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Theorising the religious borders of the Latin East: some reflections on the inter-Christian landscape of Frankish northern Syria

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Situated on the far reaches of Latin Christendom, the crusader states witnessed daily contact between numerous religious groupings; both between subjected peoples and their Frankish rulers, and regarding travellers passing in and out of the latter's territories. Though this most obviously included Muslim communities, it also meant engaging with Eastern Christian populations whose presence far pre-dated, and extended beyond the limits of, Frankish authority. This posed distinct challenges for the ruling elites of Latin polities in imposing and maintaining power. This article discusses these difficulties by examining the nature of inter-Christian, or more specifically Latin–Syriac, contact in the principality of Antioch and county of Edessa, through the theoretical frameworks proposed in Thomas Nail's 2016 *Theory of the Border*. It will be argued that the realities of human movement in such a diverse and topographically fragmented region left little chance for impermeable borders between the Christian communities who lived there.

Keywords: principality of Antioch; county of Edessa; borders; Syriac Christians; crusades; inter-culturality

The Latin East was a religiously charged landscape. Forged from the ashes of the First Crusade, the so-called crusader states not only encompassed some of the world's holiest sites, they also brought Frankish settlers into daily contact with Muslims, various Eastern Christian communities, Jews, Samaritans and others.¹ It is unsurprising, therefore, that the nature of inter-cultural contact in the Latin East has fascinated several generations of scholars: from nineteenth-century European authors who saw these polities as precursors to the apparent benevolence of modern colonialism, to mid twentieth-century rejections of this model in favour of one characterised by intolerance and apartheid, and now recent moves to stress their multi-cultural – if still messy and violent – nature.² However, despite widespread historiographical interest, not only has the evidence of the kingdom of Jerusalem attracted the mainstay of attention, but, with some notable exceptions, its lessons have also often formed the primary basis for general models of interaction applied to all four of the crusader states – a reality made all the more problematic because of the varied demographic make-up of each of the Latin polities.³ Moreover, it has not yet been established whether such studies could benefit from Thomas Nail's 2016 *Theory of the Border*, which claims to be the first systematic attempt to provide a 'theoretical framework for understanding the structure and

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¹ For useful introductions to the various communities, see Christopher MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East: Rough Tolerance* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 7–12; Bernard Hamilton, 'The Power of Tradition: The Papacy and the Churches of the East, c.1100–1300', in *Authority and Power in the Medieval Church, c.1000–c.1500*, ed. Thomas W. Smith (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 183–92.

² On the development of these historiographical trends, see Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1–186; MacEvitt, *Rough Tolerance*; Alan V. Murray, 'Franks and Indigenous Communities in Palestine and Syria (1099–1187): A Hierarchical Model of Social Interaction in the Principalities of Outremer', in *East and West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times: Transcultural Experiences in the Premodern World*, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 289–307; Andrew D. Buck, 'Settlement, Identity, and Memory in the Latin East: An Examination of the Term "Crusader States"', *English Historical Review* 135 (2020): 271–302.

³ For the other polities, see Monique Amouroux-Mourad, *Le comté d'Edesse 1098–1150* (Paris: Geuthner, 1988), 96–108; MacEvitt, *Rough Tolerance*, 74–99; Kevin J. Lewis, 'Medieval Diglossia: The Diversity of the Latin Christian Encounter with Written and Spoken Arabic in the "Crusader" County of Tripoli, with a Hitherto Unpublished Arabic Note from the Principality of Antioch (MS, AOM 3, Valletta: National Library of Malta, no. 51v)', *Al-Masāq* 27 (2015): 119–52; Andrew D. Buck, *The Principality of Antioch and its Frontiers in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), 164–88.

function of borders across multiple domains of social life’ and aligns with modern approaches to medieval frontiers that see borders as more than just physical boundaries.⁴

It is the aim of this article, therefore, to draw upon Nail’s frameworks to offer a focused examination of the processes of movement and human exchange which existed in the two northernmost polities, the principality of Antioch and the county of Edessa. Indeed, the region housing these two polities provides an excellent proving ground for considering the implications of Nail’s ideas, as not only was it home to a near incomparable wealth of internal and external religious and political groupings, but it also served as the meeting point of Asia Minor, Cilicia, Syria and Mesopotamia. Punctuated, also, by several topographical challenges, including mountain ranges and limestone massifs, as well as the Orontes, Euphrates and Tigris rivers, this meant a delicate balance of diplomacy, warfare, political reactivity and social pragmatism was demanded of Frankish rulers.⁵ In order to demonstrate this, therefore, this article focuses upon the ways in which Syriac (or Jacobite) Christians, a community often less privileged in modern discussions of inter-cultural experiences in the Latin East, engaged with Frankish religious borders – in this instance defined as efforts (or the lack thereof) to control the movement of people for personal devotional or wider religious activities, not for warfare. It will be argued that, despite some tension, particularly on the extremities of Latin authority, the borders between these two Christian communities were permeable and further attest to the benefits offered, and problems posed, by inter-denominational contact in the northern crusader states. Before turning to the Jacobites and

⁴ Thomas Nail, *Theory of the Border* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1; David Abulafia, ‘Introduction: Seven Types of Ambiguity, c.1100–c.1500’, in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, eds. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 1–34. For a first attempt to consider Nail’s theory in a medieval context, in this instance in relation to military borders and the role of castles in the principality of Antioch, see Andrew D. Buck, ‘Castles and the Frontier: Theorising the Borders of the Principality of Antioch in the Twelfth Century’, *Viator* 50, no. 2 (2019): 79–108.

⁵ Claude Cahen, *La Syrie du nord à l’époque des croisades et la principauté Franque d’Antioche* (Paris: Geuthner, 1940), 105–76; Amouroux-Mourad, *Comté d’Edesse*, 19–56.

Frankish authority, however, it is worth outlining some of the key aspects of *Theory of the Border*.

Frontier theory and Thomas Nail's *Theory of the Border*

The concept of the border, as well as the notion of the frontier as a broader zone of contact, has a long history, but the oft-cited inspiration for most modern historical analysis is Frederick Jackson Turner's 1893 essay 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', which considered how European settlers in the North American wilderness shaped and expanded the world around themselves through a continual process of developing, defining, and expanding the frontier.⁶ Turner's ideas have not gone unchallenged, though, and the modern focus on stressing the variability of borderlands, as well as the dynamic societies who inhabited or travelled across them, has necessitated a looser adoption of his frameworks, especially by medievalists, given the importance of localism to identities and the limitations on travel, communication and administration.⁷

While Nail recognises these trends and accepts the potential problems of offering a single border theory, he posits that this does not mean borders do not (or did not) exist. Rather, we must accept their varied forms – defined by how, when, where and by (or for) whom they are made. He proposes some core ideas: for example, that borders should be understood as a 'process of social division', one not restricted to the limits of sovereign states, but as zones in between; shaped first and foremost by movement. A border is thus a fluid zone – a 'zone of contestation' – which forms its own character and is maintained by

⁶ Frederick Jackson Turner, 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', *American Historical Association, Annual Report for the Year 1893* (1893): 119–227.

⁷ Robert I. Burns, 'The Significance of the Frontier in the Middle Ages', in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, eds. Robert Bartlett and Angus Mackay (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 307–30; William Urban, 'The Frontier Thesis and the Baltic Crusade', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 45–71; Enrique Rodríguez-Picavea, 'The Frontier and Royal Power in Medieval Spain: A Developmental Hypothesis', *Medieval History Journal* 8 (2005): 273–301 (276–80).

‘continuously redirect[ing] flows of people and things across or away from itself’.⁸ While borders, and one’s experiences of them, are defined by who has power and who does not, such delineations are not the end products of fully defined societies. Instead, the processes of ‘bordering’ contribute to social formation and organisation. To understand a border is not just to recognise a polity’s physical extremities, but to identify the underlying processes of motion and movement that guide its creation.⁹

Consequently, the politics of movement (‘kinopolitics’) is integral to Nail’s approach.¹⁰ Moreover, by emphasising the non-static nature of borders, he draws attention to the varied means by which divides become impermanent: natural phenomena like earthquakes and rivers; the decay in the structural integrity of border technology, including walls, towers and guard posts; violence; and socio-economic factors, such as the wealth of those moving or the policies surrounding trade, migration and social belonging. Central to this is how humans physically and ideologically manage the endless circulation of people and things; for, when identities harden, it becomes clearer where (and what) the border is.¹¹ Here, Nail introduces the notion of ‘critical limology’, or the need to recognise the importance of local conditions *as well as* their place within broader sociological processes. The border cannot be viewed simply as a technology to be resisted, a physical entity barring entry or enclosing those within; but must be understood as the underlying means by which someone is convinced to create such technologies.¹² Nail’s concept of bordering is also characterised by expansion and expulsion. For some, power and rights increase, as does their sphere of influence; for others, rights are removed, and they are expelled from the social order.¹³ To

⁸ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 2–6.

⁹ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 4.

¹⁰ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 21.

¹¹ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 5–8.

¹² Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 10–15.

¹³ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 21–3.

achieve this, three key forms of movement must be harnessed: flow, junction and circulation.¹⁴

‘Flow’ is the continuous movement of peoples or things, a process which cannot be permanently controlled but can be managed or directed through bordering.¹⁵ The primary means of doing so is by creating a ‘junction’ through which the flow passes, much like a border wall theoretically directs movement towards specific entry points and controls who or what crosses through. The heart of kinopolitics is thus the ‘study of the function and typology’ of these junctions, of which there are two key types: limit and non-limit.¹⁶ A non-limit junction is a simple conduit that does not filter the flows which pass through, whereas a limit junction marks the end point of a flow and is split into two forms. The first, an ‘exit junction’, stops the flow entirely – for instance someone is prevented from crossing a border or entering a city. By contrast, an ‘entrance junction’ allows the flow to filter through, but in so doing transforms it, much like a migrant might become the citizen of a new country.¹⁷ What level of bordering is possible also depends on the flow type. If it is ‘conjoined’, that is a limited circuit of movement redirected by junctions according to a specific need, then more control can be achieved. If it is ‘disjoined’, that is a wider process of unconstrained and multi-directional movement, bordering becomes a looser concept.¹⁸ Nevertheless, once the junctions have been formed into an ordered network and control over the ‘reproduction and redirection of movement’ has been achieved, this becomes the ‘circulation’. An interwoven knot of multiple flows, the circulation is a dynamic process, with some junctions joined by certain flows and excluded by others. Yet, it is through this that the processes of expansion and expulsion – or, more accurately, expansion *by* expulsion – are defined. Expansion allows

¹⁴ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 24.

¹⁵ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 24–6.

¹⁶ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 27–8.

¹⁷ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 32–3.

¹⁸ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 31–2.

certain flows to spread and grow (to broaden the social circulation), while expulsion drives out or deprives others of their social status and limits their flow. It is the role of junctions, therefore, to construct the circuits through which the mechanisms of social inclusion and exclusion are built and reinforced.¹⁹

Nail also urges care with terminology, as although words like ‘mark’, ‘limit’, ‘boundary’, and ‘frontier’ are often used interchangeably with ‘border’, he argues instead that each describes ‘a specific kinetic function’ that combines to form key functions of a border’s kinopolitical operation.²⁰ The ‘mark’, for example, is the forward point whereby a flow is bifurcated, often by creating a diversion in the earth, such as a ditch or a mound. This acts as the extreme point of authority, and directs the traffic of flows by pushing out, or turning back, intruders. For insiders, it also sets out the starting point of a path which, if followed, will eventually lead them back to that initial point.²¹ This is the ‘limit’, or the perimeter, and only becomes a ‘border’ once it is protected, defended, and enforced.²² The limit cannot defend against everything, though, and where it lets things through, this is called the ‘boundary’, or the ‘passage across, around, and through the border’.²³ Importantly, the boundary takes on a more sociological character, for markers of belonging, including identifiers on clothing or banners, demarcate those inside and outside a particular orbit of power. Within this framework, the ‘frontier’ is not a simple physical space, rather an area of ‘disjoined flows’ guided by expulsion (the mark), expansion (the limit) and compulsion (the boundary). As the border moves in response to the flows, so does the frontier. This is not necessarily an external process, as if a community is socially excluded, and so placed outside of the boundary of the

¹⁹ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 28–31, 33–5.

²⁰ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 35, 42.

²¹ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 36–8.

²² Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 37–9.

²³ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 39–40.

dominant power, this creates an internal frontier, a belt around the area of conjoined flows. It is a ‘zone of experimentation’, where one power expels another.²⁴

For Nail, a border is no demarcation line, created by two opposing sides with fully developed social orders. Instead, bordering is a wider process defined by the continuous movement of people and things, as well as attempts to harness and direct them. This allows societies to both emerge and disappear; to expand or to expel. To understand borders fully, one cannot simply point to the markers of a polity’s furthest extremities: rather, we must understand how these markers are utilised and managed through border technology; the nature of the flows which pass through them; and, finally, how this helps to guide the creation of social structures by harnessing the circulation. The rest of this article will thus utilise these frameworks to examine the flows of human movement in Frankish northern Syria, focusing on the Syriac Christian communities whose lives intersected with, and transgressed, the borders of Latin authority.

Religious bordering in the northern crusader states

It should be noted first that there is some imprecision regarding who can be identified as Syriac, or Jacobite, Christians in the surviving sources. Indeed, we find the use of two inter-linked, and perhaps inter-changeable, terms: *Suriani* and *Iacobi*.²⁵ Issues arise because although some medieval authors used *Suriani* for Jacobites, others may have considered it a generic term for non-Latins, including Greek Orthodox Melkites, who were predominantly Arabic speaking, or even a reference to primarily linguistic (Arabic) identities.²⁶ Historians

²⁴ Nail, *Theory of the Border*, 39–41.

²⁵ Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, 168–71.

²⁶ MacEvitt, *Rough Tolerance*, 8–9, 102–6; Cahen, *Syrie du Nord*, 191, 338; Joseph Nasrallah, ‘Syriens et Suriens’, in *Symposium Syriacum 1972: célébré dans les jours 26–31 octobre 1972 à l’Institut Pontifical Oriental de Rome: Rapports et Communications* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1974), 487–503; Johannes Pahlitzsch, *Graeci und Suriani im Palästina der Kreuzfahrerzeit* (Berlin: Duncker und Humboldt, 2001), 14–15, 181–8.

largely support the latter two hypotheses, influenced either by First Crusade and other Outremer-related sources which favoured *Suriani* (and rarely used *Iacobi*), or a late twelfth-century text known as the *Tractatus de locis et statu sancte terre ierosolimitane* ('Treatise on the places and state of the holy land of Jerusalem') which clearly distinguished the *Suriani* from the Jacobites.²⁷ However, it is possible that those texts that used *Suriani* as a catch-all term better reflect attitudes in the Latin West, especially given the preference in Arabic sources for calling the Jacobites 'Syrians'.²⁸

Nevertheless, there is reason to believe *Suriani* was used more broadly, and included the Jacobites, at least in the principality of Antioch. For example, the Antiochene chronicler Walter the Chancellor (d. c.1120) did not use *Iacobi* and instead differentiated between Greeks, Syrians and Armenians when listing those affected by an earthquake at Antioch in 1115.²⁹ Furthermore, in a document issued in favour of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre by Prince Raymond of Antioch in 1140, mention is made of three *Suriani*, Nicephorus, Michael and Nicholas, whose knowledge of Antioch helped verify the church's claims to local possessions.³⁰ The name Nicephorus hints at Greek ethnicity, but the others are less obvious. Other charters muddy the waters further, as documents issued during the reign of Prince Bohemond III in 1163, 1175 and 1190 respectively mention Syrians called Asset, Bon Mossor and Dabot.³¹ Importantly, there are suggestions here of Arabised identities, which

²⁷ Heinrich Hagenmeyer, *Epistulae et chartae ad historiam primi belli sacri spectantes. Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1901), 16; Ralph of Caen, *Radulphi Cadomensis Tancredus*, ed. Edoardo D'Angelo. *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* 231 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 34; Benjamin Z. Kedar, 'The *Tractatus de locis et statu sancte terre ierosolimitane*', in *The Crusades and Their Sources: Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton*, eds. John France and William G. Zajac (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 111–33; Denys Pringle, 'Wilbrand of Oldenburg's Journey to Syria, Lesser Armenia, Cyprus, and the Holy Land (1211–1212): A New Edition', *Crusades* 11 (2012): 109–37 (123).

²⁸ Pahlitzsch, *Graeci und Suriani*, 181, n. 348; Nasrallah, 'Syriens', 494–503.

²⁹ Walter the Chancellor, *Bella Antiochena*, ed. Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1896), 63.

³⁰ Genevieve Bresc-Bautier, ed., *Le cartulaire du chapitre du Saint-Sépulchre de Jérusalem* (Paris: Geuthner, 1984), 178–83.

³¹ Matteo Camera, ed., *Memorie storico-diplomatiche dell'antica città e ducato di Amalfi*, 2 vols. (Salerno: W. Carari-Testaferrata, 1876), 1: 202; Joseph Delaville Le Roulx, ed., *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem (1100–1300)*, 4 vols. (Paris: Ernest Thorin, 1894–1906), 1: 472, 891.

could indicate Jacobite or Melkite Christians. Indeed, other prominent exemplars of Arabised Christians can be found in the principality, including Abd al-Massie, the *rayyis* of Margat before 1174, whose name means ‘servant of the messiah’ and who had a son-in-law called George; Symeon II, the patriarch of Antioch appointed by Prince Bohemond IV in 1208 and described by Pope Innocent III as a Greek, who was also called Ibn Abu Shaiba (‘the white haired one’); and the Melkite priest named al-Mawwad li-Ilah (‘the Friend of God’) who leased a church within Antioch from the monastery of Josaphat in 1213.³² Yet, neither Abd al-Massie nor George is described as *Surianus*, even though a Syrian community lived in the suburbs of Margat.³³ This failure to differentiate is also not limited to Latin sources. The Armenian writer Matthew of Edessa makes several mentions of Christian Syrians, as opposed to Greeks and Armenians, at Edessa; while the Greek chronicler Niketas Choniates mentioned ‘Syrians’ (Σύροι) at Antioch in 1143 and 1158 but did not classify them as Jacobites.³⁴

It is evident, however, that even if a clear differentiation between the Jacobites and the Melkites is not always possible in our sources, the former certainly populated the region, as demonstrated by evidence of Syriac communities, churches and monasteries found throughout the northern Frankish polities, as well as in neighbouring regions and cities like Aleppo.³⁵ Moreover, while members of the Jacobite church hierarchy lived within Frankish

³² Delaville Le Roulx, ed., *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des hospitaliers*, 1: 457, 613, 783; Joshua Prawer, *Crusader Institutions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 71–2; Bernard Hamilton, *The Latin Church in the Crusader States: The Secular Church* (London: Variorum, 1980), 313–14; Othmar Hageneder and Adolf Haidacher, eds., *Die Register Innocenz' III*, 12 vols. (Graz: H. Böhlau, 1964–2012), 11: 8; Nadia Jamil and Jeremy Johns, ‘An Original Arabic Document from Crusader Antioch (1213 AD)’, in *Texts, Documents and Artefacts: Islamic Studies in Honour of D.S. Richards*, ed. Chase F. Robinson (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 157–90.

³³ Delaville Le Roulx, ed., *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des hospitaliers*, 1: 941.

³⁴ ‘Matthew of Edessa: Chronicle’, in Ara E. Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades: Tenth to Twelfth Centuries* (New York, 1993), 1–239 (154–5, 187–8); Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. Ioannes van Dieten (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), 39, 108.

³⁵ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166–1199)*, ed. and trans. Jean-Baptiste Chabot, 4 vols. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1905), 3: 231, 255–6, 300–4, 332–5, 339, 360; Alfred Abouna, Jean-Maurice Fiey and Jean-Baptiste Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon ad A.C. 1234 pertinens*, 4 vols. (Leuven: Peeters, 1916–74), 2: 69–70, 79, 82–3, 143. See also Dorothea Weltecke, ‘On the Syriac Orthodox in the Principality of Antioch during the Crusader Period’, in *East and West in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean I: Antioch from the Byzantine Reconquest until the End of the Crusader*

territory, much of the community lived outside of it, and owed their devotional allegiance to a patriarch who often did so as well and whose religious authority extended into Muslim and Eastern Christian spheres of power.³⁶ When it comes to a discussion of religious borders, therefore, the value of considering the experiences of this particular community through the prism of flows of human movement and of the circulation of people across and along boundaries and frontiers, becomes clear.

In examining this, historians are fortunate to have several texts which form part of a so-called Renaissance in Syriac historiography.³⁷ The most significant is the World Chronicle of Michael the Great, otherwise called Michael the Syrian (c.1126–99), Jacobite patriarch of Antioch from 1166 to 1199. Composed over some 50 years, Michael’s work preserves materials gleaned from non-Latin sources, including the now lost twelfth-century chronicle of Basil, Jacobite bishop of Edessa, as well as Michael’s own eyewitness observations drawn from a career that saw him travel throughout Cilicia, Mesopotamia and northern Syria, as well as to the kingdom of Jerusalem.³⁸ To this can also be added an anonymous mid-thirteenth-century Edessan text known as *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon ad A. C. 1234 pertinens* (the *1234 Chronicle*) which perhaps drew upon some similar sources to Michael but is nevertheless independent of his chronicle – unlike a third source, the Chronography of Gregory Bar ‘Ebroyo, which as a result will be used sparingly here.³⁹

Principality, eds. Krijnie Ciggaar and Michael Metcalf (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 95–124; Bas ter Haar Romeny and others, ‘The Formation of Communal Identity Among West Syrian Christians: Results and Conclusions of the Leiden Project’, *Church History and Religious Culture* 89 (2009): 1–52; Mat Immerzeel, *Identity Puzzles: Medieval Christian Art in Syria and Lebanon* (Leuven: Peeters, 2009); Hamilton, ‘Power of Tradition’, 186–7.

³⁶ Weltecke, ‘On the Syriac Orthodox’, 100–7.

³⁷ Dorothea Weltecke, ‘A Renaissance in Historiography? Patriarch Michael, the Anonymous Chronicle ad a. 1234, and Bar ‘Ebroyo’, in *The Syriac Renaissance*, eds. Herman Teule and others (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 95–111.

³⁸ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 1: i–lx; 3: 278–81; Dorothea Weltecke, *Die ‘Beschreibung der Zeiten’ von Mor Michael Dem Grossen (1126–1199): eine Studie zu ihrem historischen und historiographiegeschichtlichen Kontext* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 127–52.

³⁹ Andy Hilken, *The Anonymous Syriac Chronicle of 1234 and its Sources* (Leuven: Peeters, 2018), 305–14; Gregory Bar ‘Ebroyo, *The Chronography: Being the First Part of his Political History of the World*, trans. Ernest A. Wallis Budge, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1932).

Importantly, in these texts we find multiple instances when Michael and other Jacobites travelled in and out of Frankish territory, demonstrating the permeability of the borders and boundaries between Syriac and Latin communities. For example, in the first decade of the 1100s, churchmen travelled to Edessa from the Jacobite monastery of Mor Barsawmo, situated in the far north near to Melitene and where Michael began his career and spent much of his life, to try to settle a long-running dispute between the Syriac patriarch, Athanasius, and their Edessan bishop, Bar Sabuni.⁴⁰ Before 1119, Bar Sabuni had raised complaints with Antioch's Latin patriarch, Bernard of Valence, who summoned Athanasius from the monastery of Dovair (which was near to Antioch) and asked him to pardon Bar Sabuni at a council held in St Peter's church in Antioch. According to Michael, an argument then arose between the two patriarchs owing to a misunderstood translation from Syriac into the Frankish language (it is unclear whether this was Latin or French) and so Bernard ordered the Jacobites to remain in Antioch until a proper council was convened. However, the Jacobite patriarch was allowed to depart after a few days owing to the intercession of a Jacobite philosopher called 'Abd ul-Masih and discussions between Athanasius and Prince Roger, who chastised Bernard for his behaviour.⁴¹ Athanasius now remained in Amid to the north and refused to visit Frankish territory, although he kept a close eye on Bar Sabuni, whose excommunication caused so many problems for his Edessan congregation that some had their children baptised in Frankish churches instead.⁴²

This aside, it appears that the Jacobites were not only largely well treated and officially protected by the Latins, but that interaction and engagement were prominent.⁴³

⁴⁰ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 193–4, 196–7; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 222–6; MacEvitt, *Rough Tolerance*, 106–9. On Michael and Mor Barsawmo, see Weltecke, *Die 'Beschreibung der Zeiten'*, 55–86.

⁴¹ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 207–10; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 222–6. Dorothea Weltecke has posited that this philosopher is synonymous with the one who acted as translator and teacher for Stephen of Pisa in Antioch. See Weltecke, 'On the Syriac Orthodox', 101.

⁴² Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 212–13.

⁴³ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 222, 230–1.

Thus, Michael records how three Syrian brothers, Constantine, Tavitoug and Kristopher, held military sway in the mountain regions between Frankish-held Samosata and Mor Barsawmo in the first decades of the twelfth century, while the *1234 Chronicle* records that the brother of Basil of Edessa was an influential administrator within the city.⁴⁴ Christopher MacEvitt has suggested that both these instances indicate the Jacobites' incorporation into Latin power structures, albeit caution is required in making such assumptions given our lack of corroborative evidence.⁴⁵ The reality of interaction and human movement is undeniable, however, as when a new patriarch was elected after Athanasius' death in 1130, the synod which appointed him – attended by 15 Syriac prelates from across the region, including Adana, Gargar, Mardin and Anazarba – was held at Tell Bashir in the county of Edessa, and the chosen candidate, John XIII, was ordained in the presence of Count Joscelin I and the Frankish barons.⁴⁶ Such was the trust in Latin security, that the Jacobites came to their patriarch at Muslim Amid in the mid 1130s and convinced him to move to Frankish Kesoun in the north of the principality of Antioch, where he stayed for several years before moving on to Dovair and then Mor Barsawmo.⁴⁷ Likewise, when another Jacobite church council was held at Melitene in 1139 to appoint John XIII's successor, who also took the name Athanasius and was later consecrated in the principality of Antioch, participants again travelled from (and throughout) the region, including passing through the county of Edessa to go from Amid to Qal'at Ja'bar, to the south east of Aleppo, in order to settle disputes and other matters.⁴⁸ When a further meeting was held at Hisn Mansur (also in the county) in 1141, several canons were delivered to the new patriarch at Kesoun for a settlement; while, as

⁴⁴ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 198; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 229.

⁴⁵ MacEvitt, *Rough Tolerance*, 88, 93.

⁴⁶ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 231; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 227–8.

⁴⁷ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 242–3.

⁴⁸ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 250–1; Bar 'Ebroyo, *The Chronography*, 2: 498.

Turks raided Latin territories near Marash in this period, they came across the travelling party of the Jacobite bishop of Qlisora (in the diocese of Melitene), although he escaped with Frankish help.⁴⁹ Similarly, when a Latin church council was held at Antioch in 1140 to deal with the issue of deposing the patriarch, Ralph of Domfront, the Jacobites reportedly attended to respond to accusations made against them by the Greeks.⁵⁰ Once this was finished, the Jacobite patriarch left Antioch for Melitene to meet with the Seljuk Sultan, while the city's congregation was placed under the control of the Syriac bishop of Tarsus.⁵¹

Yet not all interaction was positive. Thus, the *1234 Chronicle* suggests Richard of the Principate, Edessa's temporary ruler in the early 1100s, mistreated the city's indigenous Christians, while Emperor John II Komnenos' seizure of the Cilician city of Adana from the Franks in 1137 was reportedly viewed by the Jacobites as a liberation from oppressive Frankish rule.⁵² Monique Amouroux-Mourad has even gone so far as to posit that the Syriac population of the county of Edessa resented the Franks for not lifting them from the submissive position in which they were placed under earlier Armenian rule.⁵³ There were also other points of contention, as Michael noted how Edessa's Latin bishop, during a visit to pray at Mor Barsawmo in the mid 1130s, was convinced by the Greeks to carry away the saint's shrine to his own church, which resulted in the temporary removal of the relics to Melitene, even though a sudden storm seemingly caused the Franks to back down.⁵⁴ This presaged an increasingly complex relationship between the Jacobites and Count Joscelin II of Edessa

⁴⁹ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 249, 251–2. See also Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kamil fi'l-Ta'rikh*, ed. and trans. Donald S. Richards, 3 vols. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 1: 368–9.

⁵⁰ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 255–6. On the synod, see Rudolf Hiestand, 'Ein neuer Bericht über das Konzil von Antiochia 1140', *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 19 (1987): 314–50; Hans Eberhard Mayer, *Varia Antiochena: Studien zum Kreuzfahrerfürstentum Antiochia im 12. und frühen 13. Jahrhundert* (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1993), 19–30.

⁵¹ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 254–5.

⁵² Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 52, 82–3. See also MacEvitt, *Rough Tolerance*, 90.

⁵³ Amouroux-Mourad, *Comté d'Edesse*, 100.

⁵⁴ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 238–9.

(r.1131–59), who often intervened in Syriac affairs and financially exploited the monks of Mor Barsawmo.⁵⁵ For example, when Jacobite churchmen came to Joscelin in the early 1140s to claim that Patriarch Athanasius had been unlawfully appointed, the count forbade the latter from being proclaimed in his lands and only relented when the Jacobite bishop of Gargar, who had been responsible for the consecration, interceded with him at Samosata.⁵⁶ Tension remained, though: when Basil was made bishop of Edessa, having previously been at Kesoun, some feared Joscelin exerted too much influence over him. Consequently, the patriarch came from Mor Barsawmo to mediate with the count at Tell Bashir.⁵⁷ It was also not only Joscelin who mistreated the Jacobites, as the Antiochene nobleman, Baldwin of Marash, is said to have forced the community at Kesoun, including the priests, to rebuild its walls after an earthquake.⁵⁸

The situation became even more complex following Edessa's fall to Zengi, the Muslim *atabeg* of Mosul and Aleppo, in 1144. Indeed, Michael reports that in the wake of this loss, Joscelin imprisoned Bishop Basil at Samosata for three years due to accusations he had colluded with the Muslims.⁵⁹ While this is not corroborated by the *1234 Chronicle*, there are hints Zengi had long recognised the Jacobites as a potential weak point in Edessa, as the text has him offer them protection in return for betraying the city during a reported siege in 1131.⁶⁰ This offer was rejected, as was a similar one made during the siege of 1144, but Basil did seemingly play a significant role in trying to forge a peaceful resolution with Zengi, while he (and the wider Jacobite population) enjoyed a distinctly positive relationship with the

⁵⁵ Amouroux-Mourad, *Comté d'Edesse*, 102–3.

⁵⁶ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 255–7.

⁵⁷ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 259–60.

⁵⁸ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 269.

⁵⁹ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 262–3, 270–2. Although such collusion is not recorded elsewhere, William of Tyre's comment that Edessa's Latin archbishop, Hugh, died during the city's initial capture, may lend some validity to the idea that another senior churchman, albeit a Syriac one, would have been called upon to lead negotiations regarding the citadel's eventual surrender. See William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, ed. Robert B. C. Huygens. *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* 63/63A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986), 720–1.

⁶⁰ Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 79.

atabeg during the early stages of Muslim rule.⁶¹ For Joscelin, this might easily have been interpreted, wilfully or otherwise, as collusion. It is also likely that the count's actions were influenced by his failed attempt to recover Edessa in conjunction with Baldwin of Marash in 1146 – which resulted in a disastrous retreat (and Baldwin's death), the slaughter or dispersal of the Christian populace throughout the region, including to Samosata (where Basil fled) and Antioch, and the destruction of many churches and other holy sites.⁶² Joscelin had certainly become a major threat to the Jacobites by this point, as he seized the shrine of Mor Barsawmo in 1148 after he and his men had been joyfully welcomed by the monks upon his sudden arrival. Having gained access to the monastic complex, the Franks despoiled the monastery and exacted financial tribute in return for the release of the relics and hostages. Accordingly, the monks and other Jacobite supporters visited Joscelin in the following months to procure a settlement.⁶³

Yet this did not halt the continuity of human movement. Upon his release, Basil travelled widely to raise funds for those of his people in Muslim prisons, visiting Antioch and Jerusalem and receiving enough from their rulers and patriarchs to travel to Mosul and secure his goals before continuing on to Amid and meeting with the Jacobite patriarch.⁶⁴ Moreover, in spite of Zengi's initially positive approach to the Jacobites at Edessa, the breakdown of Frankish rule and the failed attempt at recapturing the city made by Joscelin in collaboration with Baldwin of Marash and some local Christians in 1146 appears to have hardened Muslim attitudes and sparked migration into the principality and elsewhere.⁶⁵ That Frankish military activities could lead to Eastern Christian migration away from settlements had precedence,

⁶¹ Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 90–5, 98–102.

⁶² Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 104–11; Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 270–2.

⁶³ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 283–6, 293–5; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 113–14.

⁶⁴ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 277–8.

⁶⁵ Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 104–11; Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 270–2.

for Baldwin II of Jerusalem's failed assault on Aleppo in 1124 reportedly led the city's Muslim rulers to persecute and disperse the local Christians, who fled either to Antioch or Qal'at Ja'bar.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, as the *1234 Chronicle* reports, those who travelled east (and so into Muslim lands) in the late 1140s fared more positively than those who reached their co-religionists to the west.⁶⁷ One migrant whose experiences bucked this trend, though, was a travelling monk of Mor Barsawmo who appeared alongside Bishop Basil at Antioch in 1151. While there, he advised a Frankish family to pray to Mor Barsawmo so that he might intercede on behalf of their son, who was gravely ill after falling from a tree. When the boy awoke and reported that the saint had visited him, the Franks, Jacobites and Armenians all processed together to St Peter's Church.⁶⁸ At the subsequent consecration in 1156 of a church built by this Frankish family and dedicated to Mor Barsawmo, there were numerous Jacobite churchmen and people (including Michael, then abbot of Mor Barsawmo, who came to Antioch along with the foundation's monks), as well as Franks and Armenians.⁶⁹

Importantly, this marked only the first of Michael's several identifiable forays into Frankish territory. Although unable to visit Antioch when appointed its patriarch c.1168 because the Franks were at war with Aleppo, and so he went instead to Kesoun, it was not long before he reached the city.⁷⁰ Michael thus entered Cilicia and came to Antioch, where he was well received by its lords outside the city walls before travelling on to Latakia and taking ship to Jerusalem.⁷¹ The reason for avoiding entering Antioch, it would appear, was that its patriarch was a Greek called Athanasius, who was installed at Emperor Manuel Komnenos'

⁶⁶ Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 69–70; Kemal al-Din, 'La Chronique d'Alep', in *Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens orientaux*, vol. 3, (Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1884), 638–9. See also Thomas S. Asbridge, 'How the Crusades Could Have Been Won: King Baldwin II of Jerusalem's Campaigns against Aleppo (1124–5) and Damascus (1129)', *Journal of Medieval Military History* 11 (2013): 73–94.

⁶⁷ Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 104–11.

⁶⁸ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 300–3.

⁶⁹ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 303–4.

⁷⁰ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 330–1. On this, see also Weltecke, 'On the Syriac Orthodox', 113–17.

⁷¹ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 327.

instigation, after he had paid for Bohemond III to be released from captivity following the latter's disastrous defeat to Nur al-Din, the Muslim ruler of Aleppo and Damascus, at Artah in 1165.⁷² Upon Michael's return from Jerusalem, he first visited the deposed Latin patriarch, Aimery of Limoges, at Qusair – both hated Athanasius – before finally entering Antioch. Here, after perhaps being allowed to sit on the throne of St Peter, he consecrated several Jacobite bishops, including one of formerly Frankish Anazarba, who must have been there either in exile or he had travelled specially for the occasion, and then returned to Mor Barsawmo for a synod.⁷³

Throughout the 1170s, Michael seems to have largely split his time between Antioch, which he visited in 1172, 1175, 1178–9 and early 1180, and was in turn visited there by other Jacobites seeking his judgements (including the appointment of a new bishop of Aleppo), and Mor Barsawmo, on which he spent a great deal of effort renovating and often used for religious meetings.⁷⁴ In 1175, when Michael (perhaps at Antioch) was visited by representatives of the Jacobites at Melitene, led by the bishop of Tarsus, who sought his help in renovating their church, he also personally went to the city. During this stay, he reportedly met with the Seljuk Sultan, Kilij Arslan, who, as a sign of his respect for the patriarch, later relinquished the monks of Mor Barsawmo from paying financial tribute.⁷⁵ Michael likewise visited Amid in 1174 and 1175, as well as Mardin in 1179.⁷⁶ Finally, in early 1179, Michael again came to the kingdom of Jerusalem, where he met King Baldwin IV at Acre and renewed an earlier agreement made with King Amalric (r.1163–74), which almost certainly related to protections afforded to the Jacobites. From here, he returned to Antioch for a short

⁷² Bernard Hamilton, 'Three Patriarchs at Antioch, 1165–1170', in *Dei gesta per Francos: études sur les croisades dédiées à Jean Richard*, eds. M. Balard, B.Z. Kedar and J. Riley-Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 199–207.

⁷³ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 327, 332, 334–6; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 230.

⁷⁴ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 345, 347, 350, 357–60, 375–7, 382.

⁷⁵ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 354–5; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 140.

⁷⁶ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 347–8, 369–70, 379.

period in early 1180 and then travelled on to Mor Barsawmo.⁷⁷ There were limits to how far he would travel, however, as although Michael's patriarchal authority stretched as far as Tikrit, and he describes helping to settle disputes there in the 1170s and 1180s, he seemingly did not do so in person, perhaps as a result of Nur al-Din's growing antagonism towards Eastern Christian communities.⁷⁸ Moreover, although Michael claimed Aimery of Limoges asked him to attend the Third Lateran Council at Rome (1179) and refute the Cathar heresy, he did not.⁷⁹ Instead, as northern Syria became more dangerous, particularly during the 1180s, due in large part to the rise of Saladin, Michael largely remained at Mor Barsawmo.⁸⁰

Others also appear to have travelled widely. In 1191, Michael sent to Antioch a certain churchman called Athanasius – formerly the bishop of Jerusalem, who had fled to Mor Barsawmo when the Holy City had fallen to Saladin and the local Christians were forced to ransom themselves to escape – where he was received very kindly by the Franks.⁸¹ Moreover, Michael tells the story of certain Armenians who turned against their *catholicos* and fell into a heresy led by a priest called Ausig. Eventually, some came to Mor Barsawmo and were convinced to enter Jacobite monasteries, while Ausig went to Antioch and lived amongst the Greeks.⁸² Another interesting example is that of Theodore Bar Wahboun, who Michael considered a heretic and who was also criticised in the *1234 Chronicle*. In c.1180, Theodore travelled from Edessa to Jerusalem, and then to Michael's patriarchal residence, probably at Antioch, gaining influential supporters along the way and being appointed patriarch at Amid in 1182. Unsurprisingly, Michael opposed this, albeit from Mor Barsawmo and Melitene, and so Theodore was soon forced to flee successively to Damascus, Jerusalem,

⁷⁷ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 380, 382.

⁷⁸ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 337–8, 376–8, 402–3; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 126–7.

⁷⁹ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 377–8.

⁸⁰ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 406, 408–10.

⁸¹ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 411–13; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 149–50.

⁸² Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 351–4.

and Cilicia, stirring up trouble as he went and securing the favour of Saladin and the Armenian *catholicos*, as well as damaging ties between the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem and the local Jacobites.⁸³

What is evident, therefore, is that throughout the twelfth century Jacobite Christians, particularly churchmen, can be seen traversing political borders across Cilicia, northern Syria, Mesopotamia and beyond. Some caution should be noted, as although Michael has been praised for his approach to writing, he was no impartial observer and like any text his chronicle is subject to narrative agendas.⁸⁴ The same can also be said of the author of the *1234 Chronicle*.⁸⁵ Michael was certainly keen to demonstrate that, while his was by no means the largest religious community, it was nevertheless present throughout the region and particularly beloved by God, as shown by the protection of Jacobite churches and people during an earthquake in 1170.⁸⁶ Yet, despite these reservations, an examination of the evidence for Jacobite movement through the frameworks of Nail's *Theory of the Border* can still offer useful insights into the nature of the Latin East's religious borders.

The first thing to note is that the flow of Jacobite movement seems to have been largely disjointed, in that is it was not closely regulated by the Franks through a noticeable series of junctions (i.e. castles).⁸⁷ That Michael records Latin rulers making agreements with the Jacobite Church suggests that freedom of movement was at least partly regulated, which could indicate elements of a conjoined flow. Indeed, this is suggested by one of the *Suriani* who appears in the charters, Bon Mossor, who was transferred into the hands of the

⁸³ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 382–8, 390–6, 398–9; Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 149–50.

⁸⁴ Weltecke, *Die 'Beschreibung der Zeiten'*, 127–52.

⁸⁵ Hilken, *The Anonymous Syriac Chronicle*, 23–33.

⁸⁶ Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, 3: 339.

⁸⁷ By contrast, castles appear to have played a significant and active role in Frankish attempts to control, or at least influence, military activities (primarily Muslim attacks) in the region. See Buck, 'Castles and the Frontier', 79–108

Hospitallers, albeit not seemingly as a slave.⁸⁸ Yet, it is difficult to identify any systematic attempt to define the Jacobites' kinopolitical activities beyond recognising their presence in major urban areas or monastic sites, even if this does not mean that Jacobites could, and did, go everywhere. For Michael, along with other churchmen and his patriarchal predecessors, it does appear that Antioch, Jerusalem, Mor Barsawmo, Amid, Melitene and Mardin formed something a series of conjoined junctions and thus an ecclesiastical circulation. It could be argued that this was not so much a Frankish bordering policy as a recognition of the patriarchal sphere of influence, but that this could occur at all suggests that the Franks' borders were highly permeable, as was as the boundary between the Latins and the Jacobites, especially for the clerical elite.

While it is at times difficult to pinpoint specific junctions which made up a Frankish-dictated circulation of Jacobite Christians, that there were occasional moments when figures were held captive does mean that cities, towns and castles *could* act as exit junctions. It is also difficult to know quite whether non-ecclesiastical Jacobites enjoyed the same freedoms, particularly given the *1234 Chronicle's* comment that Syriac Christians travelling west after the fall of Edessa fared more poorly amongst their co-religionists compared with those who had gone east. Nevertheless, Frankish settlements appear to have more generally acted as entrance junctions, allowing the flow to pass freely in and out of, as well as within, Latin territory. This was even the case when the Greek patriarch, Athanasius, was present, as although Michael refused to go into Antioch on his way to Jerusalem, and on his way back went first to Aimery of Limgoes at Qusair, he still passed freely through the principality and was able enact his religious authority in the city upon his return. If Michael's account of the events surrounding the consecration of a church dedicated to Mor Barsawmo is to be

⁸⁸ Delaville Le Roulx, ed., *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des hospitaliers*, 1: 472. See also Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, 184.

believed, it is even difficult to locate a noticeable frontier within Antioch which defined Jacobite rights through expansion and expulsion, at least when compared to the pre-1119 relationship with Patriarch Bernard and descriptions of the treatment of local Christians earlier at Adana and Kesoun. Indeed, the only time Michael reported experiencing problems was due to fears of Muslim attacks, particularly during the reign of Nur al-Din.

By contrast, it appears the counts of Edessa, especially Joscelin II, took a rather more hardline approach characterised by imprisoning churchmen and constricting religious practice, as demonstrated by the treatment of the monks of Mor Barsawmo. It is possible, then, to see here evidence of conjoined flows, as well as junctions, like Edessa, Samosata and Tell Bashir, used to control movement and potentially form an internal frontier around the Jacobites. This was not entirely limited to the county, as demonstrated by the *1234 Chronicle*'s comments regarding Adana and the accusations of forced labour levelled against Baldwin of Marash.⁸⁹ In this regard, it is perhaps no coincidence that Adana, Marash and Kesoun represented the furthest extremities of Antiochene authority and were neighbours of both Muslim and Eastern Christian territories.⁹⁰ This could indicate that fears of indigenous collusion with outside enemies were more likely to result in negative responses to these populations the further the distance from the centres of Latin authority, and that the boundary became hardened in such cases. That Zengi seemingly recognised the potential value of courting Jacobite alliances in the 1130s and 1140s does imply that any such fears were not entirely without foundation. Moreover, the broader, more positive Antiochene approach to Jacobite religious bordering was not without its problems. Indeed, there were several

⁸⁹ It should be noted here that the *1234 Chronicle* was less critical of Baldwin, in fact it praised him when recording his death outside Edessa in 1146, while Armenian sources suggest he was particularly close to Eastern Christians who lived within his lands. See Abouna, Fiey and Chabot, eds. and trans., *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, 2: 109; 'Gregory the Priest: Continuation of Matthew of Edessa', in Ara E. Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades: Tenth to Twelfth Centuries* (New York, 1993), 241–80 (241–57). See also MacEvitt, *Rough Tolerance*, 94–7.

⁹⁰ Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, 23.

occasions when the frequent internal religious conflicts which plagued the Syriac community, as well as those they experienced with other Eastern Christian groups, made their way into Frankish territory.⁹¹ There are some indications that in such moments the Latins tried (or were forced) to intervene, as seen with Bernard of Valence, the Latin church council at Antioch in 1141 and figures like Theodore Bar Wahboun. However, our sources give the impression that when problems came to the Franks, they were not the result of proactive attempts to impose controls on the flow of movement. In fact, despite these reservations, when the Jacobite experience of the northern crusader states is examined through Nail's theoretical frameworks, it for the most part offers a positive picture of permeability and inter-Christian co-existence, particularly in the centres of power.

Conclusion

The question needs to be asked why the Franks would have largely adopted such a loose bordering policy towards the Jacobites. It is possible that this was because of Christian fraternity, which was an apparent motive behind the calling of the First Crusade even if it did not prevent tensions with Byzantium or the Armenians of Cilicia across the twelfth century.⁹² Perhaps it was that the Jacobites were considered too small a group and lacking in military independence to warrant the creation of a frontier between themselves and the Latins.⁹³ Though they had a religious figurehead, as well as an established ecclesiastical hierarchy, the Jacobites (in contrast to the Greeks and Armenians) had no secular political leader. The demographic diversity of the county of Edessa and the principality of Antioch, as well as the regions neighbouring them, also likely made stringent social policies regarding non-Latin

⁹¹ Amouroux-Mourad, *Comté d'Édesse*, 100–1.

⁹² Thomas S. Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch, 1098–1130* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), 52–3, 55–6, 62–5, 67, 90, 92–103; Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, 22–4, 27–30, 35–6, 43–4, 48–50, 54–5, 189–217; Amouroux-Mourad, *Comté d'Édesse*, 67–73, 96–104.

⁹³ On the notion of military value influencing Latin treatment of native populations see Murray, 'Franks and Indigenous Communities', 289–307.

communities difficult to implement. Yet, tensions did seemingly exist and, as noted above, it is unlikely that there were no fears at all regarding collusion with outside forces, particularly in the county and on the fringes of Antiochene power. It is perhaps important in this regard that the evidence for freer movement becomes more prominent in the second half of the twelfth century, that is after the fall of Edessa had weakened Frankish authority and the resurgence of Islamic authority perhaps warranted a greater need for inter-Christian unity.⁹⁴ When coupled with the lack of a direct military threat posed by the Jacobites, as well as the potential value their presence in Islamic cities might have offered for intelligence gathering (which perhaps explains the growing Muslim antagonism towards Eastern Christians in this period), this could certainly serve to explain the weakening of any boundaries or dispersal of frontiers. Whatever the case may be, the value of the insights offered by viewing our evidence through Nail's theoretical frameworks is clear. Indeed, doing so not only reveals some of the challenges facing Frankish powers when governing a region of such demographic diversity, it also demonstrates how mediating such difficulties did not often lead to attempts at violent control.⁹⁵ Rather, the borders of Latin authority were far from closed to the Syriac Christians who so frequently passed through them.

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⁹⁴ On a broader level, this is argued in Isabelle Augé, *Byzantins, arméniens et francs au temps de la croisade: politique religieuse et reconquête en Orient sous la dynastie des Commènes (1081–1185)* (Paris: Geuthner, 2007).

⁹⁵ This partly supports MacEvitt's proposed 'Rough Tolerance' model, albeit the propensity for violence appears less pronounced than he suggests. See MacEvitt, *Rough Tolerance*, 21–6.

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