Praise and scorn

Antiochene identity as represented by Libanius, emperor Julian and modern scholarship

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Introduction

The Roman empire contained not only a wealth of cities, territories and peoples within its borders through history, but also a vast array of identities. No matter how extensive the supposed impact of 'Romanization' across the Mediterranean and beyond, within the confines of Rome's borders lay cultural as much as natural barriers. Different challenges were faced by inhabitants of Gaul compared to those living near the Danube, and cultural changes occurred at varying rates across the empire, if indeed they occurred along a similar path at all. Life in the city of Antioch-on-the-Orontes in Syria certainly changed over time in part by way of political shifts and religious transformation.

The continuous, gradual process of change within traditions, politics and religious views does mean that a historical source merely presents us with a freeze-frame of this movement. There are two solutions to this problem: one is to find as many of these frozen frames as possible, finding out which elements persist or perish within a given society. Another is to focus on a small subset of the sources available, aiming to construct as accurate an image of a past culture at a particular time from the perspective of the source in question. It is the latter which I aim to do in this work. Research of this kind provides an insight into a particular cultural identity, be it individual or collective, although it must be prefaced by a discussion of larger cultural transformation with regard to the topic at hand. The inherent limitation of my approach is that a broader investigation would allow for cultural shifts (or lack of it) to be at least hinted at. Nevertheless, a large scope risks generalization and frankly requires more intimate knowledge of the breadth of relevant sources than this graduate student has been able to gather thus far. A lack of sources may be a problem at the best of times - it is of course reasonable to expect this drawback when dealing with research topics focused on Antiquity. However, as was pointed out by Glanville Downey in 1963, 'parts of the history of [Antioch] during the Roman period are relatively well known'[1].

The topic in question is Antioch during the middle of the fourth century CE, specifically around the timeframe of emperor Julian's visit to the city in preparation for his Persian campaign. The overarching question is as follows: what did the Antiochene identity consist of? Two sources from that period will play centre stage in this research: the *Antiochikos* ('In praise of Antioch') written by the rhetorician Libanius, and the *Misopogon* from the aforementioned Julian 'the Apostate'. Both authors were pagans during a time in which Christianity had gained prominence within the empire, although their religious views differed significantly.[2] The first chapter will revolve around Libanius' work, the second around Julian's visit to Antioch. Their significant differences will be addressed in the second chapter.

[1] G. Downey, *Ancient Antioch* (Princeton 1963) 24.

[2] E.G. Burr, 'Libanius of Antioch in relation to Christians and Christianity: the evidence of selected letters' in: *Topoi. Orient-Occident* 7 (2006). 63-76. Here: 68.

The third chapter requires some more explanation. During this research, one aspect kept reappearing within current scholarship: that of the representation of Antioch's identity as presented within the confines of these modern works. The attempt by academics such as Andrea U. De Giorgi to compile a comprehensive history of the city[3] sets out to accomplish a quite different task than those that focus on the writings of Julian and Libanius. In the latter case, Antioch appears as part of a rhetorical construction that follows a traditional format and serves a specific purpose, as we can see in the work done by Casevitz and Lagacherie.[4] These contrasting approaches has led me to explore the question of Antiochene identity as a construction from modern research. Modern scholarship on the subject ultimately relies on how an author has defined Antioch and the Antiochenes. The agency one has in this academic research is an aspect that deserves more attention. How does one accurately represent a city that has ceased to exist? Furthermore, how does Antioch's cultural identity as perpetuated by Libanius and Julian relate to that of modern representations of the city we find in academic literature?

Ever since Peter Brown's seminal 1971 work "The World of Late Antiquity", historians have been able to better understand the transformation from the 'classical' Roman empire to the world of the Middle Ages by focusing on a larger period of change rather than merely the circumstances that led to the fall of the western half of the Roman empire.[5] Although the exact periodization may differ - 'about AD 200 to about 700' was the original suggestion[6] - the concept of a distinctive period that bridges the gap from ancient to medieval continues to be utilized by historians today to great effect. Within the context of Late Antiquity, the middle of the fourth century becomes part of a gradual period of change that would not be finalized for centuries to come. The Crisis of the Third Century as well as the Tetrarchy precede it, while the disintegration of Rome's imperial rule in the west no longer appears as the closing of an era.

With the benefit of hindsight, the fourth century is a definitive end of an era in one respect: namely that of Rome's state-supported paganism.[7] Julian was the last non-Christian Roman emperor, although his particular philosophy of theurgic Neoplatonism had itself been alien to the imperial office and was far from a restoration of a 'traditional' Roman state religion.[8] To further show the distinct nature of the emperor's religion, E.G. Burr notes that '...Julian's philosophical, organized, hierarchical paganism mimicked Christianity in ways that would surely have made Libanius uncomfortable'.[9] It is also important to stress that there is no need to discuss paganism and Christianity in terms of a clear dividing line of any substance within Roman society. Scholarly works from the past few decades have indeed been attentive of the interaction

[3] A.U. De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch: from the Seleucid Era to the Islamic Conquest* (Cambridge 2016).
[4] M. Casevitz, M., O. Lagacherie et al., 'Notice', in: Libanius, M. Casevitz, O. Lagacherie, C. Saliou, eds., *Discours XI Antiochicos* (Paris 2016) VII-CIII.
[5] P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity: AD 150-750* (London 1971).
[6] Brown, *Late Antiquity* 7-9.
[7] Teitler, H.C., *The last pagan emperor: Julian the Apostate and the war against Christianity* (New York 2017).
[8] L.B. Dingeldein, 'Julian's Philosophy and His Religious Program' in: N.P. DesRosiers, L.C. Vuong (Atlanta 2016).
[9] Burr, 'Libanius in relations to Christians'. 68.

that both Christians and non-Christians in the elite had during the fourth century.[10] As has been noted by I. Sandwell, the very reason we can separate religious identities at all is that there was interaction between these groups.[11]

For a useful periodization of Antioch's period under Roman rule, we return to F.G. Burr. The tripartite division between before 212 CE, from 212 to 400 CE and finally from 400 to 638 CE is largely based on the development of Christianity within the city.[12] The middle period marks a time during which public pagan traditions were still being upheld, despite the fact that the city's Christian population would gradually outnumber non-Christians.[13]

P. Petit's 1955 work titled *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IVe siècle après J.C.* casts a long shadow over the historiography of both Libanius and the city of Antioch itself. Split into five parts, Petit's findings deal with a wide variety of topics regarding city life: institutions, games, religion and economics to name a few, illustrating the comprehensive nature of his research.[14] G. Downey's *Ancient Antioch* from 1963 similarly took on a task of significant proportions: his book describes the city's origins, development and eventual end from a large amount of sources ranging from Libanius to chemical analyses. In a republished, more accessible form of his 1961 contribution, Downey presents his work as a reconstruction of a city lost to time.[15] A.U. De Giorgi's *Ancient Antioch: From the Seleucid Era to the Islamic Conquest* (2016) embraced a similarly large-scale topic, for which his stated objective was to correct the record: he sought to "call into question the modern generalizations that often pervade Antioch's profile".[16] Libanius' relevance to the topic have allowed for his views to reverberate through academic literature: his perspective as an elite rhetorician no doubt differed tremendously from those who did not leave a literary footprint of their experience as an inhabitant of Antioch. J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, too, heavily emphasized the importance of Libanius' works for the study of Antioch. Liebeschuetz's *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (1972) is structured in a way that exemplifies the rhetorician's place as the focal point of discussions: the first chapter in his work is focused entirely on Libanius and further topics rely continuously on his letters and orations.[17] As Liebeschuetz notes, 'the fourth century was an age of change', and his analysis of institutional and cultural changes that occurred shows the extent to which

[10] Three strong examples of this are: S. Elm, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church: Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Vision of Rome* (Berkeley 2012). ; R. Cribiore, *Libanius the Sophist: Rhetoric, Reality, and Religion in the Fourth Century* (Ithaca NY 2013). ; I. Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge 2007).
[11] Sandwell, *Religious Identity* 3
[12] Burr, 'Libanius in relation to Christians' 65.
[13] Ibidem, 65-66.
[14] Petit, P, *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IVe siècle après J.C.* (Paris 1955) 3-4.
[15] Downey, G., *Ancient Antioch* (Princeton 1963) 9.
[16] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 9.
[17] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire (Leicester 1972) vii.

this was the case.[18] Having alluded to the later transformation of Antioch in his 1972 work, his 2001 publication *Decline and Fall of the Roman City* expands the scope both in time and space of these societal changes as one defining later centuries across the Roman world.[19] The extent to which empire-wide shifts applied to Antioch remains a complicated matter that oftentimes cannot truly be verified.

Identity is pivotal to this research, and is thus in need of a proper introduction. Put simply, the term is used as a synonym for those aspects of Antiochene society that made it distinct from those of others. It is a somewhat vague application of the term, but the work of A. Erll and A. Nünning in their handbook on cultural memory studies[20] has helped crystallize this concept into something workable. Recollection of the past is presented as something instrumental to the construction of identity. Erll's approach of utilizing 'modes of remembering' assumes 'that the past is not given, but must instead continually be re-constructed and re-presented'.[21] In that sense, I would suggest that it follows that the recollection of the past is essential in the pursuit of perpetuating a given identity. A. Confino rightly points out that collective memory of this past within society requires more than just representation - the process of receiving or rejecting that act of representation determines its actual influence on a society.[22] That is a limitation of my focus on the *Antiochikos* and the *Misopogon* in particular, as they are individual representations that require other sources to find out about their impact on society. However, the cultural identity ascribed to Antiochene society by Libanius and Julian respectively can be given shape by looking at the usage of past events in explaining the supposed behavior of the city's inhabitants. These are recollections of the past in and of themselves, revealing which aspects of said past are utilized in order to perpetuate a sense of identity.

In the *Antiochikos*, Libanius' words can be understood and analysed by the way he characterized the city's past and in effect brought it into his present day. In other words: what he mentioned and what he omitted was part of an exercise to portray an identity for the city and people of Antioch, and served as an integral part of the aforementioned re-construction and re-presentation of its history. The choice of 'portrayal' of said identity is intended to emphasize the fact that Libanius relied on already established notions of what it meant to be 'Antiochene', but had agency of his own in the creation of his oration. The character of its people, the traditions they upheld, the institutions that governed them - these changed over time. However, Antioch's identity as presented in a speech during the Olympic Games of 356 is a product of a specific time and place, and reflects Libanius' role as a rhetorician praising his place of birth. Libanius' individual interpretation of Antioch's collective identity shows which topics he considered to be

[18] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 167-242
[19] J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford 2001).
[20] A. Erll, A. Nünning eds., *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (Berlin 2008).
[21] Erll, Nünning, *Cultural Memory Studies* 7.
[22] A. Confino, 'Memory and the History of Mentalities' in: A. Erll, A. Nünning eds., *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (Berlin 2008) 77-84. Here: 81.

associated with that identity and what he deemed to be an appropriate representation of it in a public setting. Nevertheless, the *Antiochikos* is a piece of rhetoric that is not to be treated uncritically as a historical work - he was quite explicit about his desire to praise the city's heritage[23], which makes the omission of any less savory parts of Antioch's history easy to explain.

Scholarship on Julian has largely focused on his religious views. The extent to which he attempted to execute a religious program to rival Christianity remains an open question, even though L. Dingeldein presented a convincing argument for the emperor's motives.[24] He was in active competition with Christians over political power, morality and religious legitimacy.[25] The satire *Misopogon* illustrates many aspects of his personal habits, evidently contrasting sharply with the behavior that Antiochene society displayed during his stay in the city. S. Elm's 2012 work on emperor Julian and Gregory of Nazianzus has placed this visit in a wider context of 'competing visions of universalism' that allows puts further emphasis on the fact that after Constantine's adoption of the faith, Christianity faced internal division and external threats during the fourth century. [26] Nevertheless, it bears repeating that religious differences did not delineate a clear divide between pagans and Christians.

The immediate political and cultural context of Antiochene society in the middle of the fourth century serves as a basis for analysis on Libanius' and Julian's respective views on the city's cultural identity. These perspectives will be compared and contrasted in order to provide a societal framework within which these historical figures cast themselves in relation to the city's population and institutions.

The trajectory of Antioch's urban expansion was largely defined by its original Seleucid defenses, established in the fourth century CE.[27] De Giorgi notes the recurring theme of 'cramped spaces' in late antique sources and estimates the city's population to have been around half a million near the end of the fourth century - the urban footprint, at that point around 800 years old, was reaching its maximum capacity.[28] Despite environmental threats from earthquakes, floods and droughts, the urban population continued to expand well within the Roman period (from 64 BCE).[29]

[23] Libanius, 'The Antochikos: in Praise of Antioch', in: A.F. Norman transl., *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture as Observed by Libanius* (Liverpool 2000) 7-65.
[24] Dingeldein, 'Julian's Philosophy' 129.
[25] A. Finkelstein, *The Specter of the Jews: Emperor Julian and the Rhetoric of Ethnicity in Syrian Antioch* (Berkeley 2018).
[26] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism*.
[27] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 63.
[28] Ibidem, 65.
[29] Ibidem.

Following the example set by I. Sandwell, I will not try to assess the degree to which Antioch was 'Christianized' leading up to the middle of the fourth century. However, the characterization put forth by Van Hoof and Van Nuffelen of 'a largely Christian city'[30] echoes that of Norman, who refers to a 'large and active Christian element' within Antiochene society - those assessments can be corroborated with the works of Libanius and Julian.[31] In the *Misopogon*, the urban population's habits contrasted by those espoused by Julian play centre stage. Though the work does not refer to the Christians directly, his polemical work *Contra Galilaeos*, also written in Antioch, certainly does.[32]

Intermittent conflict with Sasanian Persia over Rome's eastern territories meant that Antiochene society would frequently interact with the military, although the nature of said interaction changed over time. During the Crisis of the Third Century, the Persians laid siege to and captured the city, possibly in 253[33], though they were forced to retreat soon after. Roman revolts in 270 and 303 provided further unrest in Antioch.[34] Libanius would use his depictions of these tumultuous events to construct the identity he ascribed to Antiochene society.

[30] L. van Hoof, P. van Nuffelen, 'Monarchy and Mass Communication: Antioch 362/3 Revisited' in: *The Journal of Roman Studies* 101 (Cambridge 2011) 166-184, here: 167.
[31] A.F. Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture as Observed by Libanius: Translated Texts for Historians Volume 34* (Liverpool 2000) xii.i
[32] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 272.
[33] G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucis to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton 1961). 588-589
[34] Downey, *A History of Antioch* 330.

Chapter 1: the *Antiochikos*

The *Antiochikos* was a speech by Libanius in praise of Antioch for the occasion of its Olympic Games in 356.[35] The rhetorician provided his audience with an overview of the city's history as well as its present state. While a wealth of information can be gleaned from its contents, the *Antiochikos* is invariably a product of Libanius' aims and perspective - the exercise was as much, if not more, one to show off the teacher's ability as a rhetorician as it was to inform the audience of the city's heritage. As has been noted by Norman, his audience were nevertheless his contemporaries with their own views on the city of Antioch, whether they inhabited it or were part of the elite that exchanged correspondence with Libanius.[36] Taking this into consideration, the work can indeed still be considered a valuable source for the construction of an 'urban memory' in the fourth century, as is suggested by Casevitz and Lagacherie.[37] The *Antiochikos* is, ultimately, a construction of an identity for the city which it praises. The validity of Libanius' assertions would invariably have been met by the challenge of the audience's preconceived notions of what 'Antioch' meant to them. The form in which his audience received his orations is somewhat unclear. Liebeschuetz suggests that actual speeches may have been 'aimed at very small groups of listeners or readers', depending on the topic and occasion for which it was written.[38] Based on evidence found by P. Petit in a letter Libanius wrote in 358/59, the oration known as the *Antiochikos* was performed to a minority of attendants to the Olympic Games and would also be circulated in written form.[39] Liebeschuetz goes on to state that the content of every individual speech must be utilized to suggest a possible context in which these occurred.[40] Any differences between the speech as it appeared at the Olympic Games in 356 and the text that survives today can obviously not be accounted for, but the possibility that the content of the work was not set in stone must be taken seriously. However, the only way to analyse the *Antiochikos* today is to accept the oration as it has survived in the present day. A.F. Norman's 2000 translation into English is the main version analysed[41], although its French counterpart from 2016 by Casevitz and Lagacherie has been consulted as well.[42]

This chapter has been divided into four sections, followed by a brief conclusion that brings them together. The first adds to the historical context provided in the introduction by providing a brief description of the transformation that occurred in Roman cities around this time - and how this relates to Antioch and Libanius' output.

[35] Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture* 3.
[36] Ibidem, 4.
[37] Casevitz, 'Notice' XXXI.
[38] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 25.
[39] Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture* 3.
[40] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 31
[41] Libanius, 'The Antochikos: in Praise of Antioch', in: A.F. Norman transl., *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture as Observed by Libanius* (Liverpool 2000) 7-65.
[42] Libanius, *Discours XI Antiochicos*, M. Casevitz, O. Lagacherie, C. Saliou transl. (Paris 2016).

The second section describes how the past was incorporated into the *Antiochikos*. Additionally, Libanius' representation of the city council in particular requires further investigation due to its seemingly idealized nature. Finally, an explanation for Libanius' depiction of Antioch will be sought in the realm of cultural memory, namely by applying some of the suggestions made by A. Assmann with regard to the dynamics of canonization, or 'cultural working memory' as it applied to the *Antiochikos*.

The city in transformation

One important aspect of various changes that occurred in the fourth century within Roman cities and Antioch in particular is that many of them were in their early stages or 'had scarcely begun'.[43] As a result, from a modern perspective these gradual shifts can be anticipated across centuries, whereas they may have gone unnoticed or appeared reversible at the time. It is an element of the middle of the fourth century that is more intimately linked with Julian, as his early death made the possibility of a decades-long reign of a pagan emperor a moot point. Without delving into what-if scenarios, the point has to be made that the gradual changes that did occur within Roman society (e.g. Christianization, increasing importance of the bishop within city life[44]) should take into consideration the possible uncertainty of its development when discussing its early stages.

Both on an empire-wide scale as well as the level of Antioch itself, within the gradual transformation of the Roman world that defined Late Antiquity there must be a distinction between continuity and discontinuity. An example given by Liebeschuetz is that whereas cities in Rome's western provinces faced an economic downturn in the third century, Antioch remained prosperous.[45] This assessment is based on archaeological findings by G. Tchalenko in the 1930s, which as De Giorgi points out has been challenged by later scholarship.[46] However, De Giorgi goes on to describe various sites that show the enlargement of settlements in the fourth and fifth centuries in Antioch's vicinity and suggests that economic activities had not stagnated.[47]

The notion of Antioch as a 'largely Christian city' during this time as described by Van Hoof and Van Nuffelen has been mentioned before.[48] Internal conflict between Christians as well as fraught relations between Jews and Christians stood in the way of any semblance of religious unity, which puts the continuation of pagan practice in Antioch in a context of a varied religious landscape rather than a clear majority that tolerated such religious customs.[49] The steady rise of Christian adherence in the city makes the question of continuity well-suited to Brown's original argument for the concept of Late

[43] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: CIty and Administration* 264.
[44] Ibidem, 261.
[45] Ibidem, 256.
[46] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 26.
[47] Ibidem, 127.
[48] L. van Hoof, P. van Nuffelen, 'Monarchy and Mass Communication' 167.
[49] A. Finkelstein, *The Specter of the Jews* 28-44.

Antiquity. After all, if such a process of Christianization exists throughout a time period, then this gradual change may be viewed as an element of continuity, even if its effect draws an ever-increasing contrast with the city's religious landscape before.

The omnipresent attention paid by both Libanius and Julian to Greek traditions should be viewed with some caution as it relates to this question of continuity. Just as Julian's paganism was a product of its time, so too was the concept of Hellenism. V.N. Makrides helpfully outlines the evolution of its significance. Hellenism in Late Antiquity 'came to portray the amalgam of ancient Greek culture as a *whole*, a broader cultural formation, of which Hellenic religion was an inseparable part.'[50] The term often appears to be interchangeable with 'Greekness' in academic works such as S. Elm's *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church*.[51] Rather than being an unreflective imitation of a sense of Greek unity as it existed during the days of Herodotus,[52] Hellenism in the fourth century needed to be reasserted. It is perhaps to be taken for granted that the notion of 'Greekness' evolved over time. However, as Elm suggests, the incorporation of 'Greekness' as well as *Romanitas* with Christian thought remained open to interpretation during this time.[53]

Antioch's Greek heritage is a focal point in the *Antiochikos*. A.F. Norman remarks on the various ways in which this is the case: not only does the oration follow a Greek tradition of laudations of a particular city, but it also exemplifies that 'a true Hellene is to be found … in language and education'.[54] References to deities and other mythical origins are favored to the exclusion of Christian elements - Norman rightly remarks that the omission of the Great Church in the *Antiochikos* stands out.[55] The lack of accommodation Christianity receives should, in my view, be seen as an example of Libanius' desire to compete for a claim to Antiochene identity. As the following section will show, the *Antiochikos* utilizes the past in a way that allows the city's population to incorporate the supposed virtues of their ancestors as part of their own prestige and self-image.

Putting the past in the present

The analysis by Casevitz and Lagacherie is a useful starting point for further research into the *Antiochikos*.[56] Firstly, they point out that ancient oratory demanded that a city should derive its nobility from its origins and kinship as if it were a person.[57] The appearance of various gods and even a claim that Alexander founded the city (§74) can therefore be explained as a way for Libanius to legitimize the excellence of Antioch. It is unlikely that he would create these quasi-mythical origins out of thin air - however, the

[50] V.N. Makrides, *Hellenic Temples and Christian Churches: A Concise History of the Religious Cultures of Greece from Antiquity to the Present* (New York 2009) 36-37.
[51] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 2.
[52] Makrides, *Temples and Churches* 37.
[53] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 2.
[54] Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture* 4-5.
[55] Ibidem, 5.
[56] Casevitz, 'Notice', XII-XVI.I
[57] Ibidem, XIX.

suggestion that 'many of the audience' were 'ignorant of its past glory' (§10) left him with at least some room to present a retelling of the city's past in a way that is allowed to distort or leave out less favorable episodes. For example, the setbacks faced by Antiochus the Great go unmentioned. Furthermore, the annexation of Antioch by the Romans is treated as if divinely ordained, effectively negating that it was in no position to defend itself, as has been pointed out by Norman.[58]

Additionally, Casevitz and Lagacherie mention that Libanius' choice to praise Antioch in the first place on the occasion of the Olympic Games at Daphne makes the oration stand out.[59] The subject matter may have been chosen by the rhetorician out of a desire to inform the audience of the city's history and thereby improving the general population's awareness of Antioch's supposed past. Nevertheless, the panegyrical nature of the oration means that the process Libanius is engaged in is as much remembering the past as it is forgetting it. A. Assmann's contribution to Erll's and Nünning's handbook on memory studies explains how this process occurs even when an individual has no particular motive - human beings, and societies, remember and forget all the time.[60] In the context of an oration created to praise a city and its virtues, the act of forgetting about unfavorable elements of the past becomes intentional.

In the *Antiochikos*, Libanius implies a distinction between a traditional past and more recent events that he categorizes as the present (§11), as later sections show. Between these two topics, he praises the council (§132-§149), which will be discussed later on in this chapter. More pertinent to the question of cultural identity is the rhetorician's treatment of the events that had occurred in the last century. The Persian invasion of 253 as well as Eugenius' revolt in 303 feature as episodes in which Antiochene society was said to have shown its virtues.

For the description of Eugenius' revolt, Libanius' intentions are quite explicit:

> "There would perhaps be no harm done in recounting the story of the revolt, for by this means the valour of the victors will appear more clearly."[61]

Once again the panegyrical nature of the oration comes to the fore. It leads us to a central question around the *Antiochikos*: does the format inhibit historians from drawing relevant information from this source? Liebeschuetz expresses his concerns.[62] As mentioned before, Libanius offers insights into many different aspects into Antiochene life during the fourth century. Nevertheless, it is emphatically *his* perspective. Eugenius, 'an officer with a regiment of infantry' at Seleuceia, is portrayed as an opportunistic pretender. He was said to have taken a purple robe from a statue, pounced on the

[58] Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture* 5.
[59] Casevitz, 'Notice' XI.
[60] A. Assmann, 'Canon and Archive' in: A. Erll and A. Nünning eds*., Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (Berlin 2008) 97-108.
[61] Libanius, 'Antiochikos' 38.
[62] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 137.

opportunity of taking Antioch as it had no military presence and was defeated by the Antiochene populace the same day he arrived.[63] The §157-§162 passage not only praises the courage shown by the city's population, but also points to their loyalty to the emperor.[64] More importantly, the treatment of an event that had occurred only half a century earlier contains elements of Thucydides' description of the Peloponnesian war as well as references to the Amazons.[65] The suggestion that the city was captured without a fight in the afternoon and subsequently recaptured by its unarmed inhabitants before nightfall would appear to be an exaggeration. Comparisons with ancient Greek conflicts and myths found in Libanius' description of Antioch's response to Eugenius' revolt are at the very least later additions that were perpetuated by him or even conceived for the occasion. Whichever one may be true, the conclusion is that Eugenius' revolt took only half a century at most to become part of Antiochene myth-making. Furthermore, the praise excludes no part of the city's population, with Libanius specifically pointing out that women took part in the fighting as well.[66] It allows all members of the city's population to claim the virtue of courage as their own by way of ancestry. Further emphasis is placed on the city's Hellenic tradition by favorable comparisons to Athens (§58, §66, §127, §164, §167, §171, §182 and §184).[67]

Antioch's council

Libanius' praise of the council imagines the hierarchy of the city as an organism, with the council acting as its root (§133). In that same paragraph, the importance of ancestry is once more noted. The oration continues in a way that suggests exaggeration, as Libanius asserts that the generosity of councillors acting as benefactors would sometimes reduce them to poverty (§134). He then connects this generosity to *Megalopsychia*, or 'generosity of the soul', which to the Antiochene elite was evidently a virtue they were proud to possess judging by its recurring appearances in mosaics.[68] The lavish expenditures on public baths and games, in the *Antiochikos* clearly shown to be virtuous acts, makes for a striking contrast with Julian's view of Antiochene morality - as will be shown in Chapter 2. Norman makes note of the fact that Libanius partly admits to the imperfect nature of Antioch's council, conceding that it has its differences of opinion with the Syrian governor (§140-§144).[69]

As has been described by Liebeschuetz, the council's responsibilities revolved around performing civic duties such as tax collection, organizing public amenities and passing resolutions to communicate with the emperor.[70] By the end of the fourth century, the number of influential members within Antioch's council had been greatly reduced and a new class, that of the *honorati*, 'were the new leaders of society', who were exempt from

[63] Libanius, 'Antiochikos' 38.
[64] For the classification of courage: Casevitz, 'Notice' XII-XIII; Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenism* 38.
[65] Libanius, 'Antiochikos' 39.
[66] Libanius, 'Antiochikos' 39.
[67] Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenism* 194
[68] Ibidem, 7.
[69] Ibidem, 35.
[70] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 167-168.

service in the council.[71] Evidently, council service was avoided by many who instead attempted to find official posts that avoided such duties.[72] As he asserts in the *Misopogon* (§371), Julian made attempts to rectify the loss of councillors in Antioch. At any rate, it is clear that the supposed eagerness of Antioch's elite of serving for the public good was heavily exaggerated by Libanius in the *Antiochikos*. His contemporaries, especially those who too were part of Antioch's upper echelon, would have known this based on their own experience. Liebeschuetz grants Libanius that the elite he described in the *Antiochikos* may have once been as upstanding as described before facing a 'complete demoralization'.[73] The downward spiral caused by internal rifts and corruption among councillors did not need to have come down from the lofty heights imagined by Libanius. Instead, the depiction of the council in the *Antiochikos* reads more like a vision of an idealized Antioch, in accordance with its imagined past and emphasizing oratorical ability.

The city's working memory

Antioch had existed in for about eight centuries before Libanius wrote an oration in praise of the city. In the *Antiochikos*, the rhetorician admits that it would be impossible (and indeed exhausting) to speak at length about all aspects of the city's past (§43), so he was forced to make a selection of what information was still accessible to him. As mentioned before, this skewed heavily towards what he could deploy for the purpose of glorifying Antioch's characteristics. In this section, I aim to show how A. Assmann's conception of active and passive cultural memory can help elucidate the *Antiochikos*' significance.

A. Assmann outlines cultural memory as a 'temporal framework that transcends the individual life span relating past, present, and future'.[74] Her article helps explain how the act of 'forgetting' on Libanius' part made the *Antiochikos* a potential filter for those aspects of Antiochene history he would rather avoid in a panegyrical format. She elaborates on the concept of cultural memory by emphasizing the long-term processes that form a 'canon' of 'cultural working memory'. It is divided into three 'core areas': the areas of religion, art and history.[75] The topic of history in particular is explained along the lines of how a nation-state's past is taught in modern times, although I see no reason to doubt the effectiveness of her approach with regard to the *Antiochikos*.

It must be acknowledged that the *Antiochikos* may very well fit into any of Assmann's three core areas. The oration itself and indeed Libanius' view on rhetoric is of a 'pseudo-religious' nature,[76] the exercise in itself requires an artistry in constructing a convincing argument and its content deals extensively with Antioch's past. It is sufficient to say, by my estimation, that aspects of all three areas may apply, even if the

[71] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 175.
[72] Ibidem, 176-177.
[73] Ibidem, 186.
[74] A. Assmann, 'Canon and Archive' 97.
[75] Ibidem, 100.
[76] Burr, 'Libanius in relation to Christians' 68.

categorization into neither religion, art or history truly makes sense for the *Antiochikos*. It was written at a time when a clear division between these spheres did not exist. Myth and 'genuine' historical events flowed into one narrative and can only be separated by modern scholarship. In terms of the functions of cultural memory that A. Assmann lists, the *Antiochikos* executes on one especially well: the act of presenting a subset of (in this instance) historical events deemed important.[77] In this context, 'historical events' must be extended to all events claimed to have occurred in the past, as this is how Libanius presented them. It would be anachronistic to suggest that Libanius could rely on an archive giving entry to 'the unhallowed bureaucratic space of a clean and neatly organized repository', in A. Assmann's words.[78] Nevertheless, he had access to various literary sources on the subject[79] and was in a position to be familiar with oral histories as a native of the city. Of these, he made a selection and opted to present these as being representative of the greater whole of Antioch's past (§43).

One final aspect of cultural working memory should be addressed: that of 'canonization', defined by the qualities of selection, value and duration.[80] The manner in which the long succession of monarchs is presented as a continuous streak of success (§126) shows how Libanius went to great lengths to portray the city's earlier days as collectively triumphant. Even if the *Antiochikos* generally deals with Antioch's past in chronological order, the period between Antiochus IV and the third century receives very little attention. In fact, this is where the distinction pointed out earlier between a longer-term, traditional past and relatively recent history occurs within the oration. The question of duration remains to be tackled: the particular attention paid to Eugenius' revolt stands out. For a relatively recent event occurring just over half a century earlier, it is surprising that Libanius already connected the episode to Greek myth, outlined before. With that in mind, the *Antiochikos* should be viewed as an active effort by Libanius to sanctify this recent past along with what probably had already been venerated stories from Antioch's longer-term history.

In conclusion, the *Antiochikos* acts an example of Libanius affecting cultural memory by transmitting and omitting as he wished within the reasonable confines that his contemporaries would have allowed him to operate in. His effort to portray the council as a highly venerated and morally excellent citizen body must surely not have been viewed as an attempt to accurately describe its workings, but it may signal how he desired Antiochene society to behave in an idealized world. Libanius opted to show the city's recent past in a way that put it alongside the acts of gods and myth, which shows the agency that an orator of his standing could have in shaping the definition of Antiochene identity.

[77] A. Assmann, 'Canon and Archive' 101.
[78] Ibidem, 102.
[79] Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture* 15.
[80] A. Assmann, 'Canon and Archive' 100.

Chapter 2: the *Misopogon*

The six-year timeframe between the *Antiochikos* and the *Misopogon* featured the tumultuous transition from Constantius II to Julian, his cousin and only male relative left alive. The prospect of civil war was averted by the former's death, which left Julian as his only viable successor.[81] S. Elm describes that as he travelled further east to confront Constantius, the more he was viewed by those he encountered as a divinely mandated figure.[82] Having kept up the appearance of amiability with his cousin while he was alive, Julian's rhetoric turned against his dynastic predecessors once he had gained sole rule.[83] Additionally, Christianity lost its imperial support and was forced to contend with a possible pagan counterpart, although that was never given the time to materialize as Julian met his early demise during a military campaign in Persia.

This chapter deals with a sequence of topics that are quite closely related. Firstly, the question of Julian's religious aims must be addressed. Secondly, the events that transpired during Julian's stay at Antioch will be described as they help contextualise the *Misopogon* as a product of the interactions that Julian had with Antioch's population. Finally, the *Misopogon* itself will be analysed with a focus on the question of how the city is described in it. What characteristics did Julian associate with Antioch? More importantly, why did he find it necessary to critique the city's population in this manner? What purpose did his characterization of the Antiochenes serve? How does it compare to Libanius' representation of the city in the *Antiochikos*?

Julian's religion

The topic of Julian's 'School Edict' is one that is closely associated with the allegation from later authors in Antiquity that the emperor was engaged in the persecution of Christians. The reversal of imperial policy did much to strengthen the position of pagan practices, with inscriptions celebrating Julian's restoration of its legality after Constantius had banned its worship a few years earlier.[84] The edict in question was supposedly issued in Ancyra on June 17, 362.[85] As H.C. Teitler notes, its phrasing appears rather mundane for a law that was said to have been a persecutory act against Christians.[86] Calling for 'masters of studies and teachers' to 'excel first in character, then in eloquence', the law effectively called for municipal approval of teaching positions. However, Teitler adds to this by pointing to one of Julian's letters, which shows that what he meant was that a teacher of the classics should believe in what he teaches.[87] As L. Dingeldein concludes, Julian was informed by his personal philosophy in his attempt

[81] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 270.
[82] Ibidem, 270.
[83] Teitler, *The last pagan emperor* 36.
[84] Ibidem, 49-50, 57-58.
[85] Ibidem, 65.
[86] Ibidem, 65-66.
[87] Ibidem, 66.

to 'legitimize and authorize his religious program in a manner analogous to the authorization strategies of literate Christian bishops.'[88] The intent of such authorizations was to effectively exclude Christians from classical education, as they would have to renounce their faith to study the likes of Homer and Hesiod.[89] Elm emphasizes this promotion of paganism over Christianity by pointing to an edict from twelve days later on June 29 that was intended to further the construction of pagan temples.[90]

Inscriptions found in Syria from Julian's reign honor him with the title of *templorum restaurator*.[91] This concept of 'restoration' must not distract from the fact that Julian had been greatly influenced by Christianity, as similarities within his proposed religious program with the Christian faith show.[92] An organized, centralized religion based on pagan practices and classical texts would have differed greatly from the loose collection of various local customs, cults and shrines that characterized the Roman empire before the rise of Christianity. With Julian's ascension to sole ruler, his written words came to represent imperial policy even to private individuals. His communications, like those of his predecessors, were treated with reverence and ritual upon arrival at the destination. Elm outlines this as well as the emperor's persona as it was known to his subjects.[93] As a result, his words along with his deeds can be analysed with the knowledge that they were familiar to the public and not merely as the correspondence between the elite of the Roman world.

As has been asserted by P. Athanassiadi, Julian's philosophical stance greatly influenced his policies.[94] An instructional letter from the emperor, possibly during his stay in Antioch, described the behavior he wished to see from priests. These revolve around the teaching of 'pious thinkers' such as Plato, Aristotle and the followers of Chrysippus and Zeno and exemplifying Neoplatonic philosophy in practice. These priests were to be the living embodiment of Julian's morality.[95] The Greek pantheon was to be presented as internally unified and not meaning to cause harm to humanity.[96] The emperor's 361 satire *Caesares* (also known as *Symposium* or *Kronia*[97]) portrays the gods as moral arbiters to his imperial predecessors. Upon death, an individual would be judged based on the extent to which they had sought to imitate the gods.[98] The behavior Julian

[88] Dingeldein, 'Julian's Philosophy' 129.
[89] Teitler, *The last pagan emperor* 66.
[90] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 140.
[91] Teitler, *The last pagan emperor* 51.
[92] Dingeldein, 'Julian's Philosophy' 129.
[93] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 69-71.
[94] P. Athanassiadi, *Julian and Hellenism: An Intellectual Biography.* (Oxford, 1981).
[95] K. Meiling, *Afvallige contra afvalligen: keuze uit zijn geschrfiten* (Groningen 2016) 85-100.
[96] Ibidem, 96.
[97] Teitler, *The last pagan emperor* 36.
[98] Julian, *Misopogon*, W.C. Wright transl., www.attalus.org/translate/misopogon.html (accessed 12 March 2020).

endorsed, as has been noted by K. Meiling, was in fact a form a asceticism not entirely unlike that of Christian religious orders.[99] The supposed lack of piety shown by pagan priests had, according to Julian, allowed Christianity to spread.[100]

The dilapidated temple

Julian travelled from Constantinople to Antioch in 362 in preparation for war with Persia. Along the way he visited sacred sites that prolonged the journey.[101] As Elm puts it, 'the favor of the gods would determine the outcome of the military campaign'.[102] As much as the focus will be on the city of Antioch in the following section, his visit must be viewed within the context of the approaching confrontation with Persia. Elm outlines Julian's view of the city before he had interacted with the Antiochene population. Antioch represented 'Greekness' through its importance as a center of philosophy and its cultural heritage.[103] For his imperial regime, it was viewed as 'an important center for his program'.[104] Nevertheless, there existed a tension between Antioch's Hellenism and its importance as a Christian city - one that in the emperor's mind could not be compatible. After all, Christians were deemed as poor citizens of the empire for their abandonment of the traditional pagan gods.[105] In discussing the interaction Julian had with the inhabitants of Antioch, Elm's suggestion to rely on sources shortly after the emperor's death only sparingly is highly important. Julian's visit would soon be cast by later authors as one full of ill omens, anticipating his demise.[106]

A. Finkelstein has shown the degree to which Julian sought to create a stable identity for Hellenism: many different philosophical traditions, often with quite different views on salvation and ritual practices.[107] As mentioned before, his religious views were a novelty at the time and he could therefore not simply rely on the disestablishment of Christianity and re-establishment of a pagan tradition that had merely fallen out of favor. Julian's view of Hellenism did not simply represent the totality of Greek traditions, but instead emphasized the third-century integration by Neoplatonists of beliefs and practices - without following pagan traditions, one could not be a Hellene.[108] Finkelstein remarks that the ethnic dimension of 'Hellenic', alongside 'Judeans' and 'Galileans' for Jews and Christians respectively, has often been overlooked by scholars in favor of its religious connotations.[109] This recontextualizes the gradual Christianization of Antioch into one in which, in Julian's eyes, the city was gradually being stripped of its identity - another people, deemed impious, had taken ownership to the detriment of its original

[99] Meiling, *Afvallige contra afvalligen* 21.
[100] Ibidem, 101.
[101] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 136-137.
[102] Ibidem.
[103] Ibidem, 271.
[104] Downey, *Ancient Antioch* 163.
[105] Ibidem, 161.
[106] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 272.
[107] Finkelstein, *Specter of the Jews* 15.
[108] Ibidem, 18.
[109] Ibidem, 20.

heritage.
In the winter of 361-362, a drought had led to food shortages in Antioch. As a result, Julian's arrival was celebrated and hopes were high that he could help save the population from its predicament.[110] However, the emperor delayed any relief efforts until October 362. The Antiochene population, forced to facilitate the army that accompanied Julian, became increasingly hostile towards the emperor as the shortages worsened into the following winter.[111] He had expanded the amount of council members in an effort to counteract the understaffing of the municipal administration.[112] At the same time, Julian sacrificed at pagan temples and came to the realization that the Antiochenes were largely apathetic to these rituals.[113] Another incident further exacerbated the rift between Julian and the Antiochenes. The temple of Apollo, situated at Daphne, had not been fully restored by the time Julian visited it to celebrate the festival of the deity despite the emperor's orders to do so. A few months later, the temple caught fire - Julian suspected Christians to have set it alight and ordered that the Great Church be closed in retaliation.[114] This was the context in which *Misopogon* was created: a hostile environment between ruler and subjects amidst the challenge of food scarcity and clashing traditions. Rather than being a city that followed in lockstep with Julian's notions of Hellenism, he found Antioch's population unwilling to do so.

The *Misopogon*: a reversal of fortune

Academic explanations of the *Misopogon* have varied greatly over time. At face value, the alternate title (*Antiochikos*) suggests a panegyric very much like Libanius' oration.[115] Often without including the context of Antioch's food shortage as well as the presence of a Roman army about to go on campaign, the work has led historians to question Julian's personal state of mind.[116] M. Gleason's 1986 article *Festive satire: Julian's Misopogon and the new year at Antioch* signalled a change in this approach: she argued that while 'of course the emperor had a psyche', the emperor's interaction with the people of Antioch would have revolved around what was communicated, not what he personally intended to say.[117] She highlights the options available to Julian in response to his acrimonious interaction with the Antiochenes: 'massacre, loss of metropolitan status, executions, exile, and confiscation'.[118] Julian's responded with insults: the *Misopogon* is essentially an attack on the Antiochene population, criticising its supposed excesses and lack of piety. Gleason places the *Misopogon* in a tradition of imperial 'edicts of chastisement' criticizing the general population, listing examples that range from Nero to the Byzantine

[110] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 273.
[111] Ibidem, 275.
[112] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 175-176.
[113] Downey, *Ancient Antioch* 166-167.
[114] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 276-277.
[115] Gleason, M.W., 'Festive Satire: Julian's Misopogon and the New Year at Antioch' in: *The Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1986) 106-119, here 106.
[116] Ibidem.
[117] Ibidem.
[118] Ibidem, 115.

era.[119] L. van Hoof and P. van Nuffelen build on Gleason's work with regard to imperial mass communication, but argue that the *Misopogon* was not merely an ordinary example of interaction between emperor and populace.[120]

Antioch's inhabitants encountered the *Misopogon* displayed near the Regia, the city's royal street.[121] The site was known as the Tetrapylon of the Elephants - it was a passageway consisting of four arches and featured said elephants in reference to Antioch's Seleucid origins. As De Giorgi notes, this site as a great source of patriotism and unity was an unsurprising location to signal the end of Julian's aspirations for the city's future.[122] C. Shepardson outlines the power dynamics that existed for Antioch's prestigious places during this time, showing that the quest for control of important sites was far from limited to the emperor. In fact, she considered Julian and Libanius to be engaged in a negotiation of sorts: whereas the former occupied the highest office in the empire, the rhetorician was a senior figure of his native city and a teacher of rhetoric as opposed to a student.[123] They were in agreement with regard to the restoration of ancient traditions and support of classical teaching.[124] Nevertheless, Libanius did not attend Julian's daily sacrifices without being invited, which according to Shepardson was intended to show the rhetorician's independence and 'rejected the emperor's presumption of control, and in the process renegotiated the power dynamics between them'.[125]

Having proven himself unable to rid Antioch of its troubles in the eyes of its inhabitants, Julian resorted to the rejection of the city's prestige - in effect, the *Misopogon* reversed the premise of the *Antiochikos*. In Julian's text, he chastises himself for misunderstanding the 'temper of this city' (§347), which he attributes to the allegedly incestuous and ostentatious ways of Antiochus, whose father had founded the city.[126] The appeal to ancestry found in the *Antiochikos* therefore becomes an original sin of sorts, condemning the Antiochenes to lives of extravagance:

> "Now since this was the conduct of Antiochus, I have no right to be angry with his descendants when they emulate their founder or him who gave his name to the city. For just as in the case of plants it is natural that their qualities should be transmitted for a long time, or rather that, in general, the succeeding generation should resemble its ancestors; so too in the case of human beings it is natural that

[119] Gleason, 'Festive satire' 115-116.
[120] L. van Hoof, P. van Nuffelen, 'Monarchy and Mass Communication' 168.
[121] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 327.
[122] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 53.
[123] C. Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places: Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy* (Berkeley 2014) 41.
[124] Ibidem, 45-46.
[125] Ibidem, 48.
[126] Julian, *Misopogon*, W.C. Wright transl., www.attalus.org/translate/misopogon.html (accessed 17 March 2020) [347].

the morals of descendants should resemble those of their ancestors."[127]

Especially barbed is the comparison Julian makes between Antioch and Athens. Whereas Athenians could praise themselves on their humane nature and pursuit of honor (§348B), the Antiochenes emulated the behavior of "liars and dancers" (§348D).[128] It is a quite pronounced contrast to the appearance of Athens in the *Antiochikos*: instead of a favorable comparison and connection, the cities exist as opposites within the Greek world in Julian's view. Earlier on in the *Misopogon*, the emperor delves into the Antiochenes' supposed focus on external qualities. Julian claims he was not blessed by nature with regard to his physical appearance (§338B), going into great detail about his 'ill-conditioned and shabby' (§339B) looks. Whereas the Antiochenes are clean-shaven and effeminate in disposition, Julian's body is in 'rough condition' in part due to a strict way of life (§339C). The emperor's reticence with regard to visiting theaters, too, draws a stark contrast with the Antiochene way of life as presented by Julian. The hyperbole of there being 'more mimes than ordinary citizens' (§342B) in Antioch serves as a useful *pars pro toto* for the emperor's overall characterization of the populace.

The negative experience of Julian's stay in Antioch prompted him to attack the validity of the virtues of its population as described by Libanius. While it is a possibility that the *Antiochikos* informed aspects of the *Misopogon*, this does not need to be the case. The references to Athens, both as a positive comparison and a contrast to signify Antioch's shortcomings, may simply be seen as examples of a general association that those living in the fourth century made between the two cities. Both individuals characterized Antioch as a prosperous city. For Libanius, the general abundance of natural resources was proof of the divine support Antioch received. Julian, encountering the city in the midst of famine, instead sought the restoration of what he believed to have been the correct way of currying favor with the gods, despite the Antiochenes' apathy to such endeavors.

A. Assmann's deployment of cultural memory (religion, art and history[129]) may once more be of use, although the *Misopogon* is not structured similarly to the *Antiochikos* in that it does not claim to trace Antioch's history. Much of the text deals with present concerns, but Julian's characterization of the Antiochenes relies heavily on the city's earliest days. Finkelstein's examination of Julian's ethnographic basis for the division of peoples (i.e. Hellenes, Galileans, et cetera) acts as a useful guide into the emperor's motives in the *Misopogon*.[130] Julian presented ethnological arguments that allowed him to categorize Jews as Judeans limited to Judea: 'Judeans have a land, a god, a temple, a cult, and ancestral laws' as Finkelstein summarizes.[131] In a similar vein, the ancestry of Antioch acts as an explanatory factor for the behavior shown by the people who lived in the same city during the fourth century. The only part of Antioch's history that is

[127] Ibidem, [348B].
[128] Julian, *Misopogon* [348D].
[129] A. Assmann, 'Canon and Archive' 100.
[130] Finkelstein, *Specter of the Jews* 45.
[131] Ibidem, 59.

remarked upon is its early foundations.[132] In effect, the city's 'temper' is presented as if unable to move away from its conception eight centuries earlier. Taking into account the Seleucid connection to the site of the *Misopogon*'s publication, it appears Julian was well aware of the value of Antioch's earliest past as a unifying identity for its people.[133] The Tetrapylon the Elephants served as a site of active remembering, as it fits into A. Assmann's framework, of the city's Seleucid origins.[134] Julian in effect recontextualized the space into one that signified the root cause of Antioch's faults. To further damage the city's reputation, Julian utilized the sway of his imperial office in vowing to never return.[135]

[132] Julian, *Misopogon* [347]
[133] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 53.
[134] A. Assmann, 'Canon and Archive' 99.
[135] Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places* 49.

Chapter 3: modern representations

In this chapter, I will illustrate various ways in which Antioch has been represented in modern scholarship. The aim of this exercise is to understand the function that Libanius and Julian serve in academic literature and assess the possibilities and limitations of different approaches to Antioch. The question of identity in an individual and collective sense remains closely associated with memory in different forms, both in the ancient sources in question as well as modern scholarship. The identity of Julian especially has been shaped in part by how he was described by later Christian authors, which has affected how his visit to Antioch has been viewed. I will conclude this chapter with a suggestion for the re-evaluation of Antiochene identity, which has been greatly informed by the application of cultural memory. How thoroughly can such an identity be defined? How far, both methodologically and geographically, should it reach?

Approaches to Antioch

> "The study and reconstruction of a city that has perished in this fashion is one of the most fascinating tasks a scholar can undertake. (...) The past is part of the present -and through the present helps shape the future- and we come to realize that in its day Antioch played its part in the formation of our own world."[136]

Glanville Downey's 1961 work *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucis to the Arab Conquest* covers the city's history from before Alexander the Great to a brief description of Antioch through the Middle Ages. His 1963 republication served to expand the audience of Antiochene history beyond scholars, which condenses his findings down to a more manageable narrative. After the Byzantine defeat at Yarmuk (636 CE), Downey pronounces the end of Antioch as it existed in the Greco-Roman world.[137] The span of time covered by *Ancient Antioch* is therefore between the fourth century BCE and the seventh century CE, although much of the discourse on Antioch's early history relies on sources from centuries later, including Libanius. Downey's chronology therefore becomes more complicated than it appears at first sight: he traces the city's origins in large part by including its founding myths, noting the supposed divine favor it enjoyed.[138] Downey compares the archaeological findings of the 1930s with written accounts of the city, with the latter in effect acting as a point of departure.[139] In his conclusion, Antioch 'acted' in certain ways, 'served a role' and 'made its contribution' to the modern world.[140] Implicit in his assessment is that his sources represent the city as a whole, which did much to emphasize the Antiochene cultural values espoused by Libanius. In

[136] Downey, *Ancient Antioch* 9.
[137] Ibidem, 271.
[138] Ibidem, 4-5, 27-44.
[139] Ibidem, 7, 16.
[140] Ibidem, 273-278.

effect, the rhetorician's praise reverberates into Downey's account of the city.
J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz's 1972 work *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* takes a quite different approach. Rather than seeking to define the city's importance across a vast time frame, Liebeschuetz delves into the social, economic and administrative circumstances that shaped the fourth century. His focus on a smaller time period accommodates for a thematic treatment of the subject: perhaps as a result, Libanius' role in shaping the modern viewpoint on ancient Antioch can be accounted for. In fact, the rhetorician's influence is noted immediately and a survey of his life and writings comprises the first chapter in Liebeschuetz's work.[141] A major concern is that Libanius' orations represent a unique part of his oeuvre of which no similar collection from another ancient author is known.[142] Nevertheless, having taken into account the ways in which Libanius sought to present his arguments throughout his writings, Liebeschuetz contends that the rhetorician's considerations were 'sound and worth considering'.[143]

Liebeschuetz attempts to cover all social strata of Antioch in one form or another: detailed evidence for the non-elite of Antiochene society is hard to come by, so the focus on the city's authorities and institutions should not come as a surprise. The account is helped greatly by the inclusion of an empire-wide context, which Liebeschuetz would eventually elaborate on in his 2001 *Decline and Fall of the Roman City*.[144] This allows him to more critically engage with Libanius' assertions and question their validity. At the same time, the description of Antioch's social, economic and administrative processes provides a more nuanced view of changes occurring around this time, such as Rostovtzeff's assertion that the Crisis of the Third Century had effectively destroyed self-governance among cities in the empire.[145] Another important addition to Antioch's representation in modern scholarship is Liebeschuetz's consideration of the city's limits: tombstones mentioning the deceased individual's birthplace refer both to a given village as well as the city it belonged to, showing the extent of Antioch's reach as it was perceived in Antiquity.[146]

Isabella Sandwell's *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews and Christians in Antioch* (2007) describes Antioch within a context of religious identity, incorporating the works of Downey and Liebeschuetz in order to introduce the city into her analysis. In essence, the question of reputation takes centre stage: Antioch was 'famously Christian' and known as a 'city of great learning' by those living within the empire in the fourth century.[147] Sandwell's choice of presenting the work as one investigating the religious identity *within* Antioch rather than *of* Antioch causes a subtle yet meaningful alteration

[141] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* xii.i
[142] Ibidem, 23
[143] Ibidem 39
[144] Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*.
[145] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 257.
[146] Ibidem, 40.
[147] Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity* 34-35.

of how the city is represented. Instead of defining Antioch as a whole, the historical processes described take place within a larger entity - an entity that in itself is not the main topic at hand.

Andrea U. De Giorgi's 2016 work *Ancient Antioch: from the Seleucid Era to the Islamic Conquest* stands out in its broad approach as well due to its many contributions to the question of the representation of Antioch.[148] While its topic and time frame are similar to that of Downey, De Giorgi's objective is to argue against certain trends he witnesses in Antiochene historiography. One such trend is to label the Antiochenes as 'the fickle and the frivolous, dissolute folks with a bent for games and obscene festivals'.[149] Additionally, his assessment is that the city has often been discussed 'atomistically', without much attention paid to the countryside.[150] Asserting that 'Antioch is far from lost', he contradicts the recurring theme in historiography that speaks of it as a 'sophisticated city' - a view that is rightly pointed out as one that focuses heavily on the perspective of the elite.[151]

The workings of memory

Having surveyed a selection of significant contributions to the understanding of Antiochene society, I will now evaluate how a new Antiochene identity has been established by modern scholarship. This goes beyond 'what we know' about Antioch: this section questions how we should view the aforementioned scholarly works in a broader framework. Understanding what Antioch represented to Libanius and Julian respectively is one thing; making sense of quite distinct approaches to Antiochene identity as a whole is quite another. For this purpose, Jan Assmann's contribution to the 2008 memory studies handbook edited by Erll and Nünning can be rather useful.[152]

J. Assmann outlines three levels of memory associated with their own temporal quality and identity. Individual memory is tied to an 'inner self', communicative memory to that of a 'social self' closely tied to the perceived role one has within their own community and cultural memory exists as a property of cultural identity, informing its content over large spans of time.[153] Crucially, cultural memory may survive in a disembodied form (such as a text)[154] - which brings us to an aspect of the *Antiochikos* that are highly important when discussing Libanius' role as a source on Antiochene memory and identity. How does one characterize the information Libanius used to construct the *Antiochikos*? A mixture of sources, including written works, oral histories and monuments were put through the 'filter' of Libanius' interpretation and intentions

[148] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch.*
[149] Ibidem, 165.
[150] Ibidem, 3-5.
[151] Ibidem, 9.
[152] J. Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory' in: A. Erll, A. Nünning eds, *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdiscplinary Handbook* (Berlin 2008) 109-118.
[153] Ibidem, 109.
[154] Ibidem, 111.

before its end product turned out to be a panegyric in honor of Antioch delivered in 356 CE on the occasion of the Olympic Games at Daphne. As described in Chapter 1, the work itself transmits these older traditions in a selected form. Needless to say, the individual memories of Libanius have perished along with the individual - so too has the Antioch's communicative memory, which as J. Assmann explains 'has only a limited time depth which normally reaches no farther back than eighty years'.[155] Nevertheless, the *Antiochikos'* reference to Eugenius' revolt, which had occurred half a century before Libanius wrote his panegyric, would have been part of this level of memory in Libanius' day. This, by my estimation, is what has not been fully explored in analyses that include Libanius' output. Between the cultural memory transmitted to him, which includes the city's founding myths, and the events that occurred within the span of the rhetorician's own life lies this level of communicative memory. The earlier mentioned passage that refers to the common Antiochenes of 303 as heroic figures (§159-§162)[156] should be viewed as one that, consciously or not, transferred the unwritten, non-institutional communicative memory of Antiochene society into the realm of cultural memory.

To return to the studies mentioned in this chapter: each approach to Antioch treats the workings of cultural memory differently. While it may be a useful exercise to include many more historical works that precede Downey, I would argue that the sample provided here represents a significant enough variety of perspectives and methodologies - not only that, but they have all either remained relevant within current scholarship or, in the case of De Giorgi and to a lesser extent Sandwell, are still quite recent. Downey's contribution relies on Libanius' references of the city's early history to an extent that it cannot be maintained as a viable reconstruction - for that, De Giorgi offers an account that is supported by far more recent methods and sources. Needless to say, that is hardly surprising for a work that is now over half a century old. However, Downey's research can nevertheless be considered a valuable starting point for Antiochene cultural memory in the fourth century. Liebeschuetz's analysis avoids the issue of long-term memories altogether: Libanius is utilized only as a source for when he was alive. Sandwell condenses the history of Antioch for the purpose of a general overview: once more, the time period analysed stays within the boundaries of Libanius' lifetime. However, she refers back to Downey and Liebeschuetz, of whom only the former attempted to construct a complete overview of Antioch's Greco-Roman era. Finally, De Giorgi limits the authority of Libanius' words by pointing to its contradictions with archaeological evidence - at the very least, 'Libanius simply tells one side of the story'.[157] De Giorgi's work may not make use of the concept of 'cultural memory' directly or its adjacent terms, but in effect its content provides ample evidence for its workings in Antioch. Not only foundation myths are mentioned such as the theft of Seleukos' sacrificial meat to Zeus as a potent sign of Antioch's destined location,[158] but also the Bourg-es-Sleyb relief showing the persistence of such myths among Antiochene society.

[155] J. Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory' 111.
[156] Libanius, 'Antiochikos: in praise of Antioch' 38-39.
[157] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 26.
[158] Ibidem, 42.

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Representation versus reconstruction

It should not come as a surprise that Antioch is described differently in discourses on the writings of Libanius compared to how it is reconstructed in works such as those of Downey, Liebeschuetz and De Giorgi. The format of epideictic oratory, as Norman explains, allowed for a city to be lauded as a force of civilization.[160] Even more abstract was the notion of praising the heritage of one's city as if it were a person,[161] deriving its prestige from its foundation. In other words, Antioch appears as a rhetorical device and its information is thus seemingly of limited use, notwithstanding the suggestion by Casevitz and Lagacherie to utilize the *Antiochikos* as a source for '*la mémoire urbaine d'Antioche*'.[162] In other words, this approach contrasts somewhat with efforts to reconstruct the city's past - here, the focus is on how Antioch was represented by fourth-century sources. The similarity between the two approaches is the figure of Libanius, whose importance as a source for a large-scale history of Antioch has only waned with De Giorgi's contribution.

Despite the brevity of Julian's reign, historical interest in the last pagan emperor has never relented. Along with Libanius as well as Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom, his religious leanings serve as an intriguing case study for religious identity in the fourth century.[163] His tumultuous stay in Antioch was cast as an ill omen by Christian authors[164] and his supposed persecution of Christians, also perpetuated by these same authors, has quite recently been given a more nuanced analysis.[165] The *Misopogon*'s reception has had a pivotal role in the understanding of the emperor's visit; questions on the degree to which the satire is a 'normal' imperial text have not quite been answered fully. Both Gleason and Van Hoof / Van Nuffelen point out the importance of precedent as well as context with regard to the *Misopogon*.[166] On the question of precedent: previous emperors had made similar attempts to influence the impression an outside observer would have on a local issue between the Roman authorities and its subjects.[167] The context of Antioch's food shortages and economic hardship, the clash between Julian's austere lifestyle and paganism against Antiochene alleged 'uncivilized temper' and, finally, the anticipation of a Persian campaign complete with the stress of an army present in the city.

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[159] Ibidem, 43-44.
[160] Norman, *Antioch as a Centre of Hellenic Culture* 4.
[161] Casevitz, 'Notice', XIX.
[162] Ibidem, XXXIII.
[163] See: V. Limberis, '"Religion" as the Cipher for Identity: the Cases of Emperor Julian, Libanius, and Gregory Nazianzus' in: The Harvard Theological Review 93-4 (2000) 373-400. ; M. Marcos, '"He forced with gentleness": emperor Julian's attitude to religious coercion' in: AnTard 17 (2009) 191-204 ; K. Meiling, *Afvallige contra afvalligen: keuze uit zijn geschriften* (Groningen 2016).
[164] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 277.
[165] Teitler, *The last pagan emperor*.
[166] L. van Hoof, P. van Nuffelen, 'Antioch 362/3 revisited' 167.
[167] M. Gleason, 'Festive satire' 114-117.

The contrast between Julian's high expectations of the city and the acrimony of his encounter with the city has already been outlined by Elm, but it deserves to be evaluated with aspects relating to cultural memory coming to the fore.[168] The emperor's aims for the city were based in part on an external factor: Constantinople had already been defined as a Christian capital, 'polluted' in the words of Elm,[169] to which Antioch could be a counterweight. This may have been a motivation, too, for making changes to the membership of the council in Antioch[170] - mirroring the efforts by Constantine and his successors to turn Constantinople into a New Rome. The hereditary status of Antioch as a Greek city with -as Libanius would have it- its foundations linked to Alexander the Great would have been of much use had these ambitions come to fruition. Instead, Julian attacked the cultural memory of Antioch's Seleucid origins and cast it as the root cause for the city's perceived immoralities. 'The interplay of present and past in cultural context', as Erll defines cultural memory, absolutely applies to the *Misopogon*.[171]

Towards an Antiochene identity

This integration of past and present that memory studies provides is not only applicable to the sources discussed. Modern scholarship has relied heavily on this notion, even if it is not explicitly contextualised as an exercise of cultural memory. The works of Downey and De Giorgi are particularly clear examples of this in practice. Both commence with the present city of Antakya, capital of the Hatay province in Syria, described by Downey as a 'sleepy, rather dingy town'[172] - in De Giorgi's narration, the town is an example of modernization destroying the past (in this case, the last surviving Roman bridge).[173] These descriptions emphasize the disappearance of an Antiochene identity in the modern world. Nevertheless, De Giorgi's contention that Antioch is 'far from lost' should be a sufficient reminder that the exercise of reconstructing the city's past is not a futile effort. While the attention paid to Antakya is understandably brief, its inclusion serves two important functions: it helps the reader in placing Antioch's remains in the present world and suggests a stark contrast with the location's vaunted past. The lack of cultivation of the site's cultural heritage indeed suggests that the old city's identity is not claimed by those living in its vicinity, at least not anymore. However, scholarly attention has led to the development of a 'new' Antioch of sorts: its identity is displayed across pages and exists as a representation of a society that no longer exists.

What are its characteristics? These vary greatly despite sharing some similarities, as the example of the treatment of Antakya shows. They depend almost entirely on the specific context of the research in question. De Giorgi presents the city as an 'agent of

[168] Elm, *Sons of Hellenism* 271.
[169] Ibidem
[170] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 181.
[171] A. Erll, 'Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction' in: A. Erll, A. Nünning eds., *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* 2.
[172] Downey, *Ancient Antioch* 3.
[173] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 2.

transformation', its urban landscape as well as its rural expanse drawing the *oikoumene* of the Greco-Roman world further eastward, contributing to the eventual establishment of Constantinople as the imperial capital.[174] Antioch's 'civic identity', as J. Harries puts it, was greatly impacted by its imperial presence during the fourth century.[175] The 'now very Christian city' acts as the stage upon which 'Julian's prickly satire shows his increasing difficulties in coping with a world with which he was out of step.[176] While Harries' argument revolves around the emperor, the 'world' in the context of the *Misopogon* was Antioch. Indeed, any account of Julian's satire should reflect this fact. Sandwell goes to great lengths to characterize Antioch for the purpose of understanding religious identity in the fourth century - nevertheless, her description is built atop the foundation laid by the likes of Downey and Liebeschuetz.[177] Of course, referring back to historiography is one thing - any historical tradition can be argued to possess its own characteristics. However, as De Giorgi indicates, there are certain generalities that have remained pervasive aspects of Antiochene studies, greatly influenced by Libanius.

My argument, then, is that the pursuit of Antioch's identity should be recontextualized. Much work has been done on Libanius' writings, and many findings even of decades-old research remain viable - the contents of a work such as the *Antiochikos* offers a tantalizing suggestion of a cultural depth that survives only in part. However, its primary use to historians ought to be its individual interpretation of Antiochene identity, one of many and colored not only by the author but indeed also its purpose as a panegyric. Similar themes found in mosaics indeed hint at wider claim to the virtues espoused by Libanius - but they only serve to strengthen the claim and broaden the horizon of Libanius' Antioch. It nevertheless remains the rhetorician's view of the city that often acts as a point of departure in discussions around Antioch. It should be presented as such. Moreover, Confino's assessment that memory studies are 'more practiced than theorized' shows the extent to which the general thrust of this approach is supported.[178] Antiochene studies would profit greatly from a more structured relationship with Libanius' role, especially when compared to archaeological finds that either confirm or contradict his output. The three-fold structure in cultural memory can provide this structure, both in its distinction between the individual, the social and the societal as well as in its separation of the distant past of traditions, the recent past and the present.

Such a structure also allows for the tension of continuity and discontinuity, or stability and transformation, to be eased somewhat. Both Libanius' and Julian's interactions with Antioch's foundational stories show that traditions perceived to be centuries old could be utilized in their own time to legitimize their claims over Antiochene identity. Perhaps the objective should not be to compete with these assertions or validate them with external evidence to make a similarly universal claim. Perhaps inquiring into *an*

[174] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 5
[175] J. Harries, *Imperial Rome AD 284 to 363: The New Empire* (Edinburgh 2012). 274, 291.
[176] Ibidem, 290.
[177] Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity* 34.
[178] A. Confino, 'Memory and the History of Mentalities' 79.

Antiochene identity, one that fits within a larger framework that in itself does not attempt to unilaterally describe what it meant to be Antiochene is more practical and less prone to generalities than trying to demand of Libanius and Julian to inform us of *the* identity we look for. In this pursuit, more room could be given to communicative memory as an active source of information for sources like the ones discussed. While this deals with the question of identity, the question of Antioch's reach as a city should be further examined before concluding this thesis. How far away from the municipal centre, monuments and colonnaded streets did Antioch reach geographically as well as culturally?

Antioch's reach

As Liebeschuetz describes, the city of Antioch had two eastern neighbors in the form of Beroea and Chalcis roughly ninety kilometers away. All territories of northern Syria were at least nominally accounted for in the division of borders between municipal administrations.[179] Over the course of many centuries, settlements developed far beyond the city walls of Antioch, expanding greatly onto the nearby highlands beginning around the fourth century CE.[180] De Giorgi's work shows how a great amount of insight can be given into the lives of villagers that lived in the vicinity of Antioch's urban centre with archaeological evidence. The emphasis placed on the main city's founding and by implication its original confines in the discussed works of Libanius and Julian should not restrain our view of Antioch to its core.

The question of how far Antioch reached should therefore always be accompanied by a qualifier: based on archaeology, its expansion can be traced and, provided enough evidence can be provided, its gradually expanding limits can be given shape. However, the size of Libanius' Antioch is rather more diffuse. Even if the *Antiochikos* may exaggerate the splendor and fertility of the land, it nonetheless shapes a geography that shows how Libanius wished to present the city's reach. When he asserts that 'the land is as level as the sea' (§19),[181] it should at least bear some semblance to the territorial confines of Antioch. And yet, such a characterization does not stop Libanius from including the 'mountain districts' and those that plough the fields there in his representation of the city (§22).[182] The famines of the early 360s CE may contradict the image of rich soils and plentiful harvests, but the association with the countryside remains a valuable indication of Libanus' view of the city. Similarly, the emphasis on the city's distance to the coast limits the territorial confines towards the west (§34).[183] While vague, these delineations point to Libanius' overall sense of what the Antiochene community consisted of. They are the areas he associates with the city's foundational stories and acts of heroism - not merely the limited urban footprint near the Orontes river.

[179] Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Administration* 40.
[180] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 81.
[181] Libanius, 'Antiochikos' 11.
[182] Ibidem.
[183] Ibidem, 13.

A lack of archaeological surveys from the 1940s to the 1990s has long affected further development of scholarly discussions on the city's development. Indeed, as De Giorgi indicates, only in the twenty-first century have excavations stimulated research into Antioch's territories beyond textual analysis.[184] As such, it should not come as a surprise that many relatively modern works such as Sandwell's 2007 study on religious identity in Antioch in the fourth century were limited by a dearth of material or archaeological evidence.[185] This has helped Libanius' staying power despite the obvious biases and shortcomings that come into play with regard to the writings of an elite rhetorician.

Aided by the development of memory studies, Antiochene identity can be given shape even if its explanatory value is limited by a lack of sources and an unwillingness to let an individual interpretation represent the thoughts and values contained in lives that remain unmentioned in Antioch's historical record. The construction of identity in historical study is an active process that gives the historian an agency that he or she must wield with caution, as such contributions help determine the modern outlook on life in the past.

[184] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 8.
[185] Sandwell, *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity* 39.

Conclusion

The topic of this research came into being out of a desire to better understand the city of Antioch within the wider scope of the Roman empire in the fourth century. The *Misopogon*'s scathing remarks on Antiochene society invited the question: who were these Antiochenes? In the context of an MA thesis, the question needed to be asked in a way that could be verified and analysed - memory studies proves a useful companion in part due to its multitude of approaches and wide-scale applicability. The work done by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning allows for an overarching framework that still manages to capture the complexity of historical realities - interdisciplinary findings provide a solid foundation one can build on. In effect, much of the ambiguity can be taken away from discussions on cultural heritage when recontextualized into the systematic approach of memory studies as suggested by Erll, Nünning and their contributors. This is aided by the fact that, as Confino pointed out, that the notion of memory is 'more practiced than theorized'.[186]

The rhetorician Libanius often acts as an unreliable narrator of the fourth century, inevitably coloring our perspective with his own aims and beliefs. The *Antiochikos*, a panegyric written in praise of the city of Antioch on the occasion of the Olympic Games at the suburb of Daphne in 356 CE, is a potent piece of rhetoric that provides an insight into Libanius' view of his native city. It is a view that omits the less desirable aspects and version of the past to the benefit of claims to mythical foundations and a virtuous, harmonious populace. Its description of the council paints an image of an idealized citizen body serving as the root of the organism of Antioch. The panegyric contains many aspects of Antiochene society that suggests its territorial boundaries and, as has been suggested by Casevitz and Lagacherie, it can be utilized to further the understanding of the city's urban memory.[187] Libanius presents the city's cultural memory in ways that legitimize its supposed ancestral virtues and solidifies Antioch's communicative memory into a narrative that associates the city's resistance to Eugenius' 303 revolt with Greek myth.

Julian's *Misopogon* is the product of a confrontation between an emperor preparing for war and his local subjects who did not share his religious views or habits. The satire has often been the subject of puzzlement by historians, questioning Julian's mental state or focusing on the food shortages and poor economic conditions in the city. Posted in one of Antioch's sites commemorating its Seleucid origins, Julian recast the foundational story found in the *Antiochikos* into one that presented its contents as the root of the populace's supposed impiety and extravagance. In line with his views on *ethnos*, Julian attacked the Antiochenes along the lines of its ancestry, recontextualizing the cultural memory of the

[186] Confino, 'Memory and the History of Mentalities' 79.
[187] Casevitz, 'Notice' XXXI.

city as one worthy of derision and shame.
Libanius and Julian present contrasting works that both make use of the city's shared cultural memory, the former praising it as a native of Antioch and the latter as a former admirer scorning its origins. Both follow their respective precedent -Libanius in epideictic oratory and Julian with regard to edits of chastisement- but do so during a time that has often been characterized by scholars as one of transformation. Identity played a pivotal role as contested frameworks of *Romanitas*, Hellenism and religious traditions were being defined and redefined in the fourth century.

As has been argued by Liebeschuetz, Antioch proved resistant to some of the larger processes of urban decay faced throughout the empire.[188] Furthermore, its expansion of settlements from the fourth century showed that the city was still developing during this time.[189] Debate on the Christianization of Antioch has led to some tentative conclusions, but the specifics of religious identity have not yet been uncovered. This can be taken quite literally, as material and archaeological evidence continues to limit this line of inquiry despite considerable advances made with regard to pagan, Christian and Jewish identities.

General histories of ancient Antioch have sought to compile a variety of sources and present as accurate an image of the city's past. Much has been accomplished and many generalities have been dispelled in favor of more nuanced approaches to Antioch that challenge Libanius' representation of the city. Even still, Antioch serves a purpose in many narratives by academics, performing as an 'agent of transformation'[190] or a network of contested places for control over aspects of Antiochene life.[191] The archaeological evidence that now exists helps elucidate the boundaries of Antioch and affords us the opportunity to include some of the many people who have not written panegyrics or satires and remained unmentioned in the historical record. It has expanded the modern view of a city that has seized to exist, locked in part beneath a modern settlement by a different name. While De Giorgi's work can be viewed as a synthesis of multiple aspects of Antiochene studies, its perspective may be broadened further by Libanius' works that portray the city's cultural memory - on a factual basis, it may now be more easily dismissed than before.

I have argued for greater incorporation of memory studies into research dealing with Antioch and outlined the boundaries that exist within existing approaches. The question of Antiochene identity should be answered along the lines of what we know, limiting oneself to an individual perspective if no others are available and observing traces of a communicative memory that were being integrated into the greater cultural memory of society. Such findings may shed light on developments of cultural memory that otherwise may have slipped between the cracks of discussions on traditional shared

[188] Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* 37.
[189] De Giorgi, *Ancient Antioch* 81..
[190] Ibidem, 5.
[191] Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places*.

histories on the one hand and contemporary events on the other.
Upon reflection, the sources chosen for the purpose of this research contained a multitude of challenges that would have been made easier with the inclusion of comparable works - naturally, in both cases those are hard to come by, but a Christian perspective such as that from John Chrysostom would have allowed for more of the transformative processes occurring during this time to have become apparent. As it stands, his writings have been mentioned in many sources that have been put to use in this research, but I hope that the contrasting nature of Julian's words compared to those of Libanius at least show the degree to which status, intention and agency matter with regard to the construction of an Antiochene identity. As sources frozen within the confines of their particular time and place, they nevertheless offer a trace of a cultural memory that would have served at least in part as a basis for mutual identification within Antiochene society.

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