Narratives of Identity

Narratives of Identity: The Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England 1895-1914

By

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IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER JOHN 1966-1999

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NOTES ON DATING

Dates

There are four dating systems used in the archival sources in this work, *Rumi*, *Hicri*, Seleucid, and Gregorian.

Two systems are used in the Ottoman records: *Rumi* and *Hicri.*

- The *Rumi* calendar (Turkish: *Rumi Takvim*) is a calendar based on the Julian calendar but starting with the Prophet Muhammad's emigration (622CE) and was officially used by the Ottoman Empire after *Tanzimat* (1839) and by its successor, the Republic of Turkey, until 1926. It was implemented for civic matters and is a solar based calendar, assigning a date to each solar day.
- The *Hicri*, or Muslim, calendar (Turkish: *Hicri Takvim*) is a lunar-based calendar based on 12 lunar months in a year of 354 or 355 days.[1]

The double dates of the Ottoman documents in this study are the given dates in the original system, and their Gregorian equivalents. When converting from *Rumi* to Gregorian dating, the Başbakanlık Arşivi date conversion program was used, to be found at http://www.develetarsivileri.gov.tr/katalog/.

The Seleucid dating system is used in some, but not all, of the documents in the archives of Syrian Orthodox sources, as was the custom in Syriac documents until recently.[2]

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[1] For more information on these systems, see Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 419-421.

[2] Of the Seleucid system, Sebastian Brock writes, "Until fairly recently scribes of Syriac manuscripts have normally employed the Seleucid era to date their work," in "The Use of Hicra Dating in Syriac Manuscripts," in *Redefining Christian Identity*, eds, J. J. Ginkel, H.L. Murre-van den Berg, T. M. van Lint (Louvain: Peeters, 2005), pp. 275-290, especially p. 283.

ABBREVIATIONS

1. Archival Collections

1.1 BOA – Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (İstanbul)

A.} MKT.NZD.	Sadaret Nezaret ve Devair Evrakı
DH. EUM. MTK.	Dahiliye Nezareti Muhaberât ve Tensîkât Müdüriyeti Belgeleri
DH. MKT	Dahiliye Mektubi Kalemi
HR. MKT.	Hariciye Nezâreti Mektubi Kalemi
HR. SYS.	Hariciye Nezâreti Siyasi Kısım
İ. HR.	İradeler Hariciye
İ. DH.	İrade Dahiliye
İ.DUİT	İradeler Dosya Usulü
İ.TAL	İradeler Talfifat
Y. A. HUS.	Yıldız Sadaret Hususî Maruzat Evrakı
Y. A. RES.	Yıldız Sadaret Resmî Maruzat Evrakı
Y. PRK.	Yıldız Perâkende Evrakı
Y. PRK. DH.	Yıldız Dahiliye Nezareti Marûzâtı
Y. PRK. ZB.	Yıldız Perâkende Evrakı Zaptiye Nezareti Marûzâtı Analitik Envanteri

1.2 Deir ul Zarafan

D-e-Z 1311	Yusuf Kurkis 1311, Deir ul Zafaran

1.3 Archives of the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo, Mar Yuhanna Ibrahim Gregorius

Al-Amidi	Shammas Yakoub ibn Yusuf Ikhtiyar al-Amidi

1.4 Lambeth Palace Library, London

JEMF	Jerusalem and the East Mission Fund

2. Abbreviations Used in the Text

ABCFM	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress

LISTING OF APPENDICES

Listed by order of citation in the text:

Appendix Number	Document Title
Ai	Al-Amidi: 89-90
Aii	Al-Amidi: 91-92
Aiii	Al-Amidi: 92-94
Aiv	Al-Amidi: 94-95
Av a-d	Ayyub Barsoum al-Mosuli, D-e-Z, 1906
Avi	Deputy Governor of Diyarbakir
Avii	Seven Documents on the Syrian Catholic Presence in Mardin
Aviii	Papal Award to Yosef Anton Beni
Aix	Five Documents on Governmental interference in the patriarchal election
Ax	Two Documents of Ottoman nüfus of 5 Muharrem 1332
Axi	Telegram from the Governor of Bitlis to the Undersecretary for Internal Affairs
Axii	Communication of Patriarch ‘Abdel-Messih
Axiii	Communication of Patriarch ‘Abdel-Messih to the Ottoman Sultan
Axiv a-b	Yusuf Kurkis, D-e-Z, 1311
Axiv c-e	Yusuf Kurkis, D-e-Z, 1311
Axiv f	Yusuf Kurkis, D-e-Z, 1311
Axv	Petition of Meclis-i Mahsus
Axvi	Yunus, Metropolitan of Urfa
Axvii	Petition of the monk Elias
Axviii	The Office of the Grand Vizier to the Governor of Diyarbakir
Axix	Ottoman Government recommendation for first-class Mecidi Decoration

INTRODUCTION

'Narratives of identity' are the ways in which communities describe and define themselves – both to themselves and to others. Churches, as communities with histories and defining characteristics, have their own narratives of identity, made up of different components – oral accounts, historical texts, theological texts, organisational features, and Scripture. Two such narratives of identity – of the Church of England and the Syrian Orthodox Church in the Ottoman Empire between 1895 and 1914 – are examined in the course of this study. During this period, the character and shape of both Churches changed significantly, and their contact with each other was to contribute to this process of change. As part of this process of change, both churches used theological, significant memory, *anamnesis*, in their own narratives of identity.[1] History, for these churches, was not a simple recording of chronological events, but one imbued with significant, theological meaning.

Between 1895 and 1914, the Syrian Orthodox Church in the Ottoman Empire developed its own links and contacts with the Church of England, especially through the Patriarchates of Peter III, 'Abdel-Messih, and Abdallah II. The development of these contacts was part of Syrian Orthodoxy's own process of seeking support and recognition from outside its own Ottoman context. This movement may be described as an eastern church developing a western policy. At the same time, the Church of England was changing from its purely English and national context, into being part of a global Anglican Communion.[2] The ten-yearly Lambeth Conferences of the Anglican Communion contributed substantially to this process, and to the creation of a communion-wide Anglican identity,

[1] This Greek term for theological, significant, memory is explored in greater depth on pages 7-11.

[2] The term Anglican Communion is used to describe the international grouping of autonomous Anglican Provinces. It was first used in 1847 by Horatio Southgate – see Colin Podmore, *Aspects of Anglican Identity* (London: Church House Publishing, 2005), p. 36. Podmore points out that Southgate used the term in an attempt to give an account of the Anglican tradition to eastern churches – it was to be translated into Greek, Arabic, and Armenian.

especially throughout the archiepiscopates of Edward White Benson, Frederick Temple, and Randall Davidson. This simultaneous movement may be described as a western church developing an eastern policy.

Of particular significance in these contacts between 1895 and 1914, was the substantial theological dialogue that developed between the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England. These theological conversations contributed to the change of self-perception that each church underwent throughout this period. The aim of the theological dialogue, for both, was mutual recognition. The Church of England, especially through its Tractarian manifestation, was seeking ecclesiological recognition from orthodox churches as a 'sister' church to them, with a 'valid' ministry and sacraments. The Syrian Orthodox Church was seeking recognition as an independent Church of the Ottoman state, with its own international acceptance as well as material and political support, especially from the Church of England. Both were greatly influenced by their perceptions of, and relations with, the Roman Catholic Church.

This interaction between two Churches took place in the wider context of relations between the British and Ottoman Empires at a critical time for both. The wider political and diplomatic context therefore provides an integral context for an understanding of other important factors that influenced the lives of both Churches – especially in the early years of the twentieth century leading up to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

The methodological tool underlying this investigation of narratives of identity is the work of Paul Ricoeur; in particular his concepts of identity, memory, and translation in search of recognition, which are central to this work. Ricoeur uses the term 'narratives of identity'[3] to describe the process by which communities or churches seek to understand their own identities within a theological framework. For both Syrian Orthodoxy and the Church of England, understanding their own identities within a theological framework was of central and defining importance. Ricoeur's terminology, although not explicitly formed in any theological tradition, is open to this particular application.

[3] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 3 vols., trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (London: University of Chicago Press, 1984-88), vol. 3, p. 246.

Identity is, for Ricoeur, always teleological – concerned with ultimate meaning and order. Ricoeur expressed what he understood by the teleological search for meaning in history when he wrote, "The backward look is made possible by the teleological movement directed by our expectations when we follow the story."[4] Historical narratives, therefore, for faith communities such as churches are always teleological. The historical frameworks used by churches to define themselves employ a strong understanding of the concept and use of narrative. It is through narrative that identity is both defined and discovered.[5] Ricoeur describes the significance of narrative for the identity of communities in this way: "Individuals and communities are constituted in their identity by taking up narratives that become for them their actual history."[6] This will be seen time and time again throughout this study in the lives and activities of both churches as they developed their contacts with each other between 1895 and 1914.

Memory and identity then lead on to the issue of translation, i.e., how is that identity presented to 'the other' in terms that are accessible and intelligible, and in ways that lead to mutual recognition? As Ricoeur writes, "The investigation of mutual recognition can be summed up as a struggle against the misrepresentation of others at the same time that it is a struggle for recognition of oneself by others."[7] Identity, memory, and translation become especially significant when they describe corporate identity and corporate memory. In the course of this work, it is exactly this corporate identity and memory which is under consideration, as the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England sought mutual recognition from each other. In the case of the Church of England and the Syrian Orthodox Church, both used corporate narratives of identity and memory when they entered into dialogue with the other. These corporate narratives were used in translating the meaning and identity of one to the other, both of whom were in search of mutual recognition.

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[4] Paul Ricoeur, "Narrative Time," in *Critical Inquiry* 7:1:1980, pp. 169-190, p. 174.

[5] The philosopher Charles Taylor also employs the term narrative in relation to identity - "We must inescapably understand our lives in narrative form". Charles Taylor, *Sources of Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 52.

[6] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, p. 247.

[7] Paul Ricoeur, *The Course of Recognition* (London: Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 258.

i. Identity and The Other

The work of Ricouer has shaped the conceptual framework on which this study is built – identity, memory, and translation, in search of recognition. Ricoeur's *On Translation*[8] is particularly significant in understanding the concepts of identity that are used throughout this study. Of equal importance in understanding the role of memory in identity formation is Ricoeur's *Memory, History, Forgetting.*[9] As the Church of England sought to define itself to the Syrian Orthodox Church through its own narratives of identity, so there was a reciprocal movement from Syrian Orthodoxy, especially in Christology. In this reciprocal exchange, interpretive skills were needed in order for the venture to succeed. Ricoeur uses the term 'linguistic hospitality', to describe these interpretive skills, "'Linguistic hospitality,' then, where the pleasure of dwelling in the other's language is balanced by the pleasure of receiving the foreign word at home, in one's own welcoming house."[10] The use of the term 'linguistic hospitality' is of particular significance in analysing the cultural and theological exchange that took place between the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England, as both churches were 'foreign' to each other, and 'other' in their characteristics and expressions.

The concept of the 'other' at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries was also a significant part of the wider context of contemporary European projections concerning non-European cultures. This cultural (and theological) projection has been termed 'Orientalism.'[11] It was certainly the case that the wider cultural context in which these exchanges between the two churches took place had Orientalist characteristics, described by Edward Said in this way, "Thus the interpreter's mind actively makes a place in it for the foreign Other."[12]

The 'other' is central to Ricoeur's use of the term 'linguistic hospitality'. This term will be seen to be important, not only for each church's ability

[8] Paul Ricoeur, *On Translation* (London: Routledge, 2006).
[9] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
[10] Paul Ricoeur, *On Translation*, p. 21.
[11] Orientalism was the term employed by Edward Said in his *Orientalism.* Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978). Reprinted with a new preface by Penguin in London, 2003. The 2003 edition is used throughout.
[12] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. xix.

to define itself to itself, but also for its ability to 'translate' itself to the other. Of 'linguistic hospitality', Ricoeur writes:

> "It is this which serves as a model for other forms of hospitality that I think resemble it: confessions, religions, are they not like languages that are foreign to one another, with their lexicon, their grammar, their rhetoric, their stylistic which we must learn in order to make our way into them?"[13]

As communities or churches simultaneously seek to define themselves for their own self-understanding, and in order to 'translate' themselves to the other, Ricoeur's term 'linguistic hospitality' provides part of a helpful philosophical framework. In the work of Ricoeur, 'linguistic hospitality' is connected to another of his key concepts – 'polysemy'.

'Polysemy' is Ricoeur's term to describe the fact that in the work of translation from one cultural context to another, the same word can have multiple meanings. A clear illustration of 'polysemy' can be seen in this work in the use of the word 'Nation.' When this word was used, it had a totally different meaning for the Church of England from the way Syrian Orthodoxy perceived and experienced the same word.[14] This, for Ricoeur, is what he meant by 'polysemy', as he wrote: "the meaning is thus defined each time through usage."[15] Ricoeur's key concepts of 'linguistic hospitality' and 'polysemy' are helpful in understanding the process by which each Church sought to develop its own self-identity at the same time as presenting that identity to the other. It also helps to explain why the enterprise was fraught with difficulty and the potential for misunderstanding.

ii. Memory

Together with the concepts of identity and the other, memory plays a central role in Ricoeur and in the course of this work. Memory was essential to the formation of corporate identity for both the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England. Ricoeur makes use of the classical Greek philosophical basis for his own understanding of memory. Referring to the Platonic and Aristotelian concepts of memory,[16] he roots this in the indebtedness of both to the Socratic use of the term *anamnesis.*[17]

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[13] Paul Ricoeur, *On Translation*, pp. 23-4.
[14] See below, pp. 217-221.
[15] Paul Ricoeur, *On Translation*, p. 26.
[16] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, p.15.
[17] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, p. 21.

Anamnesis, in its classical philosophical application, is significant, or teleological memory. For both churches, *anamnesis* was at the centre of their Eucharistic theology, in that the recalling became the act of recreating the past in the present, while simultaneously anticipating the future. This 'anamnetic' concept of memory was also essential for retaining and projecting communal identity. The connection between memory and identity in Ricoeur has been described as central for him: "Memory can be seen as the precondition and the mechanism of both identity and history, always his major concerns."[18]

The antithesis of anamnetic memory, for Ricoeur, was historical amnesia. He underlines the threat which forgetting poses to the creation of identity: "Forgetting is thus designated obliquely as that against which the operation of recollecting is directed."[19] Without 'linguistic hospitality' and collective memory, the work of dialogue and exchange, as illustrated by the contacts and exchanges between the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England, becomes a threat to identity because identity has become both fragile and brittle. In this context, therefore, "it is a fact that the other, because other, comes to be perceived as a danger for one's own identity, our identity as well as my identity."[20] Both Syrian Orthodoxy and the Church of England will be seen to be employing this concept of *anamnesis*, or significant memory, in their self-definitions, and in their presentation of one to the other.

iii. Collective and Significant Memory: *Anamnesis*, זכר, and ܕܟܪ

Ricoeur points out the traditional philosophical tension between individual memory and collective memory, but then draws on his own analysis to suggest that these two phenomena need not be seen as equal and opposite. He illustrates the principle of the reconciling of individual and collective memory, which also underpins this study, by the use of two examples. First, he employs the Gospel parable of the woman with the lost drachma, and uses it to demonstrate the unity of individual and collective recall, "Here, finding is recovering, and recovering is recognizing, and recognizing is accepting, and so judging that the thing recovered is the same as the thing sought, and thus considered after the fact as the thing

[18] Dudley Andrew, "Tracing Ricoeur," in *Diacritics* 30:2:2000, p. 64.
[19] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting,* p. 27.
[20] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting,* p. 81.

forgotten."[21] His second illustration is from the writings of Maurice Halbwachs who, in a work published posthumously after his death in Buchenwald in 1945, examined the nature and phenomenon of collective memory.[22] Central to his thesis of the nature of collective memory is that it serves to support new social institutions at a time of great upheavals, with everything transferable from tradition. The role of communal memory in collective identity formation has been described for Halbwachs as "groups who conceive their unity and peculiarity through a common image of their past."[23]

Reflecting on this relationship between history, memory, and communal identity, Ricoeur asked the rhetorical question, "are not memory and history condemned to a forced cohabitation?"[24] These two illustrations brought Ricoeur to his conclusion of the unity of purpose between the individual and the collective:

> "It is therefore not with the single hypothesis of the polarity between individual memory and collective memory that we enter into the field of history, but with the hypothesis of the threefold attribution of memory; to oneself, to one's close relations, and to others." [25]

This threefold relation between self, close relations, and others is used throughout Ricoeur's work, and is a device which brings together different elements of memory to form collective identity. In the history of the relationships that developed between the Church of England and the Syrian Orthodox Church, the same phenomenon can be seen – both churches were addressing their own constituencies and others in their own theological exchanges. In the work of history and epistemology, Ricoeur drew attention to the relationship between archives, explanation, understanding and historical representation. The relationship between archives and explanation is also important in this thesis. Not only is all memory collective, significant memory (*anamnesis*), but also the historical work of the communities under consideration was, by definition, teleological. History, for these communities, was not an abstract and neutrally scientific process, but one imbued with theological meaning.

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[21] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, p. 99.
[22] Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory,* trans. Francis J. Ditter & Vida Yazdi (New York: Ditter, 1980).
[23] Jan Assman and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," in *New German Critique* 65:1995, p. 128
[24] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting,* p. 397.
[25] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting,* p. 132.

The Hebrew זכר and the Syriac ܕܟܪ convey the act of significant remembering that gives meaning to the present and so anticipates the future.

The significance of the Hebrew word זכר is explained by the Jewish philosopher of history Yosef Yerushalmi thus: "It achieves meaning and reality only by subverting itself, when, through the repetition of a ritual or the recitation or re-enactment of a myth, historical time is periodically shattered."[26] The Hebrew verb זכר (ZKR, to remember) and its derived noun זכרון, "memorial name by which the significance of being is made prominent"[27] is clearly of great prominence in the Hebrew Scriptures. Yerushalmi points out that the verb and its derivatives occurs 169 times, attesting to its overall significance.[28] Ricoeur expresses the same concept of the convergence of chronological time and phenomenological significance by reference to the teleological content of archives, "We must not forget that everything starts, not from the archives, but from testimony."[29] In this, Ricoeur is expressing the notion, central to זכר and to the work of this study, that cosmological time and phenomenological time is brought to convergence in the Semitic understanding of זכר and ܕܟܪ.

The Syriac verb ܕܟܪ expresses a similar understanding of a significant, teleological act and has been used in Syriac culture to convey the same meaning as זכר.[30] The derived noun ܕܘܟܪܢܐ (Memorial) is used in Syriac Eucharistic liturgical formulations to describe the diptychs, or memorials of forebears, which take central place in the many different Syriac

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[26] See Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor, Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1982), p. 6. See also Elliot R. Wolfson, "Remembering the Covenant: Memory, Forgetfulness, and the Construction of History in the Zohar," in *Jewish History and Jewish Memory, Essays in Honor of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi,* eds., Elishiva Carlebach, John M. Efram, and David N. Myers (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1998), pp. 214-249.

[27] F. Brown, S.R. Driver, and C. R. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), **זכר**, p. 269, 'to remember', and **זכרון**, p. 271 'remembrance'. See also Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English* (London: Macmillan, 1987), p. 198, where the suggestion is made that memory represents a 'piercing or pricking' of the boundaries of chronological time.

[28] Yerushalmi, *Zakhor, Jewish History and Jewish Memory,* p. 6.

[29] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, p. 147.

[30] See R. Payne Smith, ed., *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1998), p. 92.

anaphoras, of both east and west Syrian traditions.[31] Two of the earliest Syriac anaphoras, Addai and Mari and Sharar,[32] do not contain the dominical words of Institution,[33] and it has thus been argued that these words are not present as the whole content and context is ܕܟܘܪܢܐ.[34] G. Rouwhurst has argued,

> "The petition of Addai and Mari contains an intercession for the upright and just fathers – i.e. the deceased, among which (sic) are reckoned the prophets and apostles, but also all the baptised Christians. This intercession has a remarkable parallel in the so-called *Ya'aleh we ya'vo*, an embolism that in big (sic) Jewish festivals is inserted in the *Birkat Yerushalayim,* and in which God is asked to remember the remembrance of our Fathers." [35]

The significance of ܕܟܘܪܢܐ throughout the Syriac Scriptures, and in Syriac theological, exegetical, and liturgical work is further conveyed by the extensive entries in Brockelmann's *Lexicon Syriacum*.[36] The influence of this early Syriac biblical and liturgical concept of remembrance formed part of the common roots of all the Syriac Churches, Syrian Orthodoxy included. The significance of this concept can also be seen in forming memory, communal history, and identity through the concept of cosmological and phenomenological time converging, as inherent in *anamnesis,*זכר , and ܕܟܘܪܢܐ. Michael G. Morony has argued,

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[31] For the significance of 'naming' as memorials in the diptychs see Peter D. Day, *The Liturgical Dictionary of Eastern Christianity* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 'Diptych', p. 70.

[32] So called from the opening word. This is also known as Peter III and has been used in Maronite liturgical formularies.

[33] The 'Words of Institution' is a liturgical term to refer to the words of Jesus Christ in blessing the bread and wine at the Last Supper, recorded in the Gospel according to Luke as "Take, eat, this is my Body. Do this in remembrance of me." Luke 22:19, *New Revised Standard Version* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 88.

[34] As in W. Macomber, "The Maronite and Chaldean Versions of the Anaphora of the Apostles," in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 37: 1971, pp. 55-84.

[35] G. Rouwhorst, "Jewish Liturgical Traditions in early Syriac Christianity," in *Vigiliae Christianae,* 51:1:1997, pp. 72-93, p. 80.

[36] Karl Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1995), pp. 153-154. In addition to significant numbers of biblical references, Brockelmann testifies to its use in Bar Hebraeus, Ephrem, Jacob of Serugh, the Wisdom of Solomon, Severius, the Doctrine of Addai, and Aphrahat. See also Michael Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009).

> "The commemoration of Church heroes and heroines in the liturgy is one way to gauge how a particular view of the past was used to communicate the communal identity in a more or less public way… The annual commemoration of saints, martyrs, and other Church leaders in the liturgy reinforced a particular view of history and the identity of the community."[37]

Ricoeur illustrates the same interplay between belief and historical fact by drawing on the work of Marc Bloch, especially his writings on the sacred person of the Monarch.[38] This will be developed in more detail when dealing with the theology of the *mixta persona* of the Monarch through the coronation rituals and symbolism of the Church of England.[39] Ricoeur describes this interplay of belief and history in the archival process by his term 'standing for' which he further defines in this way: "It indicates the expectation attached to the historical knowledge of constructions constituting reconstructions of past events."[40]

iv. Translation and The Search for Mutual Recognition

Much of the history of the contacts between the Church of England and the Syrian Orthodox Church was a search for mutual recognition. As their contexts were totally different, the recognition sought in each case was different in form and expectation. Recognition, in the sense in which Ricoeur uses it, is also therefore an example of 'polysemy'.[41] Forgiveness and Gift will be seen to be Ricoeur's key concepts that help to elucidate the historical process, especially in dealing with the history of communal conflict. Ricoeur reflects on the significance of the nature of forgiveness in the historical process, and the importance of gift, a connection he locates through the linguistic proximity of forgiving and gift, which he describes as "the kinship found in numerous languages between forgiving and giving."[42]

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[37] Michael G. Morony, "History and Identity in the Syrian Churches," in Orientalia Lovanensia Analecta, *Redefining Christian Identity: Cultural Interaction in the Middle East since the Rise of Islam*, eds., J.J. van Ginkel, H. L. Murre-van den Berg, T. M. van Lint (Peeters: Louvain, 2005), p. 29.
[38] Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973).
[39] See Chapter 1, pp. 56-63.
[40] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting,* p. 275.
[41] See below, p. 224-225.
[42] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting,* p. 458.

Ricoeur locates the relationship between giving and forgiving in the present, and its relationship to the past and the future, which he poetically describes in this way, drawing on the work of Marc Augé; [43]

> "To return to the past…one must forget the present, as in states of possession. To return to the present, one must suspend the ties with the past and the future…To embrace the future, one must forget the past in a gesture of inauguration, beginning and rebeginning, as in rituals of initiation."[44]

This then sets free historical work to deal with the teleological meaning without distortion – "Carefree memory on the horizon of concerned memory, the soul common to memory but that forgets and does not forget."[45] It will be seen that the concepts of forgiveness and gift, as employed by Ricoeur, bring a fresh perspective on the significance of historical studies for identity formation of the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England.

These key concepts of Ricoeur, especially narrative identity, significant collective memory, and translation in search of recognition, are drawn on throughout this work to frame the question of the changing identities of two Churches as they were brought into closer contact with each other at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. It will be seen that both churches and communities constantly employed the theological resources of *anamnesis,* זכר, and ܕܟܝ in their theological and historical presentations – especially when presenting themselves to the other, in search of recognition.

v. The Late Ottoman Context

In the late Ottoman context, the concepts of memory and history take on great significance for the self-perception of the Syrian Orthodox Church as a minority. This process can be expressed in the following way,

> "Out of the difference between remembering and history, grew the awareness among fringe groups and oppressed minorities that they might find themselves an audience. By deploying history as a weapon against the collectivity of ruling opinion, the possibility was recognised of

[43] Marc Augé, *Les Formes de l'oubli,* (Paris: Payot, 1998).
[44] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting,* p. 504.
[45] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, p. 505.

> undermining the truth that supported homogenous identity and nationalism."[46]

Syrian Orthodoxy, as one minority community amongst many others in late nineteenth century eastern Anatolia, thus sought to define itself by use of its texts and resources to sustain its own separate identity. Syrian Orthodoxy was concerned to present itself as a distinct and loyal Ottoman *millet.* This was frequently mirrored in official Ottoman documents of the period.[47]

For community cohesion, a consistent historical narrative imbued with teleological meaning was vital. When this teleological approach was employed, then significant memory, *anamnesis,* brought the past into the present, and at the same time the present was connected to the past and the future. Examples of this process abound. In the *Amidi* text,[48] a contemporary, violent event which took place in 1895, was described using an established theology of martyrdom as its framework. Similarly, Tractarian historians and theologians of the Church of England based many of their historico-theological claims on a view of history, which saw themselves as the unbroken successors of the first eight centuries of the undivided conciliar Church. Ricoeur describes this fusion of the historical with the contemporary and personal, in the following way, "Literary narratives and life histories, far from being mutually exclusive, are complementary, despite, or even because of, their contrast."[49] Here the role of history and memory may be described in the following terms, "The isolated 'user' who calls up ready-made memories is replaced by the social interaction of a society within which memories are 'produced'."[50]

Contemporary Turkish historians likewise refer to this historiographical phenomenon as a guiding principle for them when interpreting late Ottoman events:

> "The dearth of local sources that might aid in the reconstruction of late Ottoman history from the vantage point of the periphery compels the

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[46] Gerdien Jonker, *The Topography of Remembrance: The Dead, Tradition, and Collective Memory in Mesopotamia* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), p. 26.
[47] See below, pp. 155-159.
[48] See below, pp. 99-103.
[49] Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 163.
[50] Gerdien Jonker, *The Topography of Remembrance: The Dead, Tradition, and Collective Memory in Mesopotamia*, p. 28.

> student to accept the well-preserved records of the central bureaucracy. The best one can do to avoid the obvious pitfalls of reliance on such evidence is to treat imperial documents not as reliable mirrors of events on the ground but as filtered interpretations of them."[51]

Similarly, in the context of late Ottoman and Turkish historiography, research on identity and memory has become particularly politicised, and has been described thus: "Collective memory is in the service of national unity…with each group carrying its own separate memories and versions of history and its causes."[52] However, new perspectives may be found by breaking the perception that collective memory should be at the service of national unity. Some of these new perspectives are presented in this study.[53]

vi. The Changing Identity of the Church of England

The changing narratives of identity of the Church of England between 1895 and 1914 form the focus of this chapter, which presents the material used by the Tractarianism of the Oxford Movement and their successors as an example of the teleological use of historical sources. External manifestations of church order were used to demonstrate the Tractarian belief that the church order of the Church of England, and therefore its ecclesiology, was somehow in unbroken continuity with the Patristic period. Characteristics of church order, such as the revival of monastic orders for men and women, and the sacral significance of the Monarch as *mixta persona*, were used to construct an ecclesiological picture designed to appeal to orthodox churches. Other characteristics were also emphasised – the use of the vernacular in liturgy and Scripture, the three-fold ordained ministry, and in particular the historic episcopate – to demonstrate that the Church of England was a historically authentic church. All these characteristics were manifestations of a narrative of identity, which was not only changing, but was also fiercely and bitterly contested from within the Church of England and the Anglican Communion.

All the above external characteristics of church order were used by their Tractarian protagonists to demonstrate that the Church of England was,

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[51] M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 4-5.
[52] Carel Bertram, *Imagining the Turkish House* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), pp. 242-3.
[53] See pp. 28-29.

like the Syrian Orthodox Church and other orthodox churches, a 'historic' church with a validity of its own. This was especially important, in the new context that the Church of England found itself, after the publication of the Papal Bull *Apostolicae Curae* in 1896. *Apostolicae Curae* specifically and categorically rejected the historical and theological claims of the Tractarian, high-church party of the Church of England. These Tractarian identity claims to describe the Church of England 1895-1914 contributed to its changing identity, but were also deeply contested by significant sections within it. All the external, contested, church order characteristics that were presented by the Tractarians were, however, secondary to the deeper thread of one uncontested characteristic of the Church of England: Establishment.

Establishment is the position 'by law established' for the Church of England within the institutions of the State.[54] More specifically, this meant that the Monarch must by law be a member of the Church of England, and its senior Bishops retained the right to occupy seats in the House of Lords. However, in reality, establishment only applied to England within the whole of the United Kingdom. The Church of Ireland had already been dis-established in 1871, and the Church of Wales was dis-established in 1914, although this was not effected until 1920.[55] In Scotland, a different church was established – the Church of Scotland, Presbyterian in structure. By 1920, therefore, the Church of England was established in England only. However, it still retained structures of Establishment that represented the whole of the United Kingdom - particularly through the position of the Monarch as its 'Supreme Governor' and its senior Bishops occupying seats in the House of Lords.[56] This manifestation of Establishment faced no serious challenges from any of the recognised groupings of the Church of England, and was therefore the only characteristic that united all its different factions. It was a reality not seriously challenged or called into question. Establishment was the key characteristic, therefore, which brought identity, memory, and translation into focus for the Church of England, especially in its dealings with the Syrian Orthodox Church.[57]

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[54] See David McClean, "Establishment in a European Context," in Norman Doe, Mark Hill, and Robert Ombres, eds., *English Canon Law: Essays in Honour of Bishop Eric Kemp* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), pp. 128-38.
[55] See Glanmor Williams, William Jacob, Nigel Yates, and Frances Knight, *The Welsh Church* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), pp. 328-9.
[56] See below, p. 64.
[57] See pp.217-224.

vii. The Changing Identity of the Syrian Orthodox Church

Between 1895 and 1914, a similar dialectic between Church and State was being played out within the Syrian Orthodox Church in the Ottoman Empire.[58] The identities of both the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England were rapidly changing, and their positions in relation to the State were also taking new shapes. While the identity of the Syrian Orthodox Church was less fiercely contested internally than that of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion, it was also, to some extent, a disputed identity for both from within their own communities.[59] At the same time, Syrian Orthodoxy's own contact and theological dialogue with the Church of England and the Anglican Communion was forcing it to define its own identity for the benefit of the other in ways it had not hitherto been forced to do. Even though the Syrian Orthodox 'heartland' was far removed from the Ottoman centre of power and government in Constantinople,[60] the whole of Ottoman society was profoundly changing through the combined effects of *Tanzimat*[61] and increased European influence in the public sphere of intellectual life and societal organisation.[62] Like the rest of Ottoman society, Syrian Orthodoxy was influenced by these factors. As Syrian Orthodoxy was brought into closer contact with the Church of England through these

[58] The Syrian Orthodox Church in India had some bearing on this, but is regarded as a separate field of study in itself for the purpose of this study.

[59] Examples of this can be seen in the rivalries that the deposition of Patriarch 'Abdel-Messih brought to the fore between 1903 and 1906, and in the fact that Patriarch Abdallah II in 1911 was unable to 'deliver' an authoritative response from the Holy Synod of the Syrian Orthodox Church to the Church of England. See pp. 215-217.

[60] The word Constantinople is used throughout this work to reflect the contemporary Ottoman *Konstantiniye*: "Until the end of the Empire, the city's name – Konstantiniye/Constantinople – remained in the Ottomans' official correspondence, their coins, and on their postage stamps." Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 4. The exception to this is in Ottoman documents quoted in this study that use the name Istanbul, which is left unchanged.

[61] *Tanzimat* (Ottoman: reforms) refers to the period between 1839 and 1876 when many legislative reforms were made, particularly related to communal identity. See Carter V. Vaughan Findley, "Tanzimat," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Vol. 4, pp. 11-37.

[62] See Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (New York: Gordian Press, 1973) and Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).

developments, Ricoeur's concepts of 'linguistic hospitality', translation, 'polysemy', and recognition become essential for an understanding of the significance of this cross-cultural enterprise.

As was the case with the Church of England, the Syrian Orthodox Church employed anamnetic, significant, collective memory for its internal definitions of itself, particularly its Patriarchal nature. This Patriarchal identity was, however, changing rapidly at the end of the nineteenth century in the Ottoman context, and was one of the principal motivating forces in bringing Syrian Orthodoxy into contact with the Church of England. These characteristics that arose from within the Syrian Orthodox Church and were part of its deeply internalised narrative of self-identity, were defined as a religious, ecclesial, identity. The collective identity of Syrian Orthodoxy was seen

> "primarily by religion and consequent endogamy. The religion is defined by the use of a specific liturgical language (Syriac)…The sense of locality arising from the concentration of the Church and its monasteries in a clearly defined geographical area, in which it has survived for some 1,500 years, is clearly an important factor."[63]

For Syrian Orthodoxy, all of these characteristics of identity were brought into sharp relief by one overriding factor, which arose from outside the community – that of being subordinate throughout all of its history – under Byzantine, Arab and Ottoman rule. It was one small minority group amongst many others in eastern Anatolia, and under Turkic and Arab secular nationalism in the successor states of the Ottoman Empire. As the Church of England's one overriding characteristic throughout this period was that of being the Established Church, so Syrian Orthodoxy's predominant characteristic of being a subordinate minority forged its overriding identity.

In their relations with each other, Ottoman Syrian Orthodoxy and the established Church of England faced particular challenges to effective ecclesial communication. In Ricoeurian terminology, 'linguistic hospitality' and 'polysemy' were tested to the extreme by these principal (and overriding) characteristics of both Churches – establishment and minority status.[64] However, with the inherent changes that the Ottoman Empire

[63] Peter Alford Andrews, *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey* (Wiesbaden: Dr Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1989), p. 162.

[64] See page 76 for the defining status of minority for the Syrian Orthodox Church throughout its history.