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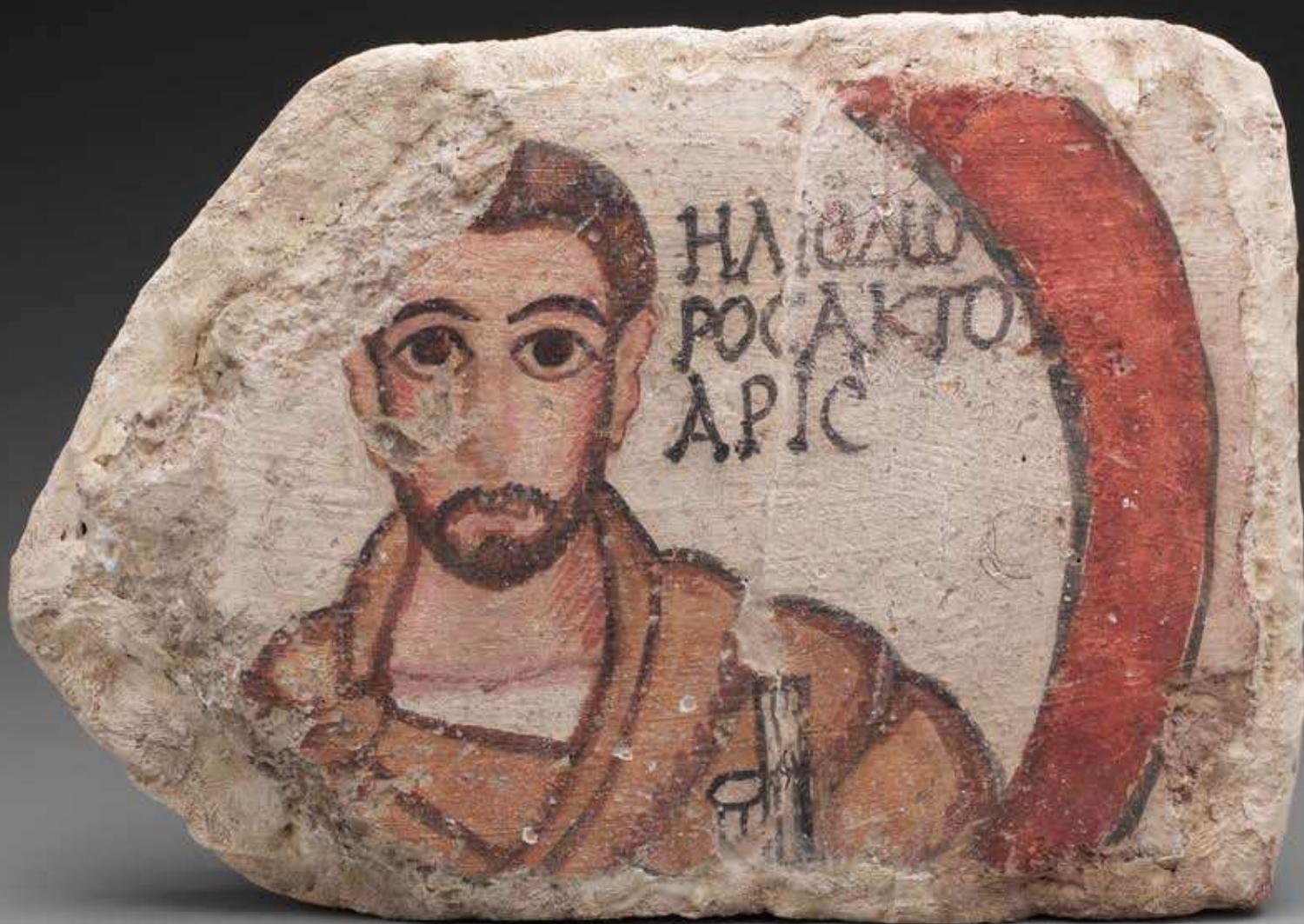
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D • U • R • A
E U R O P O S



Crossroads of Antiquity

EDITED BY LISA BRODY AND GAIL HOFFMAN

LUCINDA DIRVEN

STRANGERS AND SOJOURNERS: THE RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR OF PALMYRENES AND OTHER FOREIGNERS IN DURA-EUROPOS

Introduction

In the middle of the third century, shortly before the Sasanians succeeded in conquering Dura-Europos, a great variety of deities were worshipped in this small city overlooking the Euphrates. Excavators have found fifteen sanctuaries so far, and it is plausible that the remains of more religious buildings still are hidden below the desert sand.¹ Best known are the Synagogue and the small House Church that were discovered just inside the city wall. In addition to the monotheistic faiths associated with these buildings, cults honouring a whole range of deities of varying origins were established in the city. Historians of religion can discern gods of Greek, Babylonian, Aramaic, Phoenician, Arab, Iranian, and Roman origin. This religious variety mirrors the social diversity in the city, that in turn results from Dura-Europos' political history and geographical location.² After all, gods do not simply fall from heaven; they arrive together with their worshippers. The majority of the population of Dura-Europos was made up of descendants of the Greek (Macedonian) settlers; but the town also was inhabited by a mix of Syrians (especially people from the Middle Euphrates region and Palmyra), Mesopotamians, and Steppe pastoralists, as well as Roman provincial soldiers who originated from Syria and beyond.³

Dura-Europos was a small city, and the sanctuaries that have been excavated so far are located quite close to one another. Due to this proximity, the question arises as to whether, and if so in what way, cults of different origin influenced each other: did foreign deities retain their original character, or did they change because they were assimilated to the gods worshipped in the immigrants' new surroundings? Information about the religious life in Dura-Europos consists almost entirely of material remains, such as temples, paintings, reliefs, graffiti, and inscriptions. No theological treatises or liturgical texts have come down to us. Since it is impossible to decipher a deity's character from his or her name and outward appearance, the quest for the process of religious interaction is bound to start with a study of the religious behavior of the worshippers. The present article deals with the religion of three groups of people, originating from Palmyra, Anath, and Hatra, respectively (see plan, p. 15). Palmyra (or Tadmor) is located in the Syrian Desert about 220

kilometers west of Dura-Europos. During the first three centuries of the Common Era, the oasis flourished thanks to its role in international caravan trade.⁴ The village of Anath is situated on the left bank of the Euphrates about 120 kilometers south of Dura-Europos; and Hatra is situated in the steppe of the eastern Jazirah, in North Mesopotamia, about 80 kilometers southwest of present-day Mosul. Like Palmyra, this desert city flourished in the first centuries of the Common Era. My study focuses on migrants from these three cities because of the rich sources that are available for the study of these groups: architectural remains, sculptures in the round and reliefs, paintings, inscriptions and graffiti, and papyri.

Anthropologists know from studies into modern diaspora communities that the religious behavior of migrant groups depends on many factors. First, one has to take into account the religious situation in the group's place of origin. This, in turn, varies according to the social, economic, and intellectual background of the people. Second, the social and economic position of the immigrants in their new environment is important. Their religious behavior may be influenced by the duration and purpose of their stay; their social position, number, age and profession; the remoteness of their native country; the degree of contact they maintain with their place of origin; and so forth. Last but not least, the behavior of these groups may be said to depend on the religious situation they encounter in their new place of residence. It follows from this research that extensive information on social factors is needed in order to study and explain the process of religious interaction.

Studying the process of religious interaction is a complex matter then, even with relation to modern groups; this holds true even more for communities during antiquity. This is largely due to the deficiencies of the sources at our disposal. Even in Dura-Europos, where the material is relatively abundant, there is a lack of information on most of the social factors that are crucial in explaining the religious behavior of migrant groups. With many strangers, modern historians do not even know exactly from where they came, let alone what the religious situation was at their place of origin. It consequently is impossible to establish whether anything changed in their new environment.

This even holds true for the two most famous religious groups in Dura-Europos: the Jews and the Christians. The Pahlavi dipinti in the paintings from the Synagogue probably were fashioned by visitors from Mesopotamia, which suggests that the Jewish community had strong links with Babylonia.⁵ It unfortunately is impossible to say whether this also was where the roots of this thriving community lay, so art historians cannot tell whether the stunning illustrations to the Jewish scriptures were inspired by synagogues in Mesopotamia or resulted from local influences. Personal names suggest that at least some of the Christians in Dura-Europos were Roman soldiers. Since the army was made of men of various origins—locals, people from the west of Syria, and, perhaps, some even from northern Europe—it is impossible to say to what kind of Christianity they adhered;⁶ consequently, the reading of the biblical scenes that decorate their baptistery is bound to remain hypothetical.

Identifying foreign groups on the basis of archaeological material—especially inscriptions—is equally problematic. People plausibly can be identified as foreigners on the basis of the use of foreign script or language, characteristic personal names, or deities typical of a certain city or region,⁷ but people who assimilate to their new environment disappear from our sight. Once this assimilation is complete, and their origin is no longer of any importance to them, they stop being foreigners. As a consequence, they are no longer of interest to the present research. It is important to realize, however, that strangers who retain markers of their

foreignness dominate the picture, whereas they may not be representative necessarily of all the people of a particular origin.

Of great importance to the study of religious interaction, but exceedingly difficult to read, are instances in which elements of various origin intermingle. It frequently is impossible to tell on the basis of epigraphic evidence alone whether we are dealing with foreigners who have assimilated themselves to their new environment or with locals who have adopted foreign elements. A good example of an inscription that is open to several interpretations is located on a small limestone altar, dated to the third century CE (pl. 38), found in the building known as the Temple of the Palmyrene Gods, situated in the northeast corner of the city.⁸ The altar is dedicated to the Palmyrene god Iarhibol; but the inscription is in Greek rather than Palmyrene, and the tribune who dedicated it bears a Latin name not a Palmyrene one. Since Iarhibol, who was popular among Palmyrene auxiliaries serving in the Roman army, is a typical Palmyrene god, it is likely that this was the background of the present dedicant as well.⁹ It would, however, be equally plausible to suppose that the tribune was a foreigner, who adopted the cult because he was in command of a Palmyrene unit.

People from Palmyra, Anath, and Hatra stand out in Dura-Europos because they can be identified comparatively easily. First, they often identify themselves in inscriptions as originating from one of these places. In addition, people from Palmyra and Hatra frequently use their own script. Finally, typical local deities and personal names help us to establish their origin. Neither of these features suffices in itself, but in combination they provide a fairly good indication as to someone's origin. Last but not least, the religious situation in Palmyra, Anath and Hatra is relatively well known. This enables us to compare the religion of the people in Dura-Europos with the religion in their city of origin.

Of the three groups, people from Palmyra by far are the most significant. The material pertaining to the Palmyrenes vastly outnumbers that relating to the other two places and provides an excellent opportunity for a study of religion along social lines.¹⁰ The history of the Palmyrene community in Dura-Europos covers almost three centuries, from 33 BCE to the fall of the city in 256 CE. Palmyrene migrants can be divided in two distinct groups: soldiers who served in the Roman army and merchants. By comparing these two groups, modern scholars of Dura-Europos can establish whether or not this difference in social position influenced their religious preferences. Last but not least, information on Palmyrene merchants and soldiers who lived in the Parthian east as well as those in the Roman west is relatively abundant.¹¹ This enables the historian to establish whether their behavior in Dura-Europos was influenced by their new environment.

In the following, I start with a short sketch of the social and economic history of the inhabitants of Dura-Europos who originated from Palmyra, Hatra, and Anath. I subsequently shall discuss their religious behavior on the basis of archaeological remains found in Dura-Europos.

The Social and Economic History of the Inhabitants from Palmyra, Anath, and Hatra

Information on the social and economic position of the three foreign groups residing in Dura-Europos is scarce and seldom explicit. For the Parthian period, historians have to rely on a limited number of archaeological remains such as temples, inscriptions, and figural representations. The dated inscriptions inform us about the history of these communities, whereas the location of the buildings reflects the social and

economic position of their clientele. The construction history of these sanctuaries mirrors the economic development and growth over time of the migrant community in question. Finds from the Roman period are more abundant but are confined to the Palmyrene community. In addition to the archaeological remains, military parchments and papyri provide information on Palmyrene soldiers serving in the Roman army. There can be no doubt that many foreigners lived in Roman Dura-Europos, but it is frequently impossible to tell where they were coming from.



Figure 12.1: Relief of the god Aphlad of the village of Anath on the Euphrates, Dura-Europos, ca. mid-first century CE. National Museum of Damascus (photograph courtesy of the Yale University Art Gallery, Dura-Europos Collection)

The presence of Palmyrenes in Dura-Europos is first recorded in 33 BCE, when two Palmyrenes jointly founded a temple on the plateau outside the city walls. Shortly before the middle of the first century CE, Palmyrene inhabitants are attested within the city proper. In all likelihood they participated in the cult of Zeus Kyrios-Baalshamin, whose temple against the city walls was founded in about 20 to 30 CE. Close by, the excavators found an *andron* (assembly room) dedicated to the worship of the god Aphlad, who was from the village of Anath. Like the god, most of Aphlad's worshippers originated from this village on the Euphrates south of Dura-Europos. It is possible that Palmyrenes joined this group.¹² Around the same time, Palmyrenes established a religious meeting place in Block H1, on the spot where the structure known as the Temple of the Gadde was built around the middle of the second century CE. An inhabitant from Hatra erected a dedication to the Hatrene god Shamash in the Temple of Atargatis.¹³ The text is undated but probably was erected during the first century CE. In addition to this inscription, three graffiti in the Hatrene script were found scattered in various locations at Dura-Europos. The evidence at our disposal suggests that the temples in the necropolis and Block H1 were used exclusively by Palmyrenes, whereas the sanctuaries of Zeus Kyrios-Baalshamin and Aphlad were probably used by a mixed clientele of strangers and local inhabitants. People from Hatra apparently lodged in a local sanctuary.

The exclusive Palmyrene character of the temples in the necropolis and Block H1 is apparent from the inscriptions that are predominantly Palmyrene. Most inscriptions from Dura-Europos are in Greek; furthermore, the inscriptions from these temples mention typical Palmyrene deities, as well as personal names that are common in Palmyra but rare, if they occur at all, in other Durene inscriptions. It may be inferred from the dimensions of these sanctuaries, and their limited growth over the years, that the Palmyrene community was fairly small in the Parthian period. In contrast to most Durene temples, these sanctuaries have only one assembly room. Inscriptions from Dura-Europos, Palmyra and elsewhere, show that these assembly rooms were used for ritual dining by social groups that were organized on a familial, religious, or ethnic basis; hence, the number of assembly rooms reflects the social and perhaps religious diversity among the visitors of a particular temple. Palmyrene temples have only one such room

and this suggests they were frequented by a homogenous group of worshippers.

It is not obligatory that a religious association was comprised of people from the same family or the same locality, and there may have been exceptions to this rule. The religious association that used the assembly room that is called the temple of Aphlad, is a case in point. The dedicatory inscription of this room mentions the names of eleven people that belonged to the religious association of the god Aphlad from the village of Anath.¹⁴ Several of the names in this list are also attested in inscriptions from Palmyra; hence, it is possible that people from Palmyra joined the people from Anath who introduced their god in Dura-Europos.¹⁵ Be that as it may, it follows from the outfit of the priest on the relief that was found in this room that the servants of the god did come from Anath (fig. 12.1). The priest wears the conical headdress typical of priests from the Middle Euphrates region, whereas Palmyrene priests are invariably depicted wearing a modius. The two Palmyrene reliefs that were found in the Temple of the Gadde in Dura-Europos show that Palmyrenes adhered to their priestly modius outside Palmyra (fig. 12.2, pl. 1).

The so-called temple of Zeus Kyrios may have had a mixed Palmyrene and Durene clientele.¹⁶ The small relief dedicated to the god Zeus Kyrios-Baalshamin was found in situ encased in the back wall of a small open-air sanctuary. The relief bears the only bilingual inscription in Palmyrene and Greek from Parthian Dura-Europos and is dated to 31 CE (pl. 42).¹⁷ Both the inscription and the iconography of the god are strongly influenced by Palmyra, but at the same time the relief and inscription display local Durene elements. This may reflect the mixed origin of the people who visited this shrine. In Dura-Europos, Palmyrene inscriptions are normally associated with people from Palmyra. In Palmyra, however, bilingual religious texts are very rare. Palmyrene is dominant in religious texts from the oasis.¹⁸ This suggests that the dedicatory inscription of the Zeus Kyrios-Baalshamin relief was adapted to the situation in Dura-Europos, where Greek was the main language.

The god Baalshamin is not native to the Euphrates region but arrived in Dura-Europos from the west of Syria, in all likelihood via Palmyra.¹⁹ The iconography of the god on the relief is not typical of deities from the Euphrates region and tallies with the iconography of Baalshamin in Palmyra, which in turn derives from the west.²⁰ The bearded god is shown enthroned on the right-hand side of the relief. The “Lord of the Heaven” is dressed in a mantle and a long-sleeved tunic—an outfit that mirrors the Phoenician origin of this storm god. He holds a scepter in his left hand and a bouquet of grain and various sorts of fruit in his right. On the left-hand side of the relief stands Seleukos, the dedicant of the relief. He holds a ram—his offering



Figure 12.2: Palmyrene relief representing Hairan offering to Gad Tadmor, Temple of the Gadde, naos, 159 CE. Yale University Art Gallery, Yale-French Excavations at Dura-Europos, 1938.5313

to the deity in his arms. Like the god, Seleukos is dressed in a long-sleeved tunic and a mantle. He is bare-headed and is represented wearing shoes, which implies that he is not a priest. The style of the relief suggests a Palmyrene sculptor or someone strongly influenced by a Palmyrene workshop made the relief. The stone is different from the material that is normally used in Palmyra and Dura-Europos; it was perhaps imported from the area of Anath.

Someone originating from Hatra erected a dedication to the Hatrene god Shamash-Helios in the so-called temple of Atargatis, an otherwise local Durene temple. In addition to this inscription, only three Hatrean graffiti were found in Dura-Europos.²¹ This possibly means that the group of Hatrenes in Dura-Europos was small, which in turn explains why someone from Hatra chose to worship his ancestral god in a sanctuary that was predominantly used by local people. In this temple, the goddess Atargatis was worshipped together with a number of other deities. One of the reliefs found in this temple tallies with Lucian's description of the cult statues in the main sanctuary of the goddess in Hierapolis in northern Syria. It represents the enthroned goddess and her consort Hadad, with the sacred standard erect between them (pl. 43).²² Hierapolitan deities were also popular in Hatra, and this perhaps explains the dedicant's choice of this temple.²³ It is significant that this stranger from Hatra decided for a bilingual inscription that combines a Hatraean and Greek text.²⁴ In Hatra itself, none of the five hundred or so inscriptions found thus far is bilingual; hence, the choice for a Hatrean-Greek text was probably due to the presence of local people, who were in the majority in this temple.

Although none of the inscriptions mentions the profession of people from Palmyra, Anath, and Hatra, it is likely that many of them were involved in mercantile activities during the Parthian period.²⁵ The appearance of these strangers around the beginning of the Common Era coincides with a boom in the local economy manifested by the arrival of new inhabitants and a surge of building activity. During the first two centuries of the Common Era, Dura-Europos functioned as the political, administrative, and economic center of a large agricultural and cattle-breeding area on the Middle Euphrates, which extended from the mouth of the Chabur in the north to Anath or Hit in the south.²⁶ The assumption that the three groups were involved in trade is substantiated by the location of their sanctuaries. The oldest Palmyrene temple was founded outside the city walls. It probably was intended as a resting place for animals and their attendants. The location of the two Palmyrene sanctuaries within the city confirms the hypothesis that Palmyrenes had their business here. The Palmyrene temple in Block H1 is located in the proximity of the bazaar. When founded in 28 CE, the temple of Zeus Kyrios-Baalshamin was located in a vacant area. This suggests that the adherents of this god were outsiders who had arrived recently in the town. The same holds true for the sanctuary of another group of newcomers, the people from Anath; Anath was an agricultural center, and it is plausible that people from this village came to Dura-Europos to trade their products.

The history and growth of the Palmyrene community in Dura-Europos accords well with what is known of the development of the Palmyrene caravan trade and the ensuing flourishing of Palmyra.²⁷ The foundation of a temple in 33 BCE substantiates the assumption that Palmyra already had at this time commercial relationships with the east. Around the middle of the second century, the Palmyrene temple in Block H1 was rebuilt and enlarged substantially. This coincides with the zenith of Palmyra's caravan trade. It is unlikely that Dura-Europos was located on the route of the Palmyrene caravans to the east; the caravan trade made extensive use of the Euphrates River. On their way back from southern Mesopotamia, the merchants disem-

barked at Hit, about 300 kilometers south of Dura-Europos, and from there followed their way back home to Palmyra through the desert.²⁸ In all probability, therefore, the Palmyrenes of Dura-Europos were involved in local trade with people from the city and from its agricultural hinterland, such as Anath.

People from Hatra and Anath are unattested in Dura-Europos after 165 CE, during the period in which the Romans ruled the city. The number of Palmyrenes increased dramatically during the last one hundred years of the city's existence. Little is known about the first forty years of Roman occupation. The number of Roman soldiers stationed at Dura-Europos appears to have been small, and life in the city by and large remained the same as in the preceding period. During the second half of the second century, a contingent of Palmyrene archers was stationed at Dura-Europos. Although they belonged to the Roman garrison, they probably were an unofficial unit of the Roman army.²⁹ After 208 CE, large numbers of soldiers were stationed at Dura-Europos. One of the regiments at this time was the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*. As is clear from its name, this cohort mainly consisted of Palmyrenes, who were famous for their equestrian skills and their expertise with bow and quiver.³⁰

The growth of the Palmyrene community during the Roman period is apparent from the rebuilding and enlargement of existing temples and the foundation of new sanctuaries. In 173 CE, the Palmyrene temple in the necropolis doubled in size, and in the same year an assembly room on Main Street was rebuilt in order to accommodate larger groups.³¹ During the same period, a southern complex was added to the Temple of the Gadde in Block H1, doubling the building in size. In 194 CE, a Palmyrene adorned with paintings the *iwan* (dining room) of his house in Block M7.³² Palmyrenes are first attested in the so-called Temple of the Palmyrene Gods, in the northwest corner of the city, during the Roman period. Durene inhabitants, who had themselves represented in paintings that were found in great quantity in the naos of this temple, had founded the sanctuary around the beginning of the Common Era. When the northern part of the city was converted into a military camp, Palmyrene soldiers joined the civic population that used the temple.³³ Part of another temple in the north part of the town, the so-called temple of Artemis-Azzanathkona, was converted into a military clerical office in which Palmyrene soldiers figured prominently. In 167/168 CE, Palmyrene archers founded a Mithraeum in this part of town.

The growth of the Palmyrene community clearly was connected with the large numbers of Palmyrenes serving in the Roman army. Several finds suggest that not all Palmyrenes who resided in Dura-Europos at this time were soldiers. The extension of the Palmyrene temple in the necropolis as well as of the Temple of the Gadde suggests that soldiers joined the pre-existing Palmyrene community. It is unlikely that the Palmyrene who had his dining room adorned with paintings in 194 CE was a soldier. The location of this house in the domestic area of the town, as well as the civilian character of the paintings, suggest he was a city-dweller.

Migrant Religion in the Parthian Period

Now that we have discussed the social and economic position of the people from Palmyra, Anath, and Hatra, we turn to their religious behavior in their new environment. Since by far the majority of the material pertains to Palmyrenes, their religion will figure prominently in this account. The discussion of the religion

of Palmyrene merchants roughly covers the period from around the beginning of the Common Era until 165 CE, when the city fell into Roman hands. Their religious preferences will be discussed by means of two temples: the temple in the necropolis and the temple in Block H1, in which two reliefs that represent Gadde were recovered.

According to the Palmyrene inscription that commemorates its foundation in 33 BCE, two individuals who identify themselves as members of two different Palmyrene tribes dedicated the temple in the necropolis to the gods Bel and Iarhibol. A second inscription from the temple is in Greek and is dedicated to the god Bel. The third inscription is very long and commemorates the dedication of a second naos apparently by a descendant of one of the original founders of the sanctuary nearly two centuries earlier.³⁴ The material admittedly is scarce; however, when compared to the religious situation in Palmyra and the material that testifies to other Palmyrene expatriates, it turns out to be a rich source of information.

The dedicatory inscription of 33 BCE is one of the oldest Palmyrene inscriptions yet discovered. It reads:

...in the month Sivan of the year 279 [June 33 BCE], Zabdibol. The son of Baýasa, of the Bene Gaddibol and Maliku, the son of Ramu of the Bene Komare made the shrine for Bel and Iarhibol.³⁵

Compared to inscriptions from Palmyra, the text is unique in two respects:³⁶ First, it is the only extant inscription that mentions Bel and Iarhibol together. Second, it is the only inscription in which two members of different tribes jointly dedicate a temple. In Palmyra, religious dedications invariably are made by members of the same tribe. It is even possible to go one step further: in Palmyra a number of temples were built and attended by members of one particular tribe. One of the dedicants of the Durene inscriptions identifies himself as a member of the Komare tribe. This tribe administered a sanctuary dedicated to the gods Aglibol and Malakbel in Palmyra. Outside Palmyra, however, this individual did not dedicate a temple to his ancestral deities but opted instead for Bel and Iarhibol. This is best explained by his dedication of the temple in Dura-Europos with a member of another Palmyrene clan. This must have led them to look beyond their ancestral religion and search for religious common ground; hence, this inscription suggests that the gods Bel and Iarhibol were venerated by the entire Palmyrene community.

Information on Palmyrene religion before the Common Era is very limited but confirms this hypothesis.³⁷ Most of the material was found underneath the present temple of Bel in Palmyra, which was dedicated to Bel, Iarhibol, and Aglibol in 32 CE.³⁸ It follows from the older material that before the present structure was built, a congregation of Palmyrene clans used the place for the worship of their family gods, headed by the god Bel. So Bel was the supreme god of this temple but by no means the only god worshipped here. This explains why Palmyrene inscriptions refer to the place as the “house of their gods.”³⁹ Later inscriptions show that the cult of particular deities was confined to certain families, and it seems reasonable to suppose the same holds true for the early period.

One of the gods associated with Bel in his sanctuary was Iarhibol. Inscriptions suggest this god was connected closely with Bel and his priests. In all likelihood, Iarhibol’s eminent position results from his function as the protective deity of the Efca, the spring and source of life for Palmyra.⁴⁰ As a deity of the spring, the

entire Palmyrene community worshipped Iarhibol. The administration of his temple likely was unconfined to one particular tribe. So both Bel and Iarhibol were the tutelary deities of two important sanctuaries at Palmyra. Their cult transcended the social divisions of the oasis and touched upon the community as a whole. The religious organization in Palmyra therefore explains the choice of the two Palmyrenes in Dura-Europos. They preferred Bel and Iarhibol to their family gods, because their sanctuary was unrestricted to one particular tribe or group: it was open to all Palmyrenes who happened to visit Dura-Europos.

The best explanation for such communal undertakings is the Palmyrenes' position as merchants: Inscriptions from Palmyra show that the caravan trade cut across the genealogical boundaries in the city and was a major incentive for the political unification of the clans. Merchants maintain close contacts with their city of origin; hence, it is to be expected that their religious preferences will follow the religious developments in their hometown. The other inscriptions from the temple in the necropolis do indeed show this to be the case. In these texts from a later date, Bel is mentioned alone or with Iarhibol and Aglibol. This mirrors the religious development in Palmyra.

In 32 CE, the main temple in Palmyra was re-dedicated to Bel, Iarhibol, and Aglibol. In this constellation, known as the Triad of Bel, Bel is the main deity with Iarhibol and Aglibol as his attendants or acolytes. On representations, Bel is depicted in the center, flanked by Iarhibol in the most prominent position on his right and Aglibol on his left. As the sun and the moon, they symbolize Bel's cosmic supremacy. That Aglibol is yet unmentioned in the inscription from Dura-Europos dating from 33 BCE, suggests the triad did not exist at this time and that the constellation was formed when the new temple of Bel was built. This innovation testifies to religious centralization in Palmyra. The new temple of Bel centred on the cult of the communal deities Bel, Iarhibol, and Aglibol, whereas tribal deities were now excluded from the city temple and confined to their own sanctuaries in the city. The organization of the temple in the necropolis of Dura-Europos followed this development, for Bel became its only beneficiary in the Common Era.

The city gods of Palmyra were popular particularly among Palmyrene merchants abroad. The triad of Bel was well-liked in remote places, such as Rome and the island of Cos.⁴¹ The religious behavior of Palmyrene merchants in Dura-Europos therefore tallies with their preferences elsewhere. It is exactly the kind of behavior one would expect among small groups of merchants who live in close contact with their city of origin. Parallels are to be found among Assyrian traders travelling between their homeland and their trading colony in Karum Kanish during the second millennium BCE and among the merchants from Tyre in Carthage during the sixth century BCE.⁴²

Opting for a communal religious identity does not exclude the possibility that homage was likewise paid to the gods of the new environment. The two can exist side by side, as is shown by two reliefs found in another Palmyrene temple, the Temple of the Gadde. This temple takes its name from the two reliefs representing the Gad of Dura and the Gad of Tadmor that were placed originally in the naos or cult niche of this temple.⁴³ Gad is the Aramaic name for a protective deity (Greek Tyche or Roman Fortuna).⁴⁴ It follows from the Palmyrene stone and typical Palmyrene style that both were fabricated in Palmyra. According to the Aramaic inscription on the plinth, the same individual dedicated both reliefs in 159 CE.

The first relief depicts the dedicant, Hairan the son of Maliku the son of Nasor, offering incense before the Gad of Palmyra, the tutelary deity of the oasis (fig. 12.2). The dedicant wears a *modius* headdress surrounded by a wreath that is typical of Palmyrene priests.⁴⁵ Inscriptional evidence from Palmyra suggests that

the Gad of Tadmor was actually the goddess Astarte, who functioned as Bel's companion in the temple of Bel, the city temple of Palmyra.⁴⁶ It is obvious, therefore, that this relief has a municipal significance.

The same holds true for its counterpart on which the same dedicant is represented sacrificing before the Gad of Dura (pl. 1). The deity in this case is not a Palmyrene god but rather the Greek god Zeus, who is shown enthroned between two eagles. Zeus was the principal god of Dura-Europos and was worshipped here as Zeus Megistos, the greatest Zeus.⁴⁷ The figure standing to his left may be identified as Seleucos Nicator, the founder of the Seleucid dynasty and, allegedly, Dura-Europos. This act clearly testifies to Palmyrene immigrants' respect for the major cult in their new residence. A significant piece of information is that the dedicant wears the headdress typical of Palmyrene priests. It is clear, therefore, that he honored the main cult in his new residence, but as Palmyrene. Simultaneously, he remained loyal to the city goddess of Palmyra; hence, the Palmyrenes in Dura-Europos committed themselves to the religion of their new surroundings while preserving their indigenous religious identity.

From a cultural point of view, Palmyrenes turn out to be surprisingly chauvinistic. The two reliefs that represent the Gadde (fig. 12.2, pl. 1) and the relief of Nemesis (pl. 4) show that it was common for Palmyrenes to import votive reliefs from their native city. This may be due to the quality of Palmyrene sculpture, which far surpasses sculpture from local Durene workshops.⁴⁸ The available evidence suggests that during the first century CE, several Durene workshops worked in the Palmyrene tradition. The reliefs representing Zeus Kyrios-Baalshamin (pl. 42), Tyche with doves (pl. 44), and the god Aphlad (fig. 12.1), represent this local style under Palmyrene influence. In the later period, however, local sculptures invariably were made in a crude style influenced little by Palmyra. The reliefs of Atargatis and Hadad (pl. 43), Arsua riding a camel (pl. 46), the three Herakles sculptures (pls. 47, 48, 68), and the giant male head of a former cult statue (pl. 41), all display this crude local style.

In contrast to the sculpture that was influenced by Palmyra, the religious architecture of Palmyrene sanctuaries in Dura-Europos by and large accords with the temples of other religious groups in Dura-Europos and differs from the monumental Greco-Roman architecture of the most important temples in Palmyra. This is not due necessarily to Durene influences. It is possible that in addition to the monumental Romanized temples, Palmyra once possessed small sanctuaries similar to the Durene temples. The simple sanctuaries found in the Palmyrène (Palmyra's hinterland) suggest there was more to Palmyrene architecture than has come down to us.

Like the Palmyrenes, immigrants from Anath remained faithful to their own religious traditions and paid respect to their new environment. In addition to the dedication of the *andron* to the god Aphlad, the cult relief of the religious association was found in this room. It depicts a god clad in Hellenistic cuirass standing on two griffins (fig. 12.1). The dedicatory inscription on the relief refers to the image as the ἀφείδρυσος of Aphlad (the god of the village of Anath).⁴⁹ The latter specification characterizes Aphlad as the tutelary deity of this village. Louis Robert points out that the word ἀφείδρυσος implies that they copied the original cult image of their god in the relief.⁵⁰ The dedicatory inscription of the *andron*, dated to 54 CE, mentions eleven individuals belonging to six different families.⁵¹ The social and religious identity of this group hence was based on their common origin rather than family ties. It is clear that their religious differentiation by no means undermined their loyalty to the political authorities of their new residence; on the contrary, the *andron* was dedicated to the well-being of the *strategos* of Dura-Europos. Religious differentiation apparently

caused no problems as long as one paid homage to the local authorities.

The dedicant from Hatra, too, remains faithful to the god of his city. Throughout the first three centuries of the Common Era, Hatra was sacred to the god Shamash (the sun god).⁵² In addition to the sun god, several other deities were worshipped in Hatra, but again, it is the god of the city that is chosen as the divine recipient abroad.

The Religion of Palmyrene Soldiers

Palmyrene soldiers were stationed not only in Dura-Europos but also all over the Roman Empire: in Africa, Asia Minor, Rome, and Britain. The religious preferences of Palmyrene soldiers stationed in Dura-Europos by and large correspond to their behavior elsewhere.⁵³ Compared to other military camps, the situation in Dura-Europos was slightly more complex. This is partly due to Dura-Europos yielding the greatest number of military records found to date. It also results from the long history of Palmyrenes in the city and the interaction between the long established mercantile community and the new military. Evidence from the Temple of the Gadde and the temple in the necropolis suggests that Palmyrene soldiers joined the existing Palmyrene groups; unfortunately, it sometimes is impossible to distinguish the two. As elsewhere, the Palmyrene soldiers adopted facets of the religion of the army and simultaneously held on to their individual religious preferences and indigenous traditions. Material from Dura-Europos amply illustrates that these two aspects of religious practice coexisted peacefully.

The *Feriale Duranum* (the religious calendar of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum*) provides one of the best examples of the adoption of official religious practices by a foreign regiment. This document, which dates from the reign of Severus Alexander around 223/227 CE, allows us to reconstruct the soldiers' entire religious year.⁵⁴ Although it is a festival calendar of a foreign unit, the *Feriale* mentions no gods from the locality of Dura-Europos or Palmyra; it lists only army festivals, Roman gods of public festivals, the cults of the reigning emperor (*divi*), and imperial women. These religious observances are mostly the same as those in Rome itself. Most scholars consequently assume that copies identical to the *Feriale* from Dura-Europos were used all over the Roman Empire. As such, this calendar contributed to the Romanization and unification of the army.

In addition to participating in the official religion of the Roman army, Palmyrene soldiers worshipped gods who were never adopted officially by Rome but enjoyed great popularity among soldiers. The cult of Mithras is proverbial here. In 168/169 CE, Palmyrene archers founded a Mithraeum in the northern part of the city.⁵⁵ They probably first encountered the cult when they were stationed elsewhere on the Roman frontier, probably in Dacia or Moesia. At the beginning of the third century CE, the Palmyrene archers were joined by members of other Roman troops. The cult clearly had a supraethnic, panimperial basis. In Dura-Europos, as elsewhere in the Roman Empire, the devotees of Mithras were a brotherhood of men who mainly shared the same profession.

Both the ground plan of the shrine and the iconography of the two cult reliefs resemble monuments of the cult attested elsewhere in the Roman Empire. At the back wall of the sanctuary, two stelae representing Mithras killing the bull were found inserted. The small relief bears a Palmyrene dedicatory inscription dated

to 168/169 CE. Only two years later, a certain Zenobios, commander of the Palmyrene archers, dedicated a second tauroctony relief (fig. 12.3). In the two reliefs, the god is represented in his habitual pose. With one knee, he leans on the bull's back, pulls back the head of the animal with his left hand, and plunges a dagger into its throat with his right hand. We also see the usual attendants: the raven, dog, snake, sun, and moon. The latter relief does have one unusual feature: on the right-hand side, the dedicant of the relief and several other figures are represented. It seems likely that they are members of the cult association. The custom of depicting the dedicant alongside a deity in a relief or painting is widespread in Palmyra and Dura-Europos. Depicted here with fellow members of the association rather than his family, the dedicant deviates from local custom and is typical of the organization of the Roman cult, in which family ties were unimportant;

hence, a local iconographic motif is being adapted and reinterpreted in the light of a foreign cult.

Palmyrene soldiers thus embraced religious practices widespread in the Roman army, but this did not preclude the continuation of local religious traditions. All over the Roman Empire, Palmyrene soldiers showed a preference for two typical Palmyrene deities: the gods Iarhibol and Malakbel.⁵⁶ This also holds true for Palmyrene soldiers stationed in Dura-Europos, amongst whom Iarhibol was particularly popular. Whereas Palmyrene merchants in Dura-Europos favored the city god Bel and his associates, soldiers opt for Iarhibol. In order to explain this shift, the role of Iarhibol in Palmyra will be first discussed.

Iarhibol's role in Palmyra was twofold.⁵⁷ First, he was worshipped as the tutelary deity of the Efca, the city's spring. As far as one can tell from the available evidence, this cult was not confined to a particular tribe, and touched upon the community as a whole. Second, Iarhibol was associated with Bel in the city temple. Whenever associated with Bel, he is depicted

as a sun-god. He owes his prominent position next to Bel to his role as tutelary deity of the Efca. Whether the god of the Efca was a sun-god as well is not known. There are no representations of this god from Palmyra: the only representation discovered thus far was dedicated by Palmyrene archers in Dura-Europos (fig. 12.4). It is unusual that this deity not only has a nimbus but also a crescent behind his shoulders. Be that as it may, the relief from Dura-Europos shows that the god, who was popular among the military, was first and foremost the god of the Efca and not the god worshipped as an acolyte of Bel.

The popularity of Iarhibol amongst soldiers is explained only partially by the situation in Palmyra. The emphasis on his solar aspect when worshipped in a military context has no counterpart in Palmyrene religion. On the other hand, there is evidence of the growing importance of a variety of solar deities within the Roman army from the second century CE onward. In all likelihood, this general tendency contributed to



Figure 12.3: Cult Relief of Mithras Slaying the Bull (Tauroctony), Mithraeum, ca. 170–171 CE. Limestone, 76 x 106 cm. Dura-Europos, Mithraeum, ca. 170–171 CE. Yale University Art Gallery, Yale-French Excavations at Dura-Europos, 1935.98



Figure 12.4: Relief of Iarhibol, Temple of the Gadde, naos, ca. early 3rd century CE. Limestone, 54.5 x 25.0 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, Yale-French Excavations at Dura-Europos, 1938.5301

clerical office yielded a third-century ink drawing of a military god identified by the accompanying inscription as the Palmyrene god Iarhibol (fig. 12.5).⁶¹ The sacrificant on the left-hand side wears the usual uniform of a Roman officer: a long-sleeved tunic with fringes, a *chlamys*, and boots. He is strikingly similar to the figure of Julius Terentius in the painting. A second sacrificant, on the right-hand side of the drawing, is identified by the accompanying inscription as a standard bearer. The second example is a small altar that a tribune dedicated to Iarhibol in the temple of the Palmyrene gods in the third century CE (pl. 38).⁶²

the solarization of Iarhibol abroad. Initially, however, the choice was due to other motives. In the case of Iarhibol, the choice is at least partly explained by his function as a municipal deity at the Efca.⁵⁸ It is clear, however, that the later stress on his solar aspect is to be understood in light of the Roman army.

The prominent position of Iarhibol among Palmyrene soldiers in Dura-Europos is exemplified most clearly in a painting from the pronaos of the so-called Temple of the Palmyrene Gods, which depicts the tribune Julius Terentius and his men performing a sacrifice to three statues of Palmyrene deities (pl. 37).⁵⁹ A Greek funeral inscription found in one of the domestic buildings states that Julius Terentius was tribune of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* and fell in battle in 239 CE.⁶⁰ It seems likely that the painting was made before the tribune's death in the fourth decade of the third century. In the painting, Iarhibol is represented in the center, with Aglibol to his right and Arsu to his left; hence, Iarhibol has taken the prominent position previously taken by Bel.

Scholars have been puzzled that the sacrifice in the painting of Julius Terentius is performed by a high-ranking Roman officer and attended by a Roman cohort and its standard bearer. The *Feriale* of the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* suggests that local gods were worshipped only privately in the army. The painting of Julius Terentius shows that the calendar recognized only some of the religions practiced by the enlisted soldiers. The theory that local deities were officially worshipped in the Roman army is substantiated by two more instances of high-officers and standard bearers paying homage to Palmyrene deities inside the camp. One of the rooms

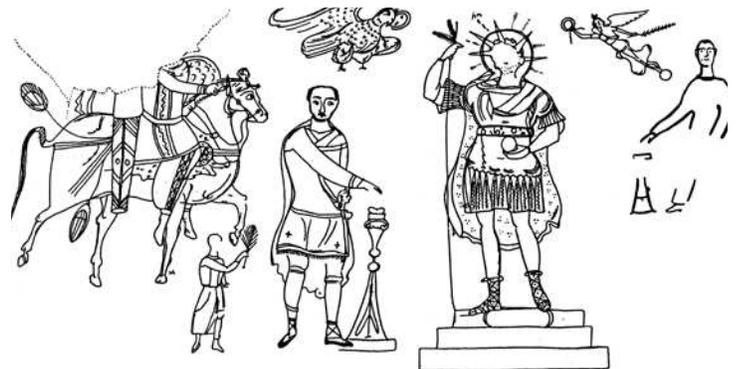


Figure 12.5: Tracing of drawing of Iarhibol, Temple of the Gadde, naos, ca. 256 CE. Ink on limestone, 54.5 x 25.0 cm. Yale University Art Gallery, Yale-French Excavations at Dura-Europos, 1932.1208. After *Prelim. Rep. V*, pl. XXXVI.3

It does not follow from Iarhibol's popularity among soldiers that his cult replaced that of Bel in Dura-Europos. Contemporary with the sacrifice of Julius Terentius is the so-called Otes fresco that was found in one of the assembly rooms in the same temple.⁶³ It pictures a certain Otes, the founder of the room, with the *bouleutès* (councilor) Iabsumsos, sacrificing before five Palmyrene gods. Iabsumsos was a member of the city council, which was only installed in Dura-Europos in the third century CE. Clearly, both Otes and Iabsumsos were civilians. This accords well with the painting, where Bel occupies his traditional central position. In the religion of non-soldiers, therefore, Bel preserved his eminent position. Iarhibol's precedence over Bel is characteristic of the religion of Palmyrene soldiers.

The importance of solar deities in the army probably explains the presence of the bust of the sun god in the relief bearing a Greek-Palmyrene dedicatory inscription that represents a certain Julius Aurelius Malochas, the son of Soudaios the Palmyrene, performing a sacrifice for the goddess Nemesis (pl. 4). The relief was made in Palmyra and is dated to 244 CE.⁶⁴ Although the dedicant does not wear military clothing, it is probable that he was somehow connected to the Roman army. His name is common among Palmyrene soldiers stationed in Dura-Europos and the relief was found at the main gate, an area where the majority of the monuments can be ascribed to soldiers. The iconography of Nemesis follows her usual Greco-Roman iconography. The goddess is clad in a long chiton and an himation, which covers her head and upper body. With the now missing right hand, she pulled away her garment such as to expose her breast in order to spit on it; an apotropaic gesture frequently found in representations of Nemesis. Above her shoulder are traces of a narrow rectangular object; probably a rod or rudder which the goddess originally held in her left hand. On the ground to her left, a small griffin is depicted standing in profile. Its forepaws rest on a wheel. Contrary to her usual representation in the Greco-Roman world, however, the goddess is associated in this relief with a sun god. This novelty is probably the effect of the cult of Nemesis in Palmyra. In Palmyra, Nemesis was most likely identified with the Arab goddess Allat. Allat was worshipped in her sanctuary with the Arab sun-god Shamash. The popularity of solar deities among the military probably enforced this Palmyrene association of Nemesis-Allat with the sun god and resulted in the presence of the sun god in the Durene relief.

Summary and Conclusion

We conclude from the above that Palmyra did not exercise a profound influence on the religion of Dura-Europos. It is true that Palmyrene deities figure prominently in the written records from the city; but as far as we can tell, their cult largely is confined to people from Palmyra and was seldom adopted by Dura's local population. A comparison between the religion of Palmyrene merchants and Palmyrene soldiers shows that the religious preferences of these two groups differed. It is apparent, therefore, that social circumstances to a large extent determined the religion of Palmyrene expatriates. Neither the religion of the tradesmen nor that of the soldiers simply copies the religion in Palmyra.

In the case of merchants, tribal religion becomes far less important outside Palmyra. Their choice of Bel testifies to their search for a communal religious identity. Immigrants from Anath and Hatra also opted for their communal deities outside their native city. At the same time, we should bear in mind the possibility that foreign visitors paid homage to the gods of their new environment. It is clear from the respect that the

Palmyrenes paid to the Gad of Dura that this was indeed the case. It is likely that this close co-operation drew individual Palmyrene merchants and other strangers to join local cult groups as well. Precisely because they became integrated into their new surroundings, such instances are bound to escape our notice. Palmyrenes may well have participated in the cults of Zeus Kyrios-Baalshamin and Aphlad, but this must remain hypothetical. One should be wary of overemphasizing the religious conservatism of Palmyrene merchants, since the nature of the sources may distort our reconstruction.

The religion of Palmyrene soldiers is more noticeably influenced by their new setting. The reason for this is twofold: First, soldiers maintained much less contact with their native cities. Second, the Roman army actively promoted solidarity and a communal identity. As a consequence, Palmyrene soldiers tended to assimilate to their new surroundings. They either accepted the religion of the army or modified local religious traditions according to the fashions of their new environment.

Notes

The present article is largely based on my doctoral thesis that was completed in 1999 and was published in the same year by Brill in Leiden as *The Palmyrenes of Dura-Europos: a Study of Religious Interaction in Roman Syria*. In preparing this thesis, I had the immense pleasure to work in the Dura archive of the Yale University Art Gallery for over a month in 1993. I have fond memories of these days, and I am particularly grateful to Dr. Susan Matheson for all her assistance and patience during my stay and in the years that followed. It is with great pleasure that I now present YUAG with the results of my research from those days.

- 1 For an indispensable discussion of the architecture of these shrines, with references to previous publications, see Susan B. Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture. Alexander through the Parthians* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 76–124. It should be stressed that the names conventionally given to these buildings do not necessarily refer to the tutelary deity of the sanctuary. For this reason, I refer to these names as “so-called.”
- 2 The study of religious life in Dura is still in its infancy. A fifteen-page article by C. Bradford Welles, published in 1969, is still the most complete overview of the religious history of Dura: C. Bradford Welles, “The Gods of Dura-Europos,” *Beiträge zur alten Geschichte und deren Nachleben: Festschrift für Franz Altheim zum 6.10.1968*, ed. Ruth Altheim-Stiehl and Hans Erich Stier (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969), 50–65. The present author has published a book on the religion of the Palmyrene community of Dura-Europos and an article on the presumed competition between the various cults in the city: Dirven, *Palmyrenes*; Lucinda Dirven, “Religious Competition and the Decoration of Sanctuaries: the Case of Dura Europos,” *Eastern Christian Art* 1 (2004): 1–20. At present, Ted Kaizer is working on a monograph on religious life in Dura. He has published several articles on the subject: Ted Kaizer, “Patterns of Worship in Dura-Europos: a Case-study of Religious Life in the Classical Levant Outside the Main Centres,” *Les religions orientales dans le monde Grec et Romain: Cent ans après Cumont (1906–2006)*, ed. Christine Bonnet, Vivienne Pirenne-Delforge, and Danny Praet (Brussels: Belgisch Historisch Instituut te Rome, 2009), 153–71; Ted Kaizer, “Religion and Language in Dura-Europos,” in *From Hellenism to Islam: Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman Near East*, ed. Hannah M. Cotton, Robert G. Hoyland, and Jonathan J. Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 235–53.
- 3 On the population of Dura, see C. Bradford Welles, “The Population of Roman Dura,” in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honor of Allan Chester Johnson*, ed. Paul R. Coleman-Norton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), 251–74.
- 4 On Palmyra and the caravan trade, see Gary K. Young, *Rome’s Eastern Trade. International Commerce and Imperial Policy 31 BC–AD 305* (London: Routledge, 2001), 136–86.
- 5 Carl H. Kraeling, *The Synagogue. The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Final Report 8, Part 1*, ed. Alfred R. Bellinger et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956); George D. Kilpatrick, “Dura-Europos: the Parchments and Papyri,” *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 5 (1964): 215–25, esp. 219–20; and Richard N. Frye, ed., *The Parthian and Middle Persian Inscriptions of Dura-Europos* (London: Lund, Humphries, 1968).
- 6 Carl H. Kraeling, *The Christian Building. The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Final Report 8, Part 2*, ed. C. Bradford Welles (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967). On the importance of the kind

- of Christianity in Dura for the interpretation of the paintings, see Lucinda Dirven, "Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained: the Meaning of Adam and Eve in the Baptistry of Dura-Europos," *Eastern Christian Art* 5 (2008): 43–57.
- 7 Admittedly, these factors do not guarantee the origin of a particular individual or group; however, the more of the above mentioned elements concur, the more likely the postulated origin becomes.
- 8 *Prelim. Rep. II*, 90–91, fig. 3.
- 9 On the cult of Iarhibol, compare below, note 57.
- 10 Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, for an extensive discussion of the Palmyrene material found in Dura-Europos.
- 11 Lucinda Dirven, "The Palmyrene Diaspora in East and West: a Syrian Community in the Diaspora in the Roman Period," in *Strangers and Sojourners. Religious Communities in the Diaspora*, ed. Gerrie ter Haar (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 77–94.
- 12 Below, note 16.
- 13 Roberto Bertolino, "Les inscriptions Hatréennes de Doura-Europos: Étude épigraphique," in *Doura-Europos Études IV, 1991–1993*, ed. Pierre Leriche and Mathilde Gelin (Beirut: Institut Français d'archéologie du Proche-Orient, 1997), 199–206.
- 14 *Prelim. Rep. V*, 112, no. 416.
- 15 In a previous publication, Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 5, n17, I have argued that the community consisted exclusively of people from Anath, cf. also Klaas Dijkstra, *Life and Loyalty: a Study in the Socio-religious Culture of Syria and Mesopotamia in the Graeco-Roman Period Based on Epigraphic Evidence* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 265–66. In his review of my book in *Topoi* 10, no. 2 (2000): 517–26, Jean-Baptiste Yon rightly questions this assumption, arguing that several of the names are also attested in Palmyra. Ted Kaizer, "Religion and Language," 162–63, argues that the description of the origin of the god proves he was not worshipped only by people from Anath, since they knew where the god came from. In my view, the stress on the god's origin functions as an identity marker for the group from Anath. This formulation is well known in the Roman Near East and it does not follow from this that people from other places worshipped the god as well.
- 16 On the clientele of the temple of Zeus Kyrios-Baalshamin, see Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 115–17.
- 17 *Prelim. Rep. VII–VIII*, 307–9, no. 915 b–c (Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 212–18). For a bilingual Greek-Palmyrene inscription dated to the Roman period, see below, note 64. In this case, the dedicant's role in the army probably explains his use of Greek: Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 327–31, pl. XVI.
- 18 On the relationship between Greek and Palmyrene in inscriptions from Palmyra, see Jean Cantineau, *Grammaire du Palmyrénien épigraphique* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1935), 5.
- 19 For a historical outline of the cult of Baalshamin, see Wolfgang Röllig, "Baal-Shamem," in *Dictionary and Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel Van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 149–51.
- 20 Susan B. Downey, *The Stone and Plaster Sculpture: the Excavations of Dura-Europos. Final Report 3, Part 1, Fascicle 2* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), 239–42. Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 211–12, pl. II.
- 21 Bertolino, "Étude épigraphique," 199–206.

- 22 Lucian describes the statues in *De Dea Syria* pars. 30–33. Cf. Lucian of Samosata, *Lucian: on the Syrian Goddess*, ed. and trans., Jane L. Lightfoot (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 269–71.
- 23 From the so-called fifth shrine in Hatra comes a statue that tallies with Macrobius' description of the cult statue of the god Apollo-Nabu in Hierapolis: Lucian, 460–61.
- 24 Above, note 15. In addition to this text, three Hatraean graffiti were found in Dura. It follows that the group of people from Hatra who settled in Dura or visited the city was probably small. The bilingual inscription was found buried in a cistern in the court of the temple: Pierre Leriche and Roberto Bertolino, "Les inscriptions hatréennes de Doura-Europos: le Contexte archéologique et historique," in *Doura-Europos Études IV, 1991–1993*, ed. Pierre Leriche and Mathilde Gelin (Beirut: Institut Français d'archéologie du Proche-Orient, 1997), 210–12. It may be inferred from the remains of the temple façade found together with the inscription in the temple, that it predates the earthquake of 160 CE.
- 25 Jean-Baptiste Yon, in his review of my book on the Palmyrenes of Dura-Europos in *Topoi* 10, no. 2 (2000): 524–25, rejects the mercantile activities of the Palmyrenes, arguing that there is no firm proof. In my view, the circumstantial evidence listed above does suggest this was the case for at least a significant part of this community.
- 26 Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 447–48. See now also Jean-Baptiste Yon, "Commerçants et petits commerçants sur les bords de l'Euphrate," in *Productions et échanges dans la Syrie grecque et romaine: Actes du colloque de Tours, Juin 2003*, ed. Maurice Sartre (Paris: De Boccard, 2007), 413–28.
- 27 On the Palmyrene caravan trade, see Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 19–22, with references for further reading.
- 28 On Palmyra's economic relations with Dura, see Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 34–40. On the route of the Palmyrene caravans and the role of the Euphrates River, see Michael Gawlikowski, "La commerce de Palmyre sur terre et sur eau," in *L'Arabie et ses mers bordières, I: Iténaires et voisinages. Séminaire de recherche 1985–1986*, ed. Jean-François Salles, Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient 16 (Paris: De Boccard, 1988): 163–72. On the marginal role of the caravan trade in Dura-Europos, see now Kai Rufing, "Dura-Europos und seine Rolle im Fernhandel der Römischen Kaiserzeit," in *Interkulturalität in der Alten Welt. Vorderasien, Hellas, Ägypten und die vielfältigen Ebenen des Kontakts*, ed. Robert Rollinger, Birgot Gugler, Martin Lang, and Irene Madreiter (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 151–60.
- 29 In the past, it was frequently suggested that Palmyrenes had already been stationed in Dura-Europos during the Parthian period, charged with the protection of the caravans. This is unlikely. First, because Dura-Europos never was an important post on the route of the Palmyrene caravans (cf. the previous note) and second, because Palmyra was a Roman city at this time; it is extremely unlikely that the Parthians would have allowed a militia from a hostile city to settle in Dura-Europos. For further references, see Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 34n133.
- 30 On the *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* in general, see David L. Kennedy, "The *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* at Dura Europos," in *The Roman and Byzantine Army in the East*, ed. Edward Dabrowa (Krakow: Universite Jagellane, 1994), 89–98.
- 31 *Prelim. Rep. VII/VIII*, 320, no. 917 (= Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 210).

- 32 *Prelim. Rep. VI*, 167–69 (= Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 281–93).
- 33 For a summary of the history of this temple and references for further reading, see Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 293–95.
- 34 *Prelim. Rep. VII/VIII*, 319–22, nos. 916–18. Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 199–207.
- 35 Delbert R. Hillers and Eleonara Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), no. 1067.
- 36 See the extensive discussion of this inscription and its implications for the reconstruction of religion in Palmyra in Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 41–66.
- 37 On religion in Palmyra, see recently Ted Kaizer, *The Religious Life of Palmyra* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2002).
- 38 Hillers and Cussini, no. 1347 (45 CE).
- 39 *Ibid.*, nos. 1353 and 0269.
- 40 Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 47–51.
- 41 Dirven, “The Palmyrene Diaspora,” 88. On the Palmyrene community in Rome, see Eugenia Equini-Schneider, “Il santuario di Bel e delle divinità di Palmira: comunità e tradizioni religiose dei palmireni a Roma,” *Dialoghi di Archeologia* 5, no. 1 (1987): 69–85.
- 42 Karel van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria and Israel: Continuity and Change in the Forms of Religious Life* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 72–74.
- 43 The two Gadde were not the main deities worshipped in this temple. In the naos, the remains of another, larger cult relief were found that probably represented the tutelary deity of the temple.
- 44 Ted Kaizer, “De Dea Syria et aliis diis deabusque: a Study of the Variety of Appearances of Gad in Aramaic Inscriptions and on Sculptures from the Near East in the First Three Centuries CE (Part 1),” *Orientalia lovaniensia Periodica* 28 (1997): 147–66; and Kaizer, “De Dea Syria et aliis diis deabusque. A Study of the Variety of Appearances of Gad in Aramaic Inscriptions and on Sculptures from the Near East in the First Three Centuries AD (Part 2),” *Orientalia lovaniensia Periodica* 29 (1998): 33–62.
- 45 Rolf Stucky, “Prêtres syrien I. Palmyre,” *Syria* 50 (1973): 163–80, esp. 176.
- 46 Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 70–71, 109–10.
- 47 Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 111–13.
- 48 For a stylistic analysis of Durene sculpture, see Downey, *The Stone and Plaster Sculpture*, 227–76.
- 49 *Prelim. Rep. V*, 112–13, no. 416.
- 50 *Prelim. Rep. V*, 106f and pl. XIII; and Louis Robert, *HelLENICA: Recueil d'épigraphie de numismatique et d'antiquités grecques, d'Aphrodisias à la Lycaonie, compte rendu du volume VIII des Monuments Asiae Minoris Antiqua* (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1965), 13:120 with note 4.
- 51 Above, note 14.
- 52 On Hatra as a city sacred to Shamash, see Lucinda Dirven, “Hatra: a ‘Pre-Islamic Mecca’ in the Eastern Jazirah,” *ARAM* 18–19 (2006–7): 363–80. On the religious organisation of Hatra, see Ted Kaizer, “Some Remarks on the Religious Life of Hatra,” *Topoi* 10 (2000): 229–52.

- 53 A comprehensive study dealing with the religious behavior of Palmyrene troops has not been published to date. For an overview and references for further reading, see Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 181–83.
- 54 On the Feriale, see C. Bradford Welles, Robert O. Fink, and J. Frank Gilliam, eds., *The Parchments and Papyri. The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters. Final Report Volume 5, Part 1* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), no. 54; Robert O. Fink, *Roman Military Records on Papyrus* (Cleveland: Press of Case Western Reserve for The American Philological Association, 1971), no. 117; and, most recently, M. Barbara Reeves, *The “Feriale Duranum,” Roman Military Religion and Dura-Europos: a Reassessment* (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Buffalo, University Microfilms International, 2005). The latter study argues that the calendar was a local document that was not used by the entire Roman army. The arguments failed to convince the present author.
- 55 *Prelim. Rep. VII/VIII*, 112ff.; Franz Cumont, “The Dura Mithraeum,” in *Mithraic Studies. Proceedings of the First International Congress of Mithraic Studies*, ed. John R. Hinnells (Manchester: Edinburgh University Press, 1975), 1:151–214; and Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 260–72, for a description of the monuments from the early Mithraeum and references for further reading.
- 56 Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 157–89.
- 57 On the cult of Iarhibol in Palmyra, see Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 47–57, with references for further reading.
- 58 The popularity of Malakbel, the second Palmyrene god who was much worshipped by the military, is far more difficult to explain. Whereas Iarhibol was an important god at the Efca and functioned as the attendant of Bel in the city temple, Malakbel seems to have been relatively unimportant. In Palmyra, Malakbel seldom figures alone and is frequently inferior to his associates. For the military, Malakbel is first and foremost a solar deity; in Palmyra, however, his solar aspect is of secondary importance. Thus compared to the Palmyrene evidence, we also note a shift in Malakbel’s personality abroad.
- 59 The identity of the three figures on the pedestal has been the subject of a lively debate. For an overview of this discussion and the arguments in favor of their identification as gods, see Lucinda Dirven, “The Julius Terentius Fresco and the Roman Imperial Cult,” *Mediterraneo Antico* 10, nos. 1–2 (2007) [2010]: 1–13.
- 60 *Prelim. Rep. IX*, 1, 176–85.
- 61 *Prelim. Rep. V*, 153–56. Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 316–18, with references for further reading.
- 62 *Prelim. Rep. II*, 90–91, fig. 3 (Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 314n58).
- 63 Franz Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geunther, 1926), 122–34, fig. 26, pls. LV–LVIII (Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 295–302, pl. XII, with references for further reading). Unfortunately, this painting is no longer extant.
- 64 Following the collated reading proposed by Hillers and Cussini, no. 1078. Cf. Dirven, *Palmyrenes*, 327–31, pl. XVI.