

Remembering Exile

The ecclesiastical historians of the fifth century complicated the process of remembering clerical exile as they attempted to define the nature and purpose of Christian flight in a post-Constantinian context. A fleeing bishop was hard to define, let alone defend. Eusebius of Nicomedia, whom we examined in some depth in the last chapter, must be (re)placed in the city from which he was exiled to condemn his flight and label him a heretic, while Athanasius of Alexandria was transferred to a recognizably orthodox space to confirm and defend his status as an orthodox hero. Our last case study turns to yet another man in flight, and one we have encountered before, by way of John Chrysostom. Meletius of Antioch is a particularly difficult figure to define precisely because his status as an exile continues to slip beyond pro- or anti-Nicene categories of orthodoxy. He exists in a liminal space within the ecclesiastical histories of the fifth century. This almost-but-not-quite-orthodox figure therefore demonstrates how exile further destabilizes the orthodox project.

In this final chapter, we will explore once again how the discourse of exile was used to remember and shape Nicene orthodoxy. And yet, this final bishop in flight had a conflicted legacy. We will then begin where we left off in the previous chapter and, here, examine Theodore's reconstruction of the Antiochene landscape. In this examination, however, we will pay attention not to the invading bishop, but to Antioch's thrice-ousted bishop, Meletius. We then turn to a more detailed assessment of Sozomen of Constantinople's reconstruction of Meletius's exile and its role in the struggle for orthodoxy not in Antioch, but in Constantinople. Finally, we compare Sozomen to his Constantinopolitan counterpart, Socrates, who was also heavily invested in promoting a pro-Nicene vision in and around this golden city. As we will conclude, this new Rome, this space of imperial Christianity and the receptacle of Athanasian orthodoxy, wrestled with a legacy of episcopal flight because it continued to threaten to undermine the very orthodoxy it sought to reinforce.

REMEMBERING A NOT-SO-MODEL CITY: ANTIOCH

Theodoret of Cyrrhus frames his assessment of Antioch by comparing Meletius to Athanasius. We have seen this tactic before.¹ He sets the stage by describing for his readers how Eudoxius, a noted Arian and a Cappadocian, invaded Antioch and seized the bishopric after the Nicene representative, Eustathius, was ousted (ca. 332). Allusions to the arrival of Gregory and George of Cappadocia in Alexandria after Athanasius was expelled are clearly at play here.² After receiving conflicting advice about this appointment, Constantius II, a dubious character in this text, calls a second council at Nicaea to settle any concerns related to Eudoxius's appointment, along with any debates related to the Nicene Creed. In order to prevent what would have been a theological disaster, Theodoret states that a divinely inspired earthquake, much like the one at Nicomedia, prevented this second Nicene council from taking place.³ There appeared to be too much support by known heretics for this to have safely ensured a pro-Nicene victory in Nicaea a second time.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, Eudoxius was successfully expelled from Antioch. His mischief, however, would not end there. The Arian bishop then dared to take control of Constantinople. (Again, Athanasius's dealings with Eusebius of Nicomedia lurk in the background.) Eudoxius's flight to Constantinople leaves Antioch without a bishop. Theodoret then announces that the most holy Meletius, not under his own volition (unlike Eudoxius), was elected as the replacement bishop:

It fell out opportunely that the divine Meletius, who was ruling a certain city of Armenia, had been grieved with the insubordination of the people under his rule and was now living without occupation elsewhere. *The Arian faction imagined that Meletius was of the same way of thinking as themselves, and an upholder of their doctrines.* They therefore petitioned Constantius to commit to his hands the reins of the Antiochene church. Indeed, in the hope of establishing their impiety, there was no law that they did not fearlessly transgress; illegality was becoming the very foundation of their blasphemy; nor was this an isolated specimen of their irregular proceedings. (*Eccl. Hist.* 2.27, emphasis mine)⁴

As we learn here, Meletius was elected by an Arian community that believed he would champion their cause. He was awarded the post explicitly for this reason. Meletius went on to win the support of Constantius, and even the Jews and

1. For a description of how Ps.-Martyrius and Palladius revive John Chrysostom's reputation by associating him with Athanasius, see chapter 4.

2. For a description of these two invading bishops from Cappadocia, see chapter 1.

3. In chapter 5, I discuss how an earthquake in Nicomedia is used by Socrates as a description of divine justice.

4. Edition: CPG 6222 and L. Parmentier, F. Scheidweiler, and G. C. Hansen, *Theodoretus Cyri, Kirchengeschichte*, 3rd ed., Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller 19 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998). Translation: *NPNF2*, 33–159, with some slight modifications.

non-Christians came out in droves to greet the new bishop. It appeared that Meletius had the support of the entire city. The true believers (that is, the Nicene Christians) knew the true reason God had allowed this man to be chosen. In the same chapter, Theodoret continues:

On the other hand, the maintainers of apostolic doctrine, who were perfectly well aware of the soundness of the great Meletius and had clear knowledge of his stainless character and wealth of virtue, came to a common vote and took measures to have their resolution written out and subscribed by all without delay. This document both parties as a bond of compromise entrusted to the safekeeping of a bishop who was a noble champion of the truth, Eusebius of Samosata. And when the great Meletius had received the imperial summons and arrived, forth to meet him came all the higher ranks of the priesthood, forth came all the other orders of the church, and the whole population of the city (*Eccl. Hist.* 2.27).

Unbeknownst to the uninitiated, Meletius was actually an orthodox leader, not an Arian ally, so the Nicene community also agreed to this appointment.

Yet Meletius, that arbiter of compromise and secret Nicene agent, was soon cast from his throne, like so many so-called orthodox bishops before him. Theodoret reveals that, in an ill-fated display of his oratory skill, Meletius (purposefully) promoted an analogy of the Trinity that landed him in trouble, because it exposed his Nicene commitments. The Arian community subsequently expelled the bishop and quickly replaced him with the unabashedly anti-Nicene Euzoius. And, predictably, the battle for orthodoxy raged on.

Theodoret's version of Meletius's story clearly reflects his own commitments to an orthodox, pro-Nicene vision of Antioch. By this point, the Meletian faction had won the day. Meletius was an unquestionably orthodox bishop as far as Theodoret was concerned. The bishop's experience of exile looked and sounded a lot like that of Athanasius. But Theodoret's positive assessment of Meletius was far from the consensus. Meletius's legacy remained a highly contested one.

As far as scholars today are able to discern, when Meletius was appointed bishop of Antioch, he was neither a strong advocate for nor a strong opponent of Athanasian theology.⁵ For example, during his lifetime, his election was not recognized by the pro-Nicene community either in Alexandria or in Rome. Even Theodoret must admit that Meletius was exiled almost immediately after he was appointed in 361,

5. See Brian Daley, "The Enigma of Meletius of Antioch," in *Tradition and the Rule of Faith in the Early Church: Essays in Honor of Joseph T. Lienhard, S.J.*, ed. Ronnie J. Rombs and Alexander Y. Hwang (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 128–50; and Oliver Hihn, "The Election and Deposition of Meletius of Antioch: The Fall of an Integrative Bishop," in *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity*, ed. Johan Leemans, Peter Van Nuffelen, Shawn W. J. Keough, and Carla Nicolaye. *Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte* 119 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 357–74. Both authors appear to favor the more popular idea that Meletius's theology was a happy medium. I neither make this claim nor entirely refute it. My goal in this chapter is to show how this enigmatic figure, to borrow from Daley's title, came to be remembered in the writings of fifth-century historians.

which is a conspicuous detail. Yet Meletius also returned under Julian's reprieve and, like Athanasius, found he had been replaced. In this instance, Euzoius, the anti-Nicene champion, and Paulinus, the pro-Nicene Alexandrian hero, had both occupied the city. As far as we know, Athanasius and other powerful bishops in the West recognized Paulinus as the one true bishop. And Richard Flower has made a firm case for the ongoing western influence in Antioch.⁶

And yet it is clear that Meletius continued to influence a competitive Antiochene community, even though he was expelled two more times (365–366 and 371–378). But his firmly pro-Nicene position was remembered only by Theodoret. As we will see, others would not easily agree. The claim to orthodoxy, at least a recognizably Athanasian orthodoxy, appears linked to that climactic moment later historians would frequently hark upon: Meletius's recruitment and baptism of John Chrysostom.

As we explored in chapter 3, the battle over an Antiochene orthodoxy remained a sore spot for John, and it followed him to Constantinople. His relationship with Meletius and his mentorship under Meletius's successor, Flavian, placed John at risk. To state it another way, John's initiation into Christianity under Meletius, specifically his baptism by a possible Arian—or, at the very least, anti-Nicene—sympathizer, remained an embarrassing detail for later pro-Nicene writers. This detail was further exacerbated by John's ongoing praise of Meletius. It was John's continued efforts to promote Meletius's legacy of flight that would force later writers to reconcile this relationship. As we will come to see, it took nothing short of a miracle, provided by a long-dead martyr, to restore Meletius to a respectable, albeit still questionable, orthodox register.

Dead or alive, the places from which and to which a bishop was exiled could make or break his orthodoxy. This consequence is most clearly seen in John Chrysostom's assessment of another Antiochene hero to describe how later writers dealt with Meletius's memory. His martyrology *On St. Babylas* served as a literary model for later writers who were at a loss with what to do with a bishop in flight who was just too difficult to place.

MARTYRS AND BISHOPS IN FLIGHT

St. Babylas was an important martyr in Antioch, and his posthumous links to Meletius were a rehabilitative force, much as Athanasius's exile would later help restore John to Constantinople. But his memory proved efficacious only to those who inhabited the spaces in and around Antioch. Although the bones of the martyr would frequently move, the martyr would find his final resting place just outside the city limits. Christine Shepardson has provided a thorough investigation of

6. Richard Flower, *Imperial Invectives Against Constantius II* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 18–20.

St. Babylas's story in her book *Controlling Contested Places*, in which she highlights the significance of the competition over the memory of this saint's relics at a particularly tense moment in Antiochene history.⁷

As we learn in the contemporaneous writings of John Chrysostom, Libanius of Antioch, and the emperor Julian, the bones of Babylas were moved from Antioch to the neighboring territory of Daphne. The bones were then housed in a church built by Constantius Gallus (a nephew of the emperor Constantine), in 354, which eventually became an important religious site for Christians. Daphne was also the location of a famous Graeco-Roman Temple of Apollo and the oracle of Daphne. As we might expect, the two sacred sites eventually clashed.

Each of our authors preserves a version of the following story. After Julian's rise to power in 361, he sought out the oracle at the Temple of Apollo for guidance. After finding the oracle mute, he discovered that the bones of the martyr Babylas were the cause. So Julian ordered that the bones be removed and returned to their original location. The Christian community apparently used the occasion to challenge the emperor and turned the event into a religious parade. The bones were then reburied in the Antiochene city cemetery and became a site of rebellion.⁸ To add further insult to the emperor's efforts to restore the integrity of the temple, it was soon leveled to the ground by a suspicious fire.⁹

John Chrysostom, whose narrative we will explore in greater detail below, preserves our only evidence of Libanius's report on the events preceding and following the fire (John Chrysostom, *Or.* 60). As Shepardson has noted in detail, Libanius's version demonstrates that this peculiar story remained a sore spot among the non-Christian intellectual elite who lived during and after the event. While Julian's version pits the citizens of Antioch as a whole against the emperor, John and Libanius describe the event as an internal struggle over the sacred history of a city and its sacred places. John would ultimately have the final say on the matter, but all three authors provide us with one revealing detail: the bones of the martyr were returned to the heart of the city. Let us examine why this spatial detail is significant for our understanding of Meletius and his journeys in and out of the city.

In John's martyrology, *On St. Babylas*, and his later homily, *On Babylas against Julian and the Pagans*, he is careful to stress the location and movement of the bones of the martyr to recreate heterotopic spaces around the Antiochene city limits.¹⁰ In *On St. Babylas*, we first learn how Babylas, the bishop of Antioch, was killed.

7. See Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places*, 163–203.

8. Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places*, 74–78.

9. See Julian, *Mis.*, 361B. Ammianus Marcellinus also notes the fire, which is a surprisingly well-documented event that has been preserved from a variety of points of view, see Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gest.* 22.13.1–2. We will soon see Sozomen's perspective on the events and how they relate back to Meletius of Antioch.

10. John Chrysostom, *Bab. Jul.* Editions: SC 362, 90–274; CPG 4348; PG 50, 533–72. Translation: Schatkin and Harkins, *Saint John Chrysostom*. According to Christine Shepardson, the text was written

An uncommonly virtuous man, he called out a tyrannical emperor for his horrific behavior. At the height of the Decian persecution (250), an unnamed emperor unwisely chose to murder a young royal captive who had been moved to Antioch to be raised in the emperor's household. This violated a number of laws, but the boldest offense was the tyrant's decision to attend church after committing such a heinous act. Babylas, upon learning of the emperor's misdeed, expelled the murderer from the church. The emperor did not take too kindly to this and, in turn, chained the bishop and placed him in prison.¹¹ The bishop was eventually killed and buried in a Christian burial plot. At this point in his narrative, John does not say whether this was inside or outside the city. Upon the martyr's request, he was buried with his chains, and both his bones and his chains were considered relics.

Many years later, another figure, Constantius Gallus (Constantine's nephew and then Caesar of the East), transferred these relics from the city of Antioch—here John is careful to say they were *in* the city—to the neighboring retreat of Daphne. According to John, Gallus did this in an effort to build upon and, in turn, influence the healing properties of the sacred site, as well as quell some of the more debauched behaviors that appeared to plague the Temple of Apollo.¹² The transfer proved to be more effective than the young Caesar could have hoped for, and the demon that was housed in the Temple of Apollo was immediately silenced. The temple soon fell under disuse and disrepair and was in serious need of restoration by the time Julian rose to power.

Upon the death of Constantius II in November 361, Julian moved to Antioch and began his many efforts to restore and reform Greek traditions and revive the Roman cult practices across the empire (361–363). After his arrival, he heard about the troubles in the local temple at Daphne and sought to discover the source of its problems. He quickly learned of his brother Gallus's decision to move the bones of the martyr and effectively silence the oracle (or demon) in the temple. John then reports that Julian had the bones moved back to the original burial spot. In a particularly revealing moment, John states:

That he [Babylas] inspired these two individuals [Gallus and Julian] with greater fear than the first person [the original tyrant] is clear from this fact. The one seized,

while John was in Antioch, sometime between spring 379 and spring 380; see Shepardson, "Rewriting Julian's Legacy: John Chrysostom's On Babylas and Libanius' Oration 24," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 2, no. 1 (2009): 99–115. John Chrysostom, *Bab.* Editions: CPG 4347; PG 50, 527–34. Translation: J. Leemans, W. Mayer, P. Allen, and B. Dehandschutter, *Let Us Die That We May Live: Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria c. AD 350–AD 450* (London: Routledge, 2003), 140–48.

11. For a history of imprisonment and the use of chains in late antiquity, see Hillner, *Prison, Punishment, and Penance*, 163–93.

12. We are led to believe that this was due to the behavior of its founder, Apollo, who infamously pursued the nymph Daphne in an effort to sexually assault her. Before Apollo could catch her, however, she was turned into a tree in an effort to preserve her from the insatiable desires of the pursuing god. John narrates the myth in chapter 67.

bound, and executed him, but the other only changed his location. . . . [Julian] should have banished [*apoikizein*] it to the recesses of the mountains. But no less than Apollo himself, the wretch knew the strength of the blessed one and his relationship with God, and he feared that if he did this he would call forth a thunderbolt or some other disease upon himself (*Bab.*, 91).

The original tyrant was a fool to destroy the bishop of Antioch, but Julian was a greater fool for moving the relics back to the burial plot rather than banishing them from the city. He appropriately feared that banishment would go too far, and we soon learn why. As soon as the martyr was transferred, John remarks, a fire took place at the temple and destroyed the roof, along with the image of Apollo held within it.¹³

The story of the martyr is repeated, although in a truncated version, in John's later homily, given on the feast days of both Ignatius and Babylas. In this reflection, John notes how the relics of Babylas find their final repose not inside the city, but outside the city and across the Orontes River (*Bab.* 3). It appears that the holy bones were eventually banished, just not under Julian's directive. Here we learn the significance of this final flight. The relics were cared for and attended to by a man who "shared with him the same dignity" (*Bab.* 10). Although the caretaker goes unnamed, we ought to assume that John is referring to Meletius, who also resided just outside the city limits. As Shepardson stresses, "Equally important for Chrysostom, however, was not just that Meletius and Babylas were both saints, but that Meletius had self-consciously forged a relationship with Babylas while he was still alive, and thus rightfully enjoyed his place next to him in death."¹⁴ While this is certainly a significant detail, even more important is where these relics were placed. At the end of Meletius's career, he was said to have led a community in a church attached to the martyrrium named after Babylas outside of the city. When Meletius died, he found his final resting place in this spot where the martyr was buried. John is careful to stress in his hagiography that Meletius's remains do not stay in Constantinople, where he died, but are moved to the martyrrium just outside of Antioch.¹⁵ And there he remains as Babylas's "fellow-lodger" and "imitator" (*Bab.*, 10).

Meletius's decision to worship and to live outside the city limits was not an impossible detail for John to reconcile. In an earlier hagiography by John, Meletius was said to have carried the city with him into exile—a detail Ps.-Martyrius

13. Soon after this account, John also remarks that God's wrath frequently takes shape in spaces of idolatry. He notes another fire among the rebuilding efforts in Jerusalem when Julian encouraged the Jews to return and rebuild. In that instance, the Jews were also consumed by the flames (*Bab.* 119–20). John's vitriol for the Jews has been well documented. For an excellent recent survey, see Susanna Drake, *Slandering the Jew: Sexuality and Difference in Early Christian Texts* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

14. Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places*, 86.

15. This point is stressed in Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places*, 87; and Wendy Mayer, "Antioch and the Intersection between Religious Factionalism, Place and Power," in *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity*, ed. A. Cain and N. Lenski (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 361.

was also careful to emphasize—and it appears that the bones of Babylas followed him (John Chrysostom, *Melet.* 5).¹⁶ Like Athanasius does in his heterotopic desert, Meletius recreates a holy site where he and Babylas find their final rest, no longer confined by those walls that would determine who was or was not a Christian. The heterotopic spaces were free from those constraints.

The exiled bishop, neither firmly anti-Nicene nor explicitly pro-Nicene, embodied an exilic identity that may have paved the way for John in his later reflections. With the bones of Babylas firmly in his control, Meletius took on the authority of the wandering martyr. Both men were remembered as persecuted figures, and neither could stay put. It is only fitting, then, as John would stress, that the exiled bishop was buried alongside the martyr. Yet, as Sozomen will demonstrate, Meletius's legacy remained just outside the city, like his orthodoxy. For this next historian, the powerful memory of the martyr was not enough to preserve the legacy of the city or those fleeing bishops who were associated with them.

HOW TO REMEMBER ORTHODOX FLIGHT: SOZOMEN OF CONSTANTINOPLE'S *ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY*

The fifth-century historian Sozomen of Constantinople wrote his *Ecclesiastical History* in Constantinople between 440 and 443.¹⁷ Little is known about him beyond the autobiographical details he provided in his works. Like his predecessors, he begins his history by stating that he will begin where Eusebius of Caesarea left off and covers the history of the Christian Church from 323 to 439. With Nicaea's triumph echoed in Sozomen's work, it is clear why it was dedicated to Theodosius II. What stands out, however, is how Nicaea's legacy is intimately tied to Antioch's history.¹⁸ Other locations certainly play a role in his narrative. For instance, Alexandria and its dealings with Athanasius shift in and out of focus as the battle for Nicene terminology made its way across the Roman Empire. According to Sozomen, the West was won through the efforts of both Eusebius of Vercelli and Hilary of Poitiers, who aligned themselves with the Athanasian creed. Antioch proved to be a much more difficult case due to the party politics at play once the so-called apostate, Julian, sowed chaos among the Christian citizens of the empire. While exile played out as a larger plot point throughout Sozomen's broader narrative, it was absolutely central to Antiochene and Constantinopolitan efforts to lay claim to a Nicene presence in the Eastern Roman Empire.

16. For a discussion on the significance of this point, see chapter 4.

17. Sozomen, *Eccl. Hist.* Edition: CPG 6030; PG 67.V. 14 (1253); G. C. Hansen, *Sozomenus Kirchengeschichte*, 2nd ed., Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller 4 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995). Translation: *NPNF2* 2:179–427.

18. For a more detailed exploration of Antioch's history and its role in how various exiles are tied to that space, see chapter 3.

Sozomen thus begins his history by telling us the history of Antioch. Due to the Great Persecution, he remarks, Antioch had no bishop. But after the Council of Nicaea, Eustathius was appointed as its first bishop. Important for our interests, Eustathius is also cited as the first bishop to be expelled in the fallout of Nicene debate. His flight introduced the series of controversies directly related to the Antiochene episcopacy, which included Meletius of Antioch's much-troubled appointment. Sozomen's history is a story of Christian flight. If Eustathius's noted support of Athanasius of Alexandria tells us anything, it is that this legacy of flight was tantamount to this pro-Nicene historian's history of orthodoxy.

Sozomen himself was also no stranger to exile. As he states in a rare autobiographical moment, his family also experienced Christian persecution and flight under Julian's rule: "Hence, although not absolutely persecuted by the emperor, the Christians were obliged to *flee* from city to city and village to village. My grandfather and many of my ancestors were compelled to flee in this manner" (*Eccl. Hist.* 5.14, emphasis mine). Notably, this lineage follows Sozomen's description of Athanasius's fourth exile. We are reminded that Athanasius, too, was expelled during the so-called apostate's reign. For Sozomen, Athanasius's exilic past provides insight into how a Christian persecution could take place even when no imperial edict had been invoked.

Julian's momentary reprieve of all those who had been exiled under Constantius's rule was not an act of benevolence, but a way to sow discord and chaos across the empire. It also gave the emperor an excuse to further persecute men like Athanasius, who rightfully took back his church upon his return. Yet it was this decision to take back control of Alexandria that Julian cited as the reason to expel him a fourth time. Christian persecution took on many forms in this new era, according to Sozomen. It was a secret war, and the many enemies of the church lurked about in disguise—some even claimed to be defenders of the faith. Yet Sozomen's treatment of Meletius's narrative departs significantly from the treatments of it by Theodoret and John. The significant difference is most clearly seen in his account of the transference of Babylas's bones to Antioch in book 5.

Sozomen preserves fragments of Julian's oration, which described how the events unfolded, and provides his own creative interpretation. Here the story sounds familiar, with a few notable differences. According to Sozomen, after Constantius appointed Gallus, Julian's brother, to the position of Caesar, the young man took on the zeal of a true Christian. When he moved to Antioch, he took it upon himself to reform the city and the neighboring territory, including Daphne. Its reputation was notorious, and Gallus sought to cleanse the territory by first installing a house of prayer and then transferring the bones of the martyr Babylas to the area. We are familiar with the events that followed. As soon as the bones took up residence there, the demon who lived in the temple ceased to speak. The demon remained silent even after Julian's arrival close to a decade later, due to the martyr's oppressive presence. Julian went to consult the demon to figure out what

was amiss, but the demon could only admit to the area being filled with dead bodies that silenced the oracle. Julian discerned the cause immediately and had the bones of Babylas removed and returned to the city.

Here Sozomen departs from John's narrative, described above. He states that the bones were moved to that place where they now reside, which meant outside the city. The movement of the relics then transformed into a religious procession that insulted Julian's sensibilities. In Sozomen's version, Julian attempts to punish the Christians for their offensive ritual and arrests several of them, including a young man named Theodore, who is tortured. This proved in vain, because the youth simply sang the same psalm that the crowd sang during their processional and went through the ordeal without any anguish. Rather than make a martyr out of the boy, Julian reluctantly released him, along with his compatriots.

Sozomen then reports on the great fire that took place at Daphne. Both the roof of the temple and the statue of Apollo were destroyed, and credit was ascribed to the departed martyr. In turn, the pagans are said to have blamed the Christians for setting fire to the temple, but no one was found guilty. Sozomen notes many instances when Julian attempted but failed to restore other non-Christian temples outside of Antioch, including the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Fire after fire broke out and laid waste to all of his efforts. It seems the relics of the long-dead martyr had inspired more than a few arsonists across the empire. Nevertheless, these relics were preserved beyond the city walls from the start to finish. This slight change in the reception of the story of the martyr Babylas is central to Sozomen's departure from John's glorification of Meletius and the problem of episcopal succession in and around Antioch.

The next two books in Sozomen's history focus more narrowly on the ecclesiastical battles that plagued Antioch and Constantinople. After Julian's death, and after his successor, Jovian (363–364) sought to undo the damage Julian had wreaked, we hear of the Synod of Antioch, where the Nicene Creed was to be confirmed once and for all. Euzoius, the leader the Arian faction in Antioch, went to great lengths to prevent the creed from being confirmed. He sent a representative to Alexandria to conspire with other known Arians to undermine Athanasius's authority. Jovian, not so easily duped, expelled these men and encouraged Athanasius to return. But, as we have come to expect, the life expectancy of Athanasius's imperial supporters was all too short. Jovian died a mere eight months after he had taken up his post, and Valentinian was proclaimed emperor (364–375).

The newly proclaimed emperor was himself a former exile, according to Sozomen. He had been banished to Armenia after offending Julian with his pious behavior (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.6). He was restored under Jovian and even moved to Nicaea, certainly a confirmation of his Christian faith. Then, after his rise to power, he moved to Constantinople and raised his brother Valens to the position as co-emperor. Valens, however, was not as pious as Valentinian proved to be. Valens had been baptized by the anti-Nicene bishop Eudoxius, who, at this point, was in control of

Constantinople (360–370). It is for this reason, that ill-fated baptismal link, that Meletius was ultimately expelled. Valens took up residence in Antioch and, upon his arrival, exiled Meletius a second time. (Meletius had already returned from his first exile by this point.) Valens permitted Paulinus to remain, because of his virtuous life, but ordered all those who stayed in the city to either to fall in line with the anti-Nicene bishop Euzoius or risk expulsion as well (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.7).

In his narration of events, Sozomen then turns to Constantinople, where the pro-Nicenes and followers of Novatian were being persecuted in an identical fashion as their counterparts in Antioch. The consequence of any pro-Nicene claim, of course, was expulsion. Sozomen zeroes in on the Novatian community to emphasize this point: “They were all ultimately expelled from the city; and the churches of the Novatians were closed by order of the emperor. The other party [other Nicene Christians] had no churches to be closed, having been deprived of them during the reign of Constantius” (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.9). Peter Van Nuffelen has recently drawn attention to this peculiar moment in Sozomen’s history. In his view, Sozomen may have been a member of the Novatian community in Constantinople, which is positively represented throughout this work.¹⁹ At the very least, he is certainly a sympathetic observer. We will return to Van Nuffelen’s observations momentarily. For now, it is important to emphasize that Constantinople served as the focal point of Christian orthodoxy during Sozomen’s lifetime. It is not without reason that Theodosius II, who represents this victory, is the imperial hero of this narrative and bookends Sozomen’s narrative of Nicene triumph. The exiles that link Antioch, Alexandria, Nicaea, and now Constantinople mirror one another and are of key significance for Sozomen.

Books 6 and 7 function as the center point of his narrative and relate what serves as the foundation story of Nicene orthodoxy and Christian flight. Here Sozomen turns to the final exile of Athanasius. He states that one last attempt to undermine the Nicene cause is made by Eudoxius in Constantinople. Curiously, the heretic bishop attempts to persuade Valens to once again expel all those who had been banished by Constantius and returned under Julian. Readers might ponder why he would insist on the expulsion of this group? We learn this was a power move that condemned not just part of Athanasius’s career as a fleeing bishop but the entirety of his life in flight. Sozomen remarks, “On account of this order, those who were at the head of the government of Egypt were anxious to deprive Athanasius of his bishopric and expel him from the city; for no light punishment was inserted in the imperial letters” (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.12). In response, the entire city of Alexandria unites. They implore the governor not to expel Athanasius once again. And here we find a summary of Athanasius’s career as an exile from Constantius on:

19. Peter Van Nuffelen, “Episcopal Succession in Constantinople (381–450 C.E.): The Local Dynamics of Power,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 18, no. 3 (2010): 425–51.

The majority of Christians of the city, however, assembled and besought the governor not to banish Athanasius without further consideration of the terms of the imperial letter, which merely specified all bishops who had been banished by Constantius and recalled by Julian; and it was manifest that Athanasius was not of this number, inasmuch as he had been recalled by Constantius and had resumed his bishopric; but Julian, at the very time that all the other bishops had been recalled, persecuted him, and finally Jovian recalled him. The governor was by no means convinced by these arguments; nevertheless, he restrained himself and did not give way to the use of force. The people ran together from every quarter; there was much commotion and perturbation throughout the city; an insurrection was expected; he therefore advised the emperor of the facts and allowed the bishop to remain in the city (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.12).

Here we have a change in details. Constantius is noted as the emperor who exiles Athanasius a second time and then famously allows Athanasius to return. As we might recall, this return was due to the appeals made by the emperor's younger brother and co-emperor, Constans (who dies soon after Athanasius's return). The reprieve is short. Athanasius flees into exile a third time, and remains in exile until Constantius's death.²⁰ According to Sozomen, he was expelled yet again, this time by Julian, because he took back his post and inspired a good portion of the city to follow Christ, which caused Julian to state that, while he had been allowed to return, he had not been permitted to take up his duties. This fourth flight, then, although imperially sanctioned, was fiercely contested by the Alexandrian citizens. Nevertheless, well-practiced in flight by this point, Athanasius secretly departed from the city a final time. Officials soon sought him out and, to their surprise, he was miraculously nowhere to be found. Upon learning of these events, Valens allowed Athanasius to return once again. Sozomen states that this was due to his fear of Valentinian and the general mutiny that the fourth exile might inspire, given Athanasius's popularity. Even the Arian leaders feared the fallout of this exile and did not protest. Sozomen concludes, "They were greatly troubled by the evidences of the virtue and courage of Athanasius, which had been afforded by the events that had transpired during the reign of Constantius" (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.12). And so Athanasius served as a model that other men of virtue ought to emulate. While others suffered expulsion during this period, Sozomen stresses, Athanasius had already proven too much the hero to take on and therefore preserved Alexandria from any further persecution.

Constantinople would also taste the rewards of Athanasius's success, but not yet. After the death of Eudoxius, another Arian bishop replaced him. But this bishop, Demophilus, as we have learned elsewhere, would not have as strong a hold as his predecessor. Evagrius was then elected as a pro-Nicene rival and ordained by that very first bishop exiled from Antioch after the Nicene council, Eustathius.

20. According to Sozomen, at least for a time during this third exile, Athanasius resides in the city with a famously beautiful (unnamed) virgin; see, Sozomen *Eccl. Hist.* 5.6. After Constantius's death, he once again appears in the midst of the city ready to take back his position, which Julian initially allows.

In an effort to bring us full circle, Sozomen states that Eustathius had been recalled by Jovian but decided not to return to Antioch. Instead, he went to support and thus ensure the victory of the small Nicene community in Constantinople. Valens ultimately had to step in and quell the rising theological coup (from Nicomedia, no less), but the damage had been done. Even though Evagrius was banished, along with Eustathius, this event appeared to be the turning point for Sozomen, as all true exiles had proven. Athanasius had won. After a particularly horrific account, in which a number of exiles were placed on a boat that was eventually set on fire, resulting in the merciless death of all the men, we hear of weakening Arian attempts to expand their control with the help of Valens. One by one, the anti-Nicene efforts began to collapse.

Eusebius and Basil of Caesarea, for example, curtail the anti-Nicene efforts in Cappadocia. We heard of these events in Gregory of Nazianzus's account discussed in chapter 2. And like Gregory's report, Sozomen also takes notice of the events that led to a Nicene victory. As we might recall, the emperor Valens's son takes ill and ultimately dies. Sozomen states, "The death of his son was universally attributed to the vengeance of God as punishment of his parents for the machinations that had been carried on against Basil. Valens himself was of this opinion and, after the death of his son, offered no further molestation to the bishop" (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.16). In true biblical fashion, the death of the children of corrupt emperors (or empresses, as we saw with Eudoxia) appears to be the natural outcome of the enemies of God.²¹

The Nicene position was on the rise and peaked when Gregory of Nazianzus was appointed bishop of Constantinople. Valens was still determined, however, and returned yet again to Antioch, where he expelled all who aligned themselves with Nicaea. He even initiated what Sozomen describes as an imperial persecution, although members of his own heretical party resisted such efforts. And like in Alexandria, the Antiochene citizens proved too strong for the emperor and took the persecution as an opportunity for martyrdom. Not incidentally, Sozomen capitalizes on this moment by announcing the death of Athanasius. Peter, his successor, was arrested, and the Arians once again took hold of Alexandria, with aid from Euzoius, who, after installing Lucius as the Arian bishop in Alexandria, returns to Antioch. Yet this was only a temporary setback. Not even Athanasius's death would determine the outcome of Nicene orthodoxy. Dead or alive, the story of flight proved too strong.

Lucius, in his arrogance, decided to take on the desert. As we saw in chapter 1, the desert had already become a refuge and a stronghold for Athanasius, who had strategically aligned Alexandrian theology with the neighboring monks. Sozomen, not unfamiliar with this alliance, given his frequent references to Antony in

21. We might recall that the firstborn sons of the Exodus account, including the Pharaoh's son, also faced this consequence. See Exodus 11:1–13:16.

this section, uses the desert to reveal Lucius's tenuous hold on the Nicene presence in and around Alexandria. These men of the desert were the disciples of Antony, a monk who had already reaped the benefits of the desert (and was cloaked in the robes of the Alexandrian bishop). The victory of Nicaea was sure to come, and the armed men and women of the desert knew where their strength came from.

The unquestionable orthodoxy of the monks in the desert further highlights Sozomen's own background as an ascetic sympathizer and a supporter of the Tall Brothers in a later tense and quite different controversy that pit John Chrysostom against Theophilus of Alexandria. We will return to the Origenist controversy momentarily, but for now it is important to note that Sozomen laid the groundwork for a fierce alliance between Alexandria and Antioch. It is this alliance that ultimately placed Meletius of Antioch's legacy in a precarious position.

COMPETING MEMORIES: SOCRATES AND SOZOMEN

The reception history of Meletius of Antioch in the reflections of both Sozomen and Socrates demonstrate the conflicting history of Christian flight and spatial politics. The pro-Nicene narrative is entirely dependent upon this link. As Wendy Mayer has pointed out, these two ecclesiastical historians had differing opinions when it came to the triangular battle between Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople.²² All orthodox roads would invariably lead to Constantinople, but the aftermath of the Johanite faction—that is, the reception of John Chrysostom's legacy after his death in exile—reveals for us the battle over the legacy of Christian flight and its complicated relationship with Christian authenticity. Again, we return to Van Nuffelen's observations, which we considered above. He also offers an invaluable analysis of fifth-century party politics as a way to trace how the memory of Christian purity during times of imperial persecution still played a significant role in and around Constantinople in its episcopal succession history.²³ Both Mayer and Van Nuffelen provide us with the pieces necessary to determine how Meletius of Antioch's life as an exile, death in Constantinople, and eventual interment outside the walls of Antioch ultimately prevented him from inheriting an unquestionable, orthodox Nicene legacy after his death—unlike that of John Chrysostom.

Sozomen—and Socrates before him—have different takes on John Chrysostom's exile and his relationship with Meletius. As we previously explored in chapter 3, Mayer notes that John's election as the bishop of Constantinople came with its own controversies. Chief among them was his ongoing support of the Meletian faction in Antioch after he had taken control of Constantinople. Since Meletius and his successor, Flavian, were in direct opposition to the Alexandrian favorite

22. Mayer, "Antioch and the Intersection," 357–67.

23. See Van Nuffelen, "Episcopal Succession" n. 55 for a full description of his evidence.

(and Athanasian theological surrogate), Paulinus, Nicene supporters were constantly at odds well before and after John's career. Mayer has remarked:

Indeed in 381 we see a council of western bishops at Aquileia, led by Ambrose of Milan, at which demands were made that a general council be convoked at Alexandria to rule in the case of Antioch in regard to the election of Flavian (in other words, to deny the legitimacy of his election in favor of Paulinus) and also to affirm Maximus, Alexandria's candidate, as the legitimate bishop of Constantinople.²⁴

This battle plagued John's episcopacy and eventually resulted in a Johanite faction immediately after his death. Mayer has already convincingly showed how this division was confirmed in John's legacy. But how do heresiology and exilic discourse play a role in the memory-making process of two ecclesiastical historians in the fifth century? The exiles of Meletius and that of John Chrysostom tell us a great deal.

The Origenist controversy was a defining point of contention in how these two men would be remembered. Mayer has pointed to how Epiphanius (ca. 310–403), the bishop of Cyprus—and a wandering bishop in his own right—immediately questioned John Chrysostom's orthodoxy.²⁵ This caustic rejection of John would result in more than a few ancient and contemporary rejections of Epiphanius's authority and credibility.²⁶ Nevertheless, his suspicion of John is symptomatic of a larger issue at play between Antioch and Constantinople during and soon after Chrysostom's death.

Socrates, as noted above, is much more critical of Meletius's initial election by a non-Nicene party in Antioch. He states, "Now he at first avoided all doctrinal questions, confining his discourses to moral subjects; but subsequently he expounded to his auditors the Nicene Creed, and asserted the doctrine of the *homoousion*" (*Eccl. Hist.* 2.44). Socrates argues that Meletius was sent into exile because he promoted the Nicene Creed. Yet, even after a clear Nicene opponent was elected, Euzoius (who, incidentally, was deposed with Arius in Socrates's memory), the initial election of Meletius by a non-Nicene party was still too damning, and his supporters, all of them, would suffer for it. Socrates continues, "Such, however, were attached to Meletius, separated themselves from the Arian congregation, and held their assemblies apart: nevertheless, those who originally embraced the *homoousian* opinion would not communicate with them, because Meletius had

24. Mayer, "John Chrysostom as Bishop," 458.

25. *Ibid.*, 460–61.

26. Two recent works have shown how Epiphanius's memory has often been cast off and rejected; see Young Richard Kim, *Epiphanius of Cyprus: Imagining an Orthodox World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015); and Andrew Jacobs, *Epiphanius of Cyprus: A Cultural Biography of Late Antiquity*, Christianity in Late Antiquity Series (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016). The two have been reviewed together in a forum introduced by Mark DelCogliano, "Epiphanius of Cyprus: Reconsidered," *Ancient Jew Review*, January 30, 2017, www.ancientjewreview.com/articles/2017/1/12/epiphanius-of-cyprus-reconsidered. Other articles in the forum are linked from DelCogliano's introduction.

been ordained by the Arians, and his adherents had been baptized by them" (*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.44). This heretical memory is made all the more potent in book 3 of his *Ecclesiastical History*. Alexandria's ongoing rejection and Meletius's refusal to defer to Paulinus constituted the final breaking point. Meletius did indeed return from exile, but he found that Paulinus's congregants refused to unite with his supporters. So what did he do? He moved his supporters outside the city walls. Yet Socrates would not completely reject Meletius. His memory, although ambivalent, was still tied to John Chrysostom, which differs from Sozomen's assessment.

Sozomen also retains an ambivalent narrative regarding Meletius's episcopacy and his episcopal successors in Antioch (Flavian) and Constantinople (John). In section 7.7, Sozomen argues that the emperor Gratian's edict of toleration resulted in Meletius's return from his Syrian exile in 378. Sozomen reports that he goes unchallenged by Dorotheus, the Arian bishop, and although he is rejected by Rome and Alexandria, Meletius is eventually favored by the newly appointed emperor of the East and defender of Nicene Christianity, Theodosius I (379–383). Paulinus, the favorite of Alexandria and Rome, does not pose enough of a threat to unseat Meletius. And there remains a tripartite episcopacy in Antioch from at least 379 through 381.

Both Sozomen and Socrates report that Meletius travels to Constantinople, presumably for the great council under the control of Gregory of Nazianzus, and dies there. And as previously stated, after Meletius's death in Constantinople, he was succeeded by Flavian, which caused further controversy in Antioch, as we now know. J. N. D. Kelly goes so far as to claim that Gregory of Nazianzus was responsible for this controversial appointment.²⁷

According to Sozomen, there was a gentleman's agreement that, upon Meletius's death, the episcopacy would transfer directly to Paulinus, who still remained in control of his church and congregation. As do most gentleman's agreements, however, the attempt failed. The Antiochene position passed to Flavian, who was supported by John Chrysostom.

Socrates, on the other hand, places blame on Meletius and his decision to maintain a factional group in (or just outside) Antioch even after Paulinus's appointment. After Meletius's death, a firmly rooted community continued to divide the Nicene Christians. This story of division is replicated in John's life, exile, and death. Mayer points out that Socrates was a harsh critic of John, unlike his other biographers, Palladius and Ps.-Martyrius. She states, "Socrates' primary concern, in devoting an entire book to the events associated with John, is to document the most recent and most devastating schism within the church and to frame the individual at the centre of the schism, John, as a schismatic."²⁸ Meletius served as an important and dangerous model for John, at least according to Socrates.

27. Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 38; and Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, 7.3.

28. Mayer, "Making of a Saint," 40.

Van Nuffelen strengthens this connection all the more in his recent assessment of episcopal succession in and around Constantinople, in which the ecclesiastical historians play a decisive role.²⁹ Party politics are at play in Antioch, where anti-Nicene and pro-Nicene episcopal battles are waged and then replicated in Constantinople's history. What Van Nuffelen notes, however, is the way the Novatian community in Constantinople adds an additional layer to Constantinople's struggle over pro-Nicene orthodoxy. Sozomen, for Van Nuffelen, is at the heart of this connection, but I want to draw our attention to how the Novatians, as the inheritors of a presumably purer form of Christianity—meaning a history of confessors who did not flee—is preserved in a Constantinopolitan context. This link abuts a pro-Nicene community that finds itself at odds and yet in alliance with the group.

By the fourth century, the established community of Novatians in Constantinople had its own flavor and political alliances. As a reminder, this community harkens back to an earlier period, in which the heroes of Christianity were the men and women who stood up to the tortures of the empire during the Decian persecution (250–251), rather than the ones who fled.³⁰ Their refusal to admit the lapsed, the ones who committed atrocities such as flight during the persecution, often put them at odds with other Christian communities in Constantinople. The pro-Nicene faction in Constantinople was thus typified in the person and legacy of Athanasius of Alexandria and later aligned with John Chrysostom and his career in flight. This legacy posed a significant problem for the Novatian community. As Van Nuffelen has remarked: “The closer the Novatians moved to the Nicenes, the higher the risk of succumbing to the pressure of assimilation exercised by the state.”³¹ This contentious relationship was further exaggerated by their own experience of flight through frequent expulsions from the city and their on-again off-again status as heretics.³² Socrates and Sozomen would nevertheless refer to this particular community as an important ally at different stages in the battle between pro-Nicene and anti-Nicene Christians. Novatians would align themselves with bishops and even pass as pro-Nicenes when bishops believed this alliance would work to their advantage.

The one exception appeared to be over the election of the bishop Sabbatius (Socrates, *Eccl. Hist.* 5.21.6–19, 75). Socrates, either a Novatian himself or a sympathizer, stated that this troublesome character was a converted Jew—a suspicious beginning for Socrates—with high ambitions to become the bishop of Constantinople.³³ After his brief attempt at a coup to take the episcopacy, Sabbatius was

29. Van Nuffelen, “Episcopal Succession,” 425–51.

30. Martin Wallraff, “Geschichte des Novatianismus seit dem vierten Jahrhundert im Osten,” *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 1 (1997): 251–79.

31. Van Nuffelen, “Episcopal Succession,” 431.

32. Caroline Humfress, *Orthodoxy and the Courts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 217–42.

33. For Socrates, formerly being a Jew meant that Sabbatius was therefore not a true Christian. Socrates even stated that Sabbatius had led many astray (*Eccl. Hist.* 75).

exiled. He died on the island of Rhodes (a rare reference to an island exile), where his body continued to be adored by his followers and to lead Christians astray. Finally, Socrates states that the rival bishop Atticus had his body removed and hidden. “He caused the body to be disinterred at night and deposited in a private sepulcher; and those who had formerly paid their adorations at that place, on finding his tomb had been opened, ceased honoring that tomb thenceforth” (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.25). This exiled bishop would not posthumously return to Constantinople. He remained outside both place and memory of orthodoxy altogether. Meletius of Antioch’s body, however, would take a different journey.

To briefly summarize, both Mayer and Van Nuffelen note the significance of the Johanite schism preserved in the works of both Socrates and Sozomen, and they place special emphasis on John’s dealings in Constantinople. Mayer even highlights Socrates’s strong anti-Johanite stance, which finds its links to the Meletian schism in Antioch. John is not Socrates’s hero, and it is therefore unsurprising that his predecessor also receives harsh treatment in his narrative. Sozomen, on the other hand, with whom John’s other biographers appear to be in alignment, was much more sympathetic to John for different reasons, according to both Mayer and Van Nuffelen. But Sozomen did not extend the same sympathy to Meletius. While Van Nuffelen has focused primarily on John’s legacy and its ties to the Origenist controversy, Mayer’s call to take an Antiochene point of view draws us back to this conflicted history of flight.³⁴

As we have seen, John’s ties to Meletius are more than a simple initiation into Christianity through baptism. Meletius serves as a model for John and his experiences of Christian flight, as we saw in his hagiographical texts in chapter 3. Their twin experiences of exile, which I have highlighted above, continued to be a source of contention for later historians such as Socrates and Sozomen. Meletius’s return to Antioch is only ever a peripheral one. Socrates writes:

About this period, [Meletius], bishop of Antioch, fell sick and died. . . . The body of the deceased bishop was by his friends conveyed to Antioch, where those who had identified themselves with his interests again refused subjection to Paulinus, but caused Flavian to be substituted in the place of [Meletius], and the people began to quarrel anew. Thus again the Antiochian church was divided into rival factions, not grounded on any difference of faith, but simply on a preference of bishops. (*Eccl. Hist.* 5.9)

Socrates states that Meletius’s body could not stay in Constantinople and that it was returned to Antioch. This transference continued to harm the community rather than promote reconciliation. Not all would remember the movement of Meletius’s body in the same way, however. Sozomen preserves this account instead:

34. Van Nuffelen, “Palladius and Johannite Schism,” 2–3; and Mayer, “John Chrysostom as Bishop,” 455.

The remains of Meletius were at the same time conveyed to Antioch, and deposited near the tomb of Babylas the martyr. It is said that through every public way, by the command of the emperor, the relics were received within the walls in every city, contrary to Roman custom, and were honored with singing of psalms antiphonally in such places, until they were transferred to Antioch. (*Ecc. Hist.* 7.10)

While it is clear that Meletius could not stay buried in Constantinople, at least in this latter case the bones of the martyr were enough to preserve his orthodox memory, and also the orthodox memory of John, who would meet an equally questionable end. Meletius still remained on the outside, and it is clear why that may be, as both pro-Nicene historians have continued to stress.

Meletius's legacy as an Arian also influenced John's legacy as an Origenist or, at the very least, as a known colluder with heretics. Both men are questionable at best. While Sozomen was happy to initiate John in the Nicene vision and treat Meletius in a sympathetic manner on the assumption that Babylas would take care of him, Socrates took a more dismissive tone, but he also had to tread carefully. Ultimately, for the pro-Nicene historians, Meletius would remain just outside the city walls and also at the boundaries of Christian memory.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, exilic discourse undermined the orthodox project as much as it supported it. Meletius of Antioch's history as an exile was also marred by his association with the anti-Nicene party in Antioch. But, like Tertullian of Carthage, with whom this book began, his memory was not so easily condemned. Instead, he rests uncomfortably just outside of orthodoxy. Meletius's failure was tied directly to his displacement. He never fully made it back into the Antiochene community but always resided just beyond its walls, even in death. It was his connection to John Chrysostom that served to mitigate some of his earlier misguided beliefs, and his association with the martyr Babylas that ultimately preserved his legacy.

Tertullian famously said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. If you happen to be buried near these seeds, you might take part in their efficacious power. Yet Meletius continues to hold a precarious position in pro-Nicene Christian memory. Due to his dubious election by an anti-Nicene majority in and around Antioch, he is unable to return fully to the city as a triumphant exile. Even if his biographers refer to him as a diplomatic Christian who really subscribed to Nicene Christianity, his earlier association would prove too powerful. Meletius would continue to be relegated to those spaces just beyond the borders of orthodoxy.