

South-Eastern Anatolia at a Crossroads. A Multicultural Mediterranean  
Area from the Hellenistic to the Early Byzantine Period



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# South-Eastern Anatolia at a Crossroads

A Multicultural Mediterranean  
Area from the Hellenistic to the  
Early Byzantine Period

Edited by  
Emanuela Borgia

Access Archaeology





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# Preface

Emanuela Borgia

This volume gathers a series of contributions presented during a thematic session organized within the 24th EAA Annual Meeting (Reflecting Futures) that was held at Barcelona from 5 to 8 September 2018. The session, titled ‘South-Eastern Anatolia at a crossroads: a multicultural Mediterranean area from the Hellenistic to the Early Byzantine period’, was focused on the analysis of a definite geographic area of the Mediterranean, encompassing all the regions south of the Taurus range (Cilicia, Isauria, Pamphylia and Pisidia) facing the sea and being, throughout their history, in strict contact with the island of Cyprus to the south and with the coast of northern Syria to the east. South-eastern Anatolia was actually a key crossroads of people and cultures, in a crucial point between East and West. Due to its strategic geographic position connecting (through maritime and terrestrial routes) Anatolia and Syria, and to the facility of contacts with the whole eastern Mediterranean, the region was characterised by manifold processes of mobility, migrations and cultural interchanges.

The focus of the volume is to present a critical overview of South-Eastern Anatolia in the period between the phase of Hellenization and the early Byzantine age, concentrating on how the various cultural identities interacted and contributed to the formation of a very peculiar Mediterranean identity, revealed by manifold historical and archaeological aspects. The reciprocal contacts with northern Syria and with Cyprus are also analysed, with the purpose of examining the process of interchanges from both directions. Finally, specific case studies of newly excavated sites or of recent discoveries are also considered. All the contributions will hopefully implement our current knowledge and provide innovative interpretative frameworks on the region.

Keeping aside the historical events previous to the advent of Rome in Asia Minor, it is worth focusing the attention on how Pamphylia (Pisidia) and Cilicia, even if having been annexed to the Empire in different moments, lived parallel vicissitudes<sup>1</sup>. It is highly probable that Pamphylia (together with Pisidia) entered the Roman sphere already in 129-126 BC, when M'. Aquilius created the *provincia Asia* as a consequence of the testament of Attalus III. However, the Roman control on this district of the southern coast of Asia Minor was not very strong until the expedition of M. Antonius against the pirates in 102 BC. After this date a *provincia Cilicia* is mentioned in the ancient sources, sometimes called Pamphylia. As I tried to demonstrate a few years ago<sup>2</sup>, this *eparcheia Kilikias* was no more than a permanent military command and did not imply the creation of a real territorial province of Cilicia. On the other hand, a territorial province, maybe still called Asia, and including a part of Lycia, Pisidia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, already existed at least since 75 BC when Servilius Vatia operated in the region. Here has to be located the seat of Roman generals, who normally started their offensive against the pirates from the harbour of Attaleia. It was only with Pompey in 67-65 BC that a territorial province of Cilicia was created, whose effective extension is still discussed (but much probably it was limited to Eastern Cilicia and parts of Isauria). In 39 BC Phrygia and Pisidia were given to the client king Amyntas of Galatia, and to these territories, a few years later, also Pamphylia, Lycaonia and Cilicia Tracheia were added. At the death of Amynta all the territories under his rule formed the new province of Galatia, including the regions of Lycaonia, Pisidia, Pamphylia and Isauria. Cilicia was granted in the age of Augustus to king Archelaus of Cappadocia, and then, after a short time span, to Antiochus IV of Commagene. According to Dio (D.C.,

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<sup>1</sup> Arena 2005: 35-47.

<sup>2</sup> Borgia 2017.

60.17.3), Claudius created in 43 AD the new province of Lycia and Pamphylia, extrapolating Pisidia and Pamphylia from Galatia (but other scholars point to the creation in this moment only of the province of Lycia and leave Pisidia and Pamphylia under Galatia until Vespasian)<sup>3</sup>. Since then, apart from short and specific occasions, the two regions were united in a single province, which was however quite disomogeneous.

Lycia et Pamphylia and Cilicia were granted their definitive organisation under Vespasian, in AD 72, and became imperial provinces under a *legatus Augusti pro praetore*. It is not easy to fix the exact limit between the two provinces, also due to the text of Strabo who locates in Cilicia some cities that in the Roman imperial period were almost certainly included in Pamphylia. Pamphylia encompassed also Pisidia, but its northern borders are not easy to be determined and certainly changed during time. The province of Cilicia remained under the control of the emperor throughout its history; on the contrary Lycia et Pamphylia were elevated to the rank of senatorial provinces during the reign of Marcus Aurelius or Commodus. Both the provinces under examination lived deep transformations with the reform of Diocletian and of his successors with a geographic fragmentation in smaller provinces: Lycia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Isauria and Cilicia.

The aims of the session presented at Barcelona were three-fold. The first was to analyse diversity and cultural interaction characterising South-Eastern Anatolia under a multidisciplinary perspective. This area was a meeting place for cultural and artistic currents from East and West, that melted with the local substratum which maintained a very strong influence<sup>4</sup>. The peculiar physical geography of the region, dominated to the north by the Taurus range and somehow isolated from the rest of Anatolia, regulated the different ways in which cultural impulses from outside penetrated it. This determined the eclecticism of cultural, monumental and decorative features. The second goal was to verify how the particular situation of this region affected urbanism and monumentalisation. As it is well known the coastal settlements granted communication, trade and subsistence, whereas inland cities performed various tasks, including the defence of the territory and the exploitation of local resources. It is clear that, depending on the contexts, transfer of concepts and mutual influences in building and architecture had different outcomes. The last goal was to analyse the development of societies, languages and interconnected traditions from the Hellenistic to the Early Byzantine period. This also particularly affects religion, rituals and cult places that were one of the pieces of evidence of cultural identity and cultural transfers. At the same time material culture is a mirror of people's tangible world and of local and trans-Mediterranean contacts. To sum up, borrowing the words of R.E. Blanton, the ultimate goal was 'to contribute to an understanding of how this region influenced and was influenced by larger social formations of the greater Mediterranean region'<sup>5</sup>. Blanton refers to Western Rough Cilicia, but the same concepts can be easily extended to the whole region of South-Eastern Anatolia.

The Editor is deeply grateful to all the contributors of this volume for agreeing to publish their research, and for their patience in waiting for the final edition, which sees the light a few years after the Congress at Barcelona. Unfortunately, Covid 19 pandemic and other impediments meant that a lot of time elapsed before publication. A final thanks goes to Richard Westall who took care to review the English texts with attention and dedication.

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<sup>3</sup> Brandt 1992: 98-99.

<sup>4</sup> Er 1991.

<sup>5</sup> Blanton 2000: 1.

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# Introduction. Hellenization versus Romanization: Understanding Cultural Identity in the Eastern Mediterranean

Oğuz Tekin<sup>1</sup>

Although the book you are holding focuses on South-Eastern Anatolia, in fact this region is part of a larger geographic entity, viz. the Eastern Mediterranean. When we say Eastern Mediterranean – in the narrow sense – we are referring to the coastal geography and hinterland that includes Southeast Anatolia, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Palestine, and Cyprus. This region of the Eastern Mediterranean is also referred to as the Levant. The name of Levant, as is known, comes from the Italian word ‘Levante’, which means ‘the place where the sun rises’ or ‘the East’, and its entry into the literature dates back to the 15th-16th centuries. Similarly, during the Byzantine period or among those living in the Byzantine world, the word ‘Anatolê,’ which also means ‘East,’ was used, and Anatolia derives from there. In fact, during the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods, the Eastern Diocese was referred to as Oriens, meaning ‘East’. The Romans embraced the Mediterranean to such an extent that they called it ‘Our Sea’ in Latin, which translates to *Mare Nostrum*. The adoption of the term Mediterranean as *Mediterraneum* in literature, on the other hand, is due to Isidore of Seville, who lived in the 6th-7th centuries AD.

However, it should not be forgotten that the axis of the Roman Empire progressively shifted eastwards from Italy to Anatolia since the time of Diocletian and Constantine the Great (from the early 4th century AD). This shift in axis made the Eastern Mediterranean even more important. Nevertheless, the Romans’ control over Anatolia had started much earlier, in the last quarter of the 2nd century BC with the establishment of the Province of Asia, which was followed by the establishment of other provinces. Considering the establishment of the Province of Asia, it can be seen that the Romans formed the provinces of Syria, Cilicia, and Lycia et Pamphylia quite late in the eastern regions. Although the establishment of Roman hegemony and the provincial organization of the southern and south-eastern parts of Anatolia dates back to the end of the 2nd century BC, this new reality was reinforced with Pompey’s campaign in the region which led to the establishment of a province in Syria and laid the foundation for Cilicia. Finally, during the time of Vespasian, the provincial process in Cilicia was completed. In other words, from the second quarter of the 1st century BC onwards, Southeast Anatolia and the Levant were, in a sense, under Roman domination.

The fact that Anatolia, which had been ruled by Hellenistic kings or dynasties for the last two centuries, was now entering the dominion of a Latin-based power must have greatly reinforced the ‘us vs. them’ perception. Was Hellenization giving way to Romanization? If we consider language as the most important element of a culture, the Hellenization of Anatolia was actually more effective and widespread than its Romanization. Ancient Greek became the primary language in Anatolia with the arrival of Alexander the Great, surpassing local languages. In those regions where Greek culture spread, intercommunication among societies became easier through a common language (*koiné*). Consequently, Greek managed to maintain its primacy even when faced with the challenge posed by Latin during the Roman Empire. Apart from being used as the official language of government in the provinces and Roman colonies, Latin failed to find an environment in which to thrive, and the people continued to use Greek. In fact, even the language used on the coins they minted with the permission of the emperor was Greek. The same situation is evident in religion as well. Traditional Greek religion continued to exert its

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influence in the city-states of Anatolia until the early 4th century AD, when Christianity became dominant. Of course, the common and shared ground between ancient Greek religion and Roman religion played a significant role in this.

In the Hellenistic period, similar influences can be observed in architecture as well. The urban plans and architectural styles of public and religious buildings in Hellenistic Anatolia reveal a homogeneous style. However, the most complex period for the city-states in Anatolia was likely the 1st century BC. In the course of this century, the city-states under the dominion of Hellenistic monarchic states witnessed the struggles in which Rome gradually put an end to these monarchies. Eventually, the city-states made the transition from the dominance of Hellenistic monarchs to the rule of another dominant power, Rome. This chaotic transitional period or the encounter between Hellenistic culture and Roman culture in Anatolia encompasses approximately one century, starting around 129 BC, when Rome established the province of *Asia* in western Anatolia, and extending to 31 BC when the last Hellenistic kingdom (that of the Ptolemies) was also eradicated from the historical stage by Rome.

The spread of Roman culture (whether spontaneous or intentional) outside Italy and in the provinces of the Roman Empire is referred to as Romanization. Undoubtedly, Romanization occurred to varying degrees due to regional cultural differences in the provinces located in the western and eastern halves of the empire. The region of South–Eastern Anatolia and Syria is an area where this influence arrived later and more slowly. Moreover, the surviving literary and archaeological evidence from that period is mainly limited to public spaces and the upper social classes. However, Romanization also indubitably differed in its manifestation among social classes (and their spaces) within a province. Nonetheless, it is also true that Roman culture was not a monolithic, unchanging entity over the course of the millennium extending from the Regal period to the Late Imperial period. In other words, if there is Romanization, the Romans must have created and coexisted with it over time, thanks to the contributions of the nations living in the provinces under their rule. In short, the Roman culture of the 3rd and 4th centuries AD was not the same as the Roman culture of a few centuries earlier; interaction with local cultures had created a new form of Roman identity.

The city-states of Anatolia saw themselves not only as friends and allies of Rome, but also as belonging to the empire. However, although this was meaningful in terms of social and political status, it did not mean that their Roman identity or culture in effect superseded their own. In general, the Hellenized cities of the Eastern Mediterranean or the southern and south–eastern regions of Anatolia continued their existence under the rule of Roman emperors. However, the depiction of Sandan on horned-lion, portrayed on the coins of Tarsus from the pre-Hellenistic period until the height of the Roman Empire, is a phenomenon not found in other parts of the Eastern Mediterranean. Likely of Hitite-Luwi origin, Sandan stands before us as evidence of what could be preserved and maintained despite the harshness of acculturation.

The efforts of the city-states in the East during the Imperial period, known as the Second Sophistic, to connect their origins to Greece and Macedonia serve as evidence of this. Perhaps the so-called ‘Romans’ (*Rhōmaioi*) in Anatolia were not mere spectators, but rather actors and protagonists in the process of Romanization, if such a process existed. It can be said that under the Roman Empire, the city-states of Anatolia to a certain extent continued to maintain the lifestyle of a *polis*. If we were to speak of a dominant acculturation in Roman Empire period Anatolia, as was the case in the Hellenistic period, it would have been most strongly felt in the 4th and 5th centuries AD. The reason for this was not the spread of Roman culture, but rather the dominance of Christianity, which was rapidly spreading at that



time. In the 4th and 5th centuries AD, Christianization had a much more profound and tangible impact than the supposed Romanization phenomenon of previous centuries. With Christianity, the life in the so-called city-states in Anatolia took on a different character than in previous centuries. The sense of civic identity and the labour and money invested in the city gave way to personal expenditures and investments in the Church. While the city councils attempted to maintain their existence, they could no longer go beyond a symbolic meaning. As the city-state councils lost their ability to represent their cities, this role was taken over by bishops. Service to the Church became more important than service to the city. This was due to the increasing importance attributed by Christians to the afterlife rather than to the present world. In the world of Late Antiquity, the traditional city-states of the late Roman empire were caught in an existential crisis.

In a significant portion of the papers contained in this book, the themes of locality and external influences (or cultural interactions) that I have just been discussing either form the focal point main axis or serve as the starting point for analysis. For instance, in her article titled **'Local Patterns and Syrian Influences in the Colonnaded Streets of Roman Cilicia and Pamphylia'**, Emanuela Borgia examines the colonnaded streets in the cities of Pamphylia and Cilicia that are located on the southern coast of Anatolia facing the Mediterranean, and their hinterlands. Although their initial construction dates back earlier, these streets took their main form during the early Principate (1st-2nd centuries AD). Borgia highlights that the phenomenon of colonnaded streets is an element of Syrian origins, and she suggests that the cities of Cilicia and Pamphylia modelled this phenomenon after Syrian cities such as Antioch on the Orontes, Apameia, and Palmyra. She even emphasizes that in addition to their functional purpose as thoroughfares, colonnaded streets should be considered as decorative elements that adorn and enhance the splendour of the cities. Borgia points out that the consoles on the column shafts, which serve the function of carrying statues, can be found in both Syrian examples and in the Cilician and Pamphylian examples inspired by them. She also notes that changes in the physical appearance of colonnaded streets, as well as the stoas and shops (*tabernae*) that should be considered together with them, occurred during the Late Roman and Byzantine periods as a result of fires, earthquakes, or urban renovations. Indeed, comparing cities like Antioch, Apameia, and Palmyra in Syria with Cilician and Pamphylian cities such as Soloi Pompeiopolis, Hierapolis Kastabala, Anazarbos, Perge, Syedra, and Side through their colonnaded streets reveals an important dimension of the interaction between the Eastern and Western worlds at the intersection point.

One of the most important physical and social elements of a city-state is undoubtedly the baths. In his article titled **'The Bath Buildings of Cilicia, Pamphylia and Lycia in Roman Times. Characteristics, Layout, and Peculiarities'**, Emanuele Casagrande Cicci examines the bath structures in Cilicia, Pamphylia, and Lycia. After providing general information about the bath buildings in Western Anatolia (such as their plans and symmetry), Cicci highlights the similarities with the baths in Lycia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia. He draws attention to the trends followed in bath architecture, particularly during the Roman Imperial Period in the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. These inevitably resulted in a homogeneous appearance for the bath complexes. Cicci draws attention to the fact that over 40 baths have been identified in the province of Cilicia so far, noting that most of them consist of several parallel rectangular rooms (usually three), with heated rooms placed in the opposite direction of the entrance. Noting that the best-documented bath structure in Kilikia is found in Elaiussa Sebaste, she dedicates more space to discussing this particular bathhouse. Cicci also provides an overview of the general features of the baths in Pamphylia and Lykia. She emphasizes that the baths in Lykia are smaller in size and mentions that the Roman hypocaust system was applied in the bath structures of Pamphylia, Lykia, and Kilikia.

Coins undoubtedly hold great importance for history and archaeology due to the visual data they provide. Even in the absence of literary, epigraphic, or archaeological evidence, coins are the most reliable source of information about a state's political, cultural, religious, and architectural past. In his article titled '**The Religious Life of Tarsus in the Light of Numismatic Evidence: Some Observations**', Edward Dabrowa discusses the religious life of Tarsus on the basis of the numismatic evidence. Dabrowa emphasizes that Tarsus served as a 'bridge' between Syria and Asia Minor for many years and analyses the gods, goddesses, and mythological figures (scenes) depicted on coins minted in Tarsus from the period of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, when Tarsians first began minting coins, until the reign of Gallienus, when coin minting ceased. The author examines the limited number of gods and heroes (e.g. Athena, Heracles, Zeus Nikephoros, and Sandan) who are depicted on Tarsus coins during the Hellenistic period, and he highlights the fact that a much broader repertoire of gods and goddesses appears on coins minted during the Roman Imperial period. Dabrowa delves into the long history of Sandan in Tarsus and associates the presence of this deity with the influence of Assyria on Cilicia, also emphasizing the mythical founder of Tarsus, King Sardanapalus of Assyria. Another topic addressed by Dabrowa is the Imperial Cult. The author mentions that Tarsus first received the title of *neôkoros* during the reign of Hadrian, and he discusses the cult's contribution to the process of Romanization in Tarsus and Cilicia.

Beatrice Fochetti's article titled '**The Doric Order in Rough Cilicia: Local Identities or Cultural Interactions?**' focuses on Doric-style temples or tomb structures in the Mountainous Cilicia region between the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman Imperial periods (2nd century BCE - 3rd century CE). After observing that the tower tomb in Diocaesarea is the oldest tomb structure in Mountainous Cilicia to feature the Doric style, Fochetti discusses other tomb structures in Diocaesarea's Western necropolis, such as rock-cut tombs at Ayatekla, Korykion Antron, and the Doric-influenced tombs in Yeniyurt Castle. She highlights both local elements and influences coming from Northern Syria and Lycia. In addition to these tomb structures, Fochetti draws attention to the Doric style in the Ismaili, Çatiören, and Korkyion Antron temples. She notes that the use of polygonal masonry and architectural elements such as metopes, triglyphs, guttae, mutules, geison, and antae pilasters in both tomb structures and temples indicates the presence of the Doric style.

Excavations in Antiochia ad Cragum (a city in Rough Cilicia) began in 2005 and are still ongoing. Among the prominent remains in the city are the Great Bath complex, the Small Baths, the bouleuterion-odeon, a temple, and two churches. Michael Hoff, the former director of the Antiochia excavations, explores the transformation of a settlement that was once a pirate base into a flourishing city during the Roman period in his contribution entitled '**Antiochia ad Cragum in Western Rough Cilicia: From Pirate Base to Hadrian**'. Founded by the Seleucid monarch Antiochus IV Epiphanes towards the middle of the 2nd century BCE, the city, later became a pirate stronghold. The pirate era came to an end in 67 BCE with the intervention of Pompey the Great. Subsequently, in the second quarter of the 1st century CE, the Romans handed over Rough Cilicia to another Antiochus IV, the King of Commagene. Antiochus maintained control over the region for over 30 years, until the establishment of the province of Cilicia by Vespasian in 72 CE.

The presence of retired Roman soldiers in Roman colonies or city-states provides important data on Rome's interaction with the East and its influence on regional cultures. In his contribution entitled '**Veterans of the Roman Army in Cilicia**', Mustafa H. Sayar draws attention to the presence of Roman veteran soldiers in Cilicia. After discussing the provincialisation of Cilicia, which began with Pompey and was completed under Vespasian, Sayar talks about the settlement of retired Roman legion soldiers in Cilicia, particularly in the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. The evidence of the inscriptions is deployed. He

cites examples from various places in Cilicia, such as a retired soldier from Legio IV Scythica who settled in Kolybrassos and a soldier from Legio II Parthica who settled in Kanytellis, along with other examples from elsewhere in Cilicia. Sayar emphasizes that the settlement of retired soldiers in the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire was considered a measure that would ensure the security and cultural assimilation of these regions.

In his article titled **'Marble in Cilicia in Antiquity as Evidence of Import of Building Material and Architectural Interaction'**, Marcello Spanu highlights that there were no marble deposits (or commercially viable ones) in Cilicia and suggests that marble was mostly imported from Western Anatolia during the Roman Imperial Period. Spanu supports this claim with a map showing the locations of marble deposits in Anatolia. Despite the absence of marble quarries, one striking aspect of Spanu's contribution is the significance of marble in Cilicia, particularly in architecture, reliefs, and sculptures. The use of marble is associated with luxury, grandeur, and prestige.

The comparison of the necropoleis of two significant centers dating to the same period in the Eastern Mediterranean reveals quite interesting results. In their articles titled **'Funerary Practices in Karpasia (Cyprus) and Kelenderis (Cilicia) during the 4th-3rd Century BC: a Comparative Analysis'**, Latife Summerer and Hazar Kaba examine the network of relations between Cilicia and Cyprus as revealed by the tombs. They compare the tombs in Kelenderis, Cilicia, and Karpasia (Tsambres), Cyprus, which in both cases date back to the 4th and 3rd centuries BC. A total of 43 tombs, 31 from Kelenderis and 12 from Karpasia, are analyzed. Most of the Kelenderis tombs have been looted, whereas in Tsambres all but one are intact. This contribution explores various aspects such as the physical condition of the tombs, their contents, and the condition of the remains. The Kelenderis tombs exhibit a variety of forms, including rock-cut tombs, chamber tombs with a dromos, and sarcophagi, whereas the Tsambres tombs are predominantly chamber tombs with a dromos. This contribution primarily focuses on the chamber tombs with a dromos in both necropoleis. It is noted that in both necropoleis, the deceased were placed in a supine position not according to the compass direction, but rather based on the physical orientation of the tomb (entrance, walls).

The relationships between the kingdoms of Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Commagene (which developed under the influence of Neo-Assyrian, Persian, and Macedonian powers) with the Roman emperors, as well as the ideological and political perceptions within these relationships, are discussed in Ljuben Tevdovski's contribution, which is entitled **'Tiny Kingdoms of Prophetic Ideals. The Impact of the Melting Pot of Roman-dependent South-Eastern Anatolia on the Ideological and Political Concepts of the Roman and Early Byzantine World'**. This paper presents data on the efforts made by these kingdoms to maintain and sustain their identities belonging to the Hellenistic world (*oikoumenê*) even under Roman rule and examines their positions between the Hellenistic world they were part of and the newly formed Roman world. It highlights the attempts of dynastic members to associate their origins with Alexander the Great or the Macedonian dynasty in order to legitimize their power and achieve political stability. Dynastic marriages were fundamental from this perspective. The relationships between Roman generals such as Pompey, Caesar, Mark Antony, and the dynastic members, followed by the relationships between Roman emperors and the dynastic members, are presented through the accounts of contemporary writers.

It appears that the above-mentioned excavations at Antiochia ad Cragum, which have been ongoing since 2005, have also extensively focused on the Northeast Temple. In the contribution entitled **'Materials and Techniques of Construction in the Northeast Temple at Antiochia ad Cragum'**, Rhys

Townsend and Ece Erdoğan provide a detailed analysis of the architecture and construction of the tetrastyle temple, which follows the Corinthian order and rises on a stepped podium of moderate size. The data obtained indicates that marble from the nearby quarry was used in the construction of the temple. Additionally, the presence of clamps and dowels, which are rarely seen or encountered in temple constructions in Cilicia, has been detected in the temple. The construction of the temple seems to be associated with the visit of Septimius Severus to the region.

It appears that archaeological excavations and surveys carried out in the southern and southeastern Anatolian region (including Lycia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia) have opened up the gateway between Syria and Anatolia (or vice versa). They provide us with an opportunity to reassess how local cultures assimilated Roman rule or exhibited hybrid formations. That is splendidly demonstrated by the case studies contained in this stimulating and useful volume. As research and studies in this field progress, the extent of interaction will become clearer and may give rise to new questions.