like Peter the Iberian, was a foreigner, a Persian born south of modern Teheran, who later changed his birth name from Magoundat ('created by the *magi*'). He himself, like his father, was a *magus*, and went to Seleucia-Ctesiphon where he joined the army of Shah Chosroes II (r. 591–628 CE) (ch. 6: 47). About this time (614 CE) the Persians sacked Jerusalem, destroying many religious sites but keeping the Cross, which they took back to Persia with them (ch. 6–7; 47–9). It was this encounter with the Cross in Persia that introduced the Zoroastrian Anastasius to Christianity, an episode which, together with the veneration of the Cross especially in Palestine, helps to explain the centrality of this sacred relic to the entire hagiography. We can also note that the restoration of the Cross by Emperor Heraclius took place in Jerusalem in 630, two years after the martyrdom of Anastasius (Flusin 1992/2: 293–319; Drijvers 2002: 175–90). The march with Chosroes's army reputedly took the troops as far as Chalcedon, which may be a utopian adumbration of Anastasius's subsequent religious life in what we suppose was a Chalcedonian monastery outside Jerusalem. When the army took a U-turn and went east to Hierapolis (Syriac: Mabbug, in eastern Syria), the saint took the opportunity to desert and take lodging with a Persian Christian there who was a jeweller (ch. 8; 49). Shortly thereafter Anastasius asked his host to arrange for him to be baptised, at a time when baptism was a capital offence in the region, and he was then inspired by seeing icons of martyrs in the local church (ch. 9; 51). After Hierapolis, the martyr went to Jerusalem to another jeweller, and was finally baptised with the permission of Modestus, who was to become the patriarch of that city for a short tenure in 630 (ch. 10; 51). In an interesting aside, the biographer relates that Anastasius did an eight-day retreat after

his baptism before going to the monastery of St Anastasius near Jerusalem to become a monk (ch. 11; 53), probably in 619–20 CE. Here he was taught Greek and the Psalter, combining his religious duties with looking after the kitchen and the garden (ch. 12; 53), a task that reminds us of a story in John Moschus's *Spiritual Meadow* (ch. 226; Nissen 1938: 360; Wortley 1992: 204), where a newly recruited brother in Egypt performed these duties for seven years. Enter the demons. They torment Anastasius and tell him to return to his Zoroastrian religion and his calling as a *magus*. Naturally Anastasius refuses, being supported by the abbot of the monastery, and shortly afterwards begins his travels, sojourning in Caesarea Palestine, where he goes to pray at the Church of St Euphemia, a significant detail since she was the patron saint of the Council of Chalcedon (ch. 16; 57–9; Schneider 1975). Along the way he encounters a group of *magi* performing their rites in a house. To them Anastasius says, 'Why are you astray and leading others astray by your acts of sorcery?' and in reply the *magi* ask him not to divulge their secrets to anyone. Possibly this encounter is the catalyst for Anastasius's arrest and three-day incarceration by Persian soldiers and his subsequent trial before the marzban, or governor, who insists that he reject Christ (ch. 19; 61) and prostrate himself in the manner of the Persians. The prisoner refuses to do either. The ensuing interrogation is as follows:

MARZBAN: Where are you from? Who are you?

ANASTASIUS: I am a true Christian. But if you wish to know also from where I come, I am a Persian by birth. . . . I was a soldier and a *magus*: I left the darkness and have come into the light.

MARZBAN: Leave this error, return to your first religion, and we shall give you horses, silver, and protection.

This is the first of several occasions when the martyr refuses to reject Christ, a tenacity that is probably meant to contrast with the apostle Peter's three denials of Christ. Anastasius's smart talk enrages the marzban, who incarcerates him in a garrison where he is forced to transport rocks while being chained to another prisoner and bearing chains around his neck and feet. Upon being beaten and interrogated, for the second time the martyr refuses to deny Christ (ch. 21; 63–5), an act which culminates in the marzban's order for him to take the instruments of the *magi*, in particular the collection of sacred lengths of wood used in Zoroastrian fire worship, and to sacrifice, upon which Anastasius provocatively asks what god he is supposed to sacrifice to—the moon, fire, a horse, the mountains, the hills, or the rest? There follows a third confession of the Christian faith by Anastasius (ch. 23; 65–7). In prison he says Psalms all night and is observed by a Jewish prisoner, who has a vision of angels around the martyr-to-be and communicates this to another prisoner, a Christian governor of Scythopolis (chs 25–6; 67–71). When for the fourth time Anastasius refuses to deny Christ, the marzban announces that the Shah has ordered the recalcitrant to be taken to Persia (chs 27–8; 71–3), and accordingly Anastasius and two other Christians (presumably of Persian origin) leave Caesarea with one of the monks. The deportees, we are told,

were farewelled by 'citizens, Christians, Persians and others' (ch. 31; 75), a detail no doubt intended to reinforce in the reader's/hearer's mind the impact which as an ex-Zoroastrian Anastasius had in a foreign country. On the way back to Persia the entourage and its escort travel through Hierapolis, and then possibly to Nisibis, before arriving at Dastagerd, the residence of Shah Chosroes II, north of modern Baghdad (ch. 32; 77). During his interrogation by one of the Shah's officials Anastasius refuses to speak Persian and also, for the fifth time, to deny Christ, despite on this occasion again being promised high honours, golden belts, and horses (ch. 33; 77–9). The rest of the hagiography encompasses the saint's sixth refusal to deny Christ, his removal to another prison, and finally his execution (chs. 36–40; 81–7), just before the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius arrived in Persia on campaign on 1 February 628, where the hagiographer, who had been sent by the abbot of their monastery in Palestine to accompany the martyr, addressed him in Greek (ch. 43; 89–91). After travelling back to Byzantium through Armenia with the emperor, a journey which is said to have taken one year, the hagiographer brought back one of the martyr's tunics to Anastasius's monastery in Palestine where, we are told, it effected a miracle (ch. 44; 91).

The writer of the *Martyrdom* of Anastasius the Persian was, as we have said, apparently an intimate of the martyr. In addition, as we are told that he was Greek-speaking, this goes some way in explaining the structure of the work, because the author was acquainted with the tropes of martyrs' acts. These tropes included the repeated interrogations by an official, usually a pagan or at least someone hostile; the questions to the accused persons about their provenance and religion; the demands to sacrifice; details of the torture of the condemned, and so on (Delehaye 1966). Unlike most other hagiographical works of this period, that concerning Anastasius has a different goal—namely, responding to religious conflict between Christianity and Zoroastrianism. In this account, as in the near-contemporary *Life* of George of Choziba, the preoccupation of the writers is the Persian menace, and the usually all-dominating Council of Chalcedon is in the background, although from reading between the lines it becomes clear that Anastasius was a convert to the Chalcedonian faith and to its monastic life.

Despite their quite remarkable travels in their response to conflict, the efforts of both hagiographers, John Rufus and the monk-companion of Anastasius, were to be rendered otiose when the Persians had to withdraw from Palestine and other occupied western Byzantine territories in c. 630 CE and the Arabs subsequently took over, provoking different responses to different conflicts, although not immediately.

The cults of Peter the Iberian and Anastasius the Persian

The development of Peter's cult fits well in the broader historical context, when the liturgical commemoration of certain saints became increasingly widespread. Peter himself instituted veneration of his several family members as 'recompense for the quiet life that they had conferred upon him and that he had chosen for himself so as to cast off the world' (*Vita* 10). Furthermore, Peter also established a practice in his monastery to perform annual liturgical commemorations of certain

martyrs, when their martyrdoms were read (*Vita* 26). The brethren of his monastic community apparently continued this practice by inserting Peter's name in their calendar and commemorating him annually. As a matter of fact, the annual celebration of the memorial of Peter's death and burial is regarded as the occasion for the composition of his *Life* (Horn 2006: 16–17).

However, there is little doubt that the main driving force behind the establishment of Peter's cult was his anti-Chalcedonian orientation. As one of the most prominent opponents to the Council of Chalcedon, who at the same time followed a rigorous ascetic life, he was an ideal type of a saint whose biography could be used for propaganda purposes. For that reason, his *Life* has been characterised as 'a propagandist composition in hagiographic dress, merging the hero's life with the religious controversy that ensued after the Council of Chalcedon in 451 in the Eastern Empire' (Bitton-Ashkelony 2004: 108). By connecting the ascetic way of life to orthodoxy, John Rufus carried on the well-established tradition in Egypt, where a close link between the monastic movement and the episcopal or patriarchal authority date to Athanasius the Great. During the Arian controversy, which marked Athanasius's entire life, he structured his church based on ascetic ideals and spiritual authority of the patriarch (Brakke 1995: 11–16). As a result, in the following centuries it was not an easy task to distinguish between the bishop's life and the ascetic concerns characteristic of contemporary monasticism. The *Life* of Peter the Iberian needs to be seen in this light, since its author's intention was to present him both as a bishop and a monastic leader (*Vita* 1). Furthermore, in his insistence on Peter's orthodoxy, John Rufus connects the confession of the true faith with asceticism and the Council of Nicaea.

It is hard to determine if Peter's cult involved some other expressions, such as the veneration of sacred images depicting him or whether there were churches dedicated to his name.

The Georgian *Life* of Peter the Iberian, although without value as a source for his life and career, is nevertheless important as a testimony to an attempt to develop his cult in Georgia, too. However, in this *Life* Peter is presented as a Chalcedonian saint, thereby turning on its head the intention of John Rufus and his followers and their utopian/dystopian models of the Council of 451. The translator of the Georgian *Life*, who identifies himself as the monk Makarios, bypassing the chapters of the theological and polemical characters, suppresses Peter's anti-Chalcedonian inclinations. Rather, he limits himself mostly to edifying parts of the *Life* and focuses on Peter's miracles (Marr 1896). Scholars have not determined even the approximate time of the *Life*'s translation. Marr believes that the Georgian translation was produced as late as the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries (Marr 1896: xxi). At any rate, it was made after 583, when Georgia embraced the theological and canonical decisions of the Council of Chalcedon (Horn and Phenix 2008: xxxi).

Many centuries later, namely in the context of the emergence of the national self-determination among the Georgians in the first half of the eighteenth century, there were some attempts to declare him a saint. In 1711, Peter's name was included in the *Georgian chronicle*, and the mention of his name is accompanied

by a prayer addressed to him for the regent Vakhtang (d. 1737) and his wife and children (Marr 1896: xiii). Furthermore, the manuscript containing a short version of Peter's *Life*, which is precisely dated to 1736, is accompanied by an icon of Peter the Iberian (Marr 1896: xvii).

All this is a far cry from the utopian leanings of John Rufus and the anti-Chalcedonian movement in the fifth and sixth centuries, which privileged the Council of Nicaea, but it is also an egregious example of the manipulation of late-antique texts which intended to change a utopian reading of the evidence to a dystopian one.

The cult of Anastasius the Persian is more straightforward and more short-lived than that of Peter, but also more difficult to track precisely. The cult began in Anastasius's lifetime, among the inhabitants of Caesarea Palestine and other places where the saint had travelled in the western Mediterranean. It spread to Persia, before going westward to Rome and Constantinople (Flusin 1992/2: 329–52). The saint's head went to Rome and was deposited before 683 in the monastery of Aquae Salviae, where the apostle Paul was supposedly decapitated (Flusin 1992/2: 370–4), while the rest of the body went to Constantinople (Flusin 1992/2: 381–93). The head had been first deposited in Jerusalem, then as a result of the Arab incursions was brought to Rome, probably by eastern monks, whom we may assume to have been Chalcedonian. This would bear out the argument, suggested previously, that Anastasius's conversion to Christianity was to Chalcedonianism. In any case, the monastery of Aquae Salviae continued in existence until the eleventh century, and presumably the cult of Anastasius endured with it until that time in Rome. In Constantinople, on the other hand, the cult lost its vigour towards the end of the eighth century (Flusin 1992/2: 392–3).

To sum up, the examples of the two prominent Palestinian saints' *lives* discussed in this chapter illustrate how hagiographical texts were mobilised in religious conflicts either to serve the utopian ideals of the anti-Chalcedonians or to present the Persian empire as a dystopia. In addition, Peter's *Life* in its Georgian translation represents a striking illustration of the manipulation of the saint's memory for ideological purposes as it is adapted to the utopian needs of the Chalcedonians. Both *lives* abound with miracles as direct results of the 'true faith.'

Notes

1 The bibliography on Palestinian monasticism is extensive. As a selection we cite Chitty (1995); Hevelone-Harper (2005); Bitton-Ashkelony and Kofsky (2006).
2 The references in what follows refer first to the paragraph numbering and then to the translation.

Bibliography

Primary sources

Antonius Chozibita (1888) Edited by House, C. 'Vita sancti Georgii Chozibitae auctore Antonio Chozibita'. *Analecta Bollandiana*, 7: 95–144, 336–59.

Athanasius of Persia (1992) *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au début du VIIe siècle*, 2 vols. Edited by Flusin, B. Paris: Éditions du CNRS.

Cyril of Scythopolis (1939) *Kyrillos von Skythopolis*, Texte und Untersuchungen, 49/2. Edited by Schwartz, E. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs Verlag.

——— (1991) *The lives of the monks of Palestine*. Translated by Price, R. M. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications.

John Moschus (1938) Edited by Nissen, T. 'Unbekannte Erzählungen aus dem Pratum Spirituale'. *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 38: 351–76.

——— (1992) *The spiritual meadow*. Translated by Wortley, J. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications.

John Rufus (1994) *The life of Saint George of Choziba and the miracles of the most holy Mother of God at Choziba*. Translated by Vivian, T. and Athanassakis, A. N. San Francisco and London: International Scholars Publications, 35–92.

——— (2008) *John Rufus and the lives of Peter the Iberian, Theodosius of Jerusalem, and the monk Romanus*, Writings from the Greco-Roman World, 24. Edited and translated by Horn, C. and Phenix, R. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2–281.

Vita Petri Iberiae (1896) 'Life of Peter the Iberian'. In Marr, N. (ed. and trans.), *Pravoslavnyy Palestinskiy sbornik*, 47, XVI/2. St Petersburg: Imperatorskoe pravoslavnoe Palestinskoe obschestvo, 1–78 (Georgian text), 81–115 (Russian translation).

Secondary sources

Bitton-Ashkelony, B. (2004) '*Imitatio Mosis* and pilgrimage in the *Life of Peter the Iberian*. In Bitton-Ashkelony, B. and Kofsky, A. (eds.), *Christian Gaza in Late Antiquity*. Leiden: Brill, 107–129.

Bitton-Ashkelony, B. and Kofsky, A. (2006) *The monastic school of Gaza*, Supplements to *VC*, 78. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

Brakke, D. (1995) *Athanasius and the politics of asceticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brubaker, L. and Cunningham, M. (eds.) (2001) *The cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium: Texts and images*. Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Chitty, D. (1995) *The desert a city: An introduction to the study of Egyptian and Palestinian monasticism under the Christian empire*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Cribiore, R. (2013) *Libanius the Sophist: Rhetoric, reality, and religion in the fourth century*, Townsend Lectures/Cornell Studies in Classical Philology. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Delehaye, H. (1966) *Les Passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires*, 2nd edn. Subsidia hagiographica, 13 B. Brussels: Société des Bollandistes.

Drijvers, J. (2002) 'Heraclius and the *restitutio crucis*. Notes on symbolism and ideology'. In Reinink, G. and Stolte, B. (eds.), *The reign of Heraclius (610–641): Crisis and confrontation*, Groningen Studies in Cultural Change, 2. Leuven, Paris, and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 175–90.

Ellis, L. and Kidner, F. (eds.) (2004) *Travel, communication and geography in Late Antiquity*. Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Frend, W. (1972) *The rise of the monophysite movement: Chapters in the history of the church in the fifth and sixth centuries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gorce, D. (1925) *Les voyages, l'hospitalité et le port des lettres dans le monde chrétien des IVe et Ve siècles*. Wépion-sur-Meuse, Belgium: Mont Vierge and Paris: A. Picard.

Hevelone-Harper, J. (2005) *Disciples of the desert: Monks, laity, and spiritual authority in sixth-century Gaza*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Horn, C. (2004) 'Weaving the pilgrim's crown: John Rufus's view of Peter the Iberian's journeys in late-antique Palestine'. *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 56: 171–90.

——— (2006) *Asceticism and Christological controversy in fifth-century Palestine: The career of Peter the Iberian*, Oxford early Christian Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Menze, V. (2008) *Justinian and the making of the Syrian orthodox church*, Oxford early Christian Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Peltomaa, L. M., Külzer, A., and Allen, P. (eds.) (2015) *Presbeia Theotokou. The intercessory role of Mary across times and places in Byzantium (4th–9th century)*, Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung, 39. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Schneider, A. (1975) 'Sankt Euphemia und das Konzil von Chalkedon'. In Grillmeier, A. and Bacht, H. (eds.), *Das Konzil von Chalkedon. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 1. Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 291–302.

Steppa, J.-E. (2002) *John Rufus and the world vision of anti-Chalcedonian culture*, Gorgias Dissertations: Ancient Christian Studies, 1. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias.

Wilken, R. (1992) *The land called holy: Palestine in Christian history and thought*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Appendix

1. Travels of Peter the Iberian

429 CE—From Iberia (Georgia) to Constantinople, where he lived as a hostage at the court of Theodosius II

437 CE—Jerusalem

444 CE—Gaza, where he built his own monastery in Maiuma

455 CE—Egypt, where he visited many monasteries as well as Alexandria and Oxyrhynchus

475 CE—Ashkelon (Palestine)

481 CE—Caesarea Palaestina

490 CE—Jerusalem

Post 490 CE—Gaza

2. Travels of Anastasius the Persian [few chronological details available]

c. 614 CE—Teheran to Seleucia-Ctesiphon, where he joined the army of Shah Chosroes

614–15 CE—Chalcedon

Hierapolis (Mabbug), where he deserted from the Persian army

Jerusalem, where he was baptised and went to the monastery of St Anastasius near Jerusalem to become a monk

Diospolis (on coastal road from Jerusalem)

620–27 CE—Caesarea Palaestina, where he prayed at the Church of St Euphemia

Hierapolis

Nisibis?

Before 1 Feb 628 CE—Dastagerd (residence of Chosroes II, 90 km NE of Baghdad), where he was interrogated and executed