Chalcedon 451: Ambition and Challenge

The Council of Chalcedon in 451 awarded ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the three provinces of Palestine to the church of Jerusalem. Insofar as Jerusalem hereby was invested with supra-metropolitan prerogatives, it became what later (and perhaps also already at the time, although this question does not interest us here) would be called a ‘patriarchate’.¹ The patriarchal rights may have had primarily internal significance – namely, superior jurisdiction in Palestine –, but Jerusalem’s elevation was at least implicitly tied to an ambition directed outwards as well, namely to the ambition of taking a leading role within the network of churches in the late-antique Roman Empire. Such a role, however, was by no means ensured by the simple conferral of higher ecclesiastical rank *per se*. It depended rather on how other players received it; hence, on whether they recognized Jerusalem’s claims as legitimate or not. The council of 451 thus did not guarantee the greater significance of Jerusalem in the empire-wide Church, but at most provided a basis for it. The new status of the church of Jerusalem first had to prove its effectiveness in contemporary conditions.²

Recognition of Jerusalem’s central ecclesiastical role was under threat from the beginning because the great churches of the empire had by no means worked out among themselves what factors legitimated such a role. Neither of the two fundamental positions in this respect – the analogy of governmental and ecclesiastical structures advocated by Constantinople and the Roman concept of a canonically sanctioned apostolic succession – necessarily saw Jerusalem as one of the central churches of the Roman Empire. It was no coincidence that the church of the Holy

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¹ The origins of the title ‘patriarch’ are obscure. It was used more frequently after Chalcedon but became standard only in the sixth century. It shall nonetheless be used in this chapter, since all of the five major (and thus: ‘patriarchal’) churches had received supra-metropolitan prerogatives by 451 at the latest. On the concept: Chabanne/Chevailler 1984, 723–724; Gahbauer 1993, 51–58; Hall 2000, 731–732; Norton 2007, 141–144. On Jerusalem’s elevation in 451: Evagr. *HE* 2,18 [p. 92,10–14].

² Ranks were not established by conciliar decree *per se*, but rather by agreement among ecclesiastical protagonists regarding the reception, acceptance, or rejection of hierarchical claims. Thus, the Council of Chalcedon was not the end of the process of the hierarchical development of the Church, but only the beginning. On the social theory of a transactional development of structures, which emphasizes reciprocity in the relationship of structures and actors: Coleman 1994, 1–23.
Land did not break into the ranks of the patriarchates until 451: since Jerusalem was not a provincial capital, the local church could not benefit from drawing analogies between the secular and ecclesiastical administration, but rather had long been at odds with the church of its own provincial capital Caesarea. When the Council of Nicaea first affirmed the superior ecclesiastical rights of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch in 325 (with Rome in particular subsequently citing this tradition with ever more emphasis), there had been no room for Jerusalem. The somewhat unspecified honorary precedence that Jerusalem should have had according to the Council of Nicaea could not be converted into specific rights. However, it did show that the city could not be ignored completely in the development of ecclesiastical hierarchies.³

Despite this, by 451 developments had not yet reached a point where Jerusalem’s new status could be welcomed warmly across the empire. Bishop Leo of Rome had reservations about the hierarchical measures of Chalcedon, since these also benefited Rome’s main rival, Constantinople. Likewise, many in Alexandria refused to recognize the council at all. Since the good will of Constantinople and the emperor had been bought at Chalcedon with dogmatic concessions by Juvenal, the bishop of Jerusalem, a continued good will of the capital could not be counted on. And since Jerusalem’s elevation ultimately came at the expense of a weakened Antioch, we should also presume reservations from this quarter as well.⁴ Jerusalem was thus initially faced with the challenge of living up to its new role. With respect to the internal implementation of higher jurisdiction of the bishop of Jerusalem, this was unproblematic. Indeed, as early as 451, Bishop Juvenal faced a Palestinian rebellion, but it grew from the ranks of the monks. The ecclesiastical hierarchy of Palestine aligned itself with Jerusalem at an early date: indeed, the rebellion actually contributed towards this alignment when its leader, Theodosius, put himself in Juvenal’s place and by intervening in episcopal investiture used his office to reshape the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the region.⁵

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³ Canon 7 of Nicaea (325) [COD, p. 8,25 – 31]: Ἐπειδὴ συνήθεια κεκράτηκε καὶ παράδοσις ἀρχαία, ὡστε τὸν ἐν Άλλῃ ἐπίσκοπον τιμᾶσθαι, ἐχέτω τὴν ἁκολούθιαν τῆς τιμῆς, τῇ μητροπόλει συνιστοῦσαν, τοῦ οἰκείου ἀξίωματος. On the development to the Chalcedonian period, Kötter 2013, 85 – 86, 90.


Jerusalem’s jurisdiction in Palestine itself was thereby recognized by all parties across the doctrinal spectrum.\(^6\)

It remained to be seen whether the new patriarchate could also assert itself externally in the world of ecclesiastical ‘superpowers’. How great a contribution would Jerusalem be permitted to make to contemporary controversies? How important were the positions taken by the Holy City to other players? And how pronounced was its bishops’ interest in getting involved beyond their own jurisdiction? More specifically: could Jerusalem maintain its internal autonomy against external encroachments, and could it in turn influence events outside its own territory? Since individual late-antique churches structurally lacked means of enforcement to secure their interests in the face of resistance without relying on the imperial court, the players in the imperial capital at Constantinople intrinsically had an important part in these questions of autonomy and influence.\(^7\)

This connection is particularly clear in the case of the other great churches: internal divisions in Antioch after Chalcedon again and again gave the capital the opportunity to intervene in the internal ecclesiastical affairs of Syria and to strengthen friendly bishops against their opponents. In Alexandria, by contrast, similar intervention was possible only with great effort. At the latest under Emperor Anastasius, a factual freedom of the church of Egypt from imperial encroachment was no longer fundamentally questioned, whereby the church of Alexandria in turn sacrificed some of its influence on events outside of Egypt. And while the popes of Rome repeatedly attempted to exert influence in the East, it became increasingly clear to them that their real power outside Italy depended on either the \textit{a priori} acceptance of their claims by their addressees or on enforcement by the eastern Roman emperors. Simultaneously, the political disintegration of the empire ensured that Constantinople could no longer directly influence the Roman church, the independence of which was thus comparatively secure.\(^8\)

Jerusalem’s elevation thus awaited confirmation by subsequent events. These events will be examined below up to the year 518, that is, the point in time where the death of Emperor Anastasius led to an important reversal of the doctrinal position of imperial-ecclesiastical policy. The period under consideration here – especially the later reign of Anastasius – is well-documented compared to the otherwise quite scanty historical record of the ecclesiastical engagement of the bishops of Jeru-

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\(^6\) The situation in Palestine was fundamentally different from that in, e.g., Rome, where Chalcedonian doctrine was undisputed but the hierarchical measures of the council – particularly the so-called ‘canon 28’ – were not recognized.

\(^7\) This interplay of ecclesiastical players and the monarchy as enforcer is the functional core of the late-antique ‘Reichskirche’. Cf. Kötter 2014b, 3–8.

\(^8\) On the early reception of the Council of Chalcedon and on the situation of the five patriarchates at this early stage: Kötter 2013, 47–55, 69–90.
Jerusalem and the Reception of Chalcedon: A History of Events

Juvenal of Jerusalem paid a high price for his success at Chalcedon. Although at the so-called 'Robber Council' of Ephesus in 449 he had stood with Bishop Dioscorus of Alexandria in support of the radical Miaphysite theology of the Constantinopolitan archimandrite Eutyches, he changed sides two years later and accepted the formula proposed in Chalcedon that Christ was one person ἐν δύο φύσεωι. As a reward, he was given jurisdiction over the three Palestines.¹⁰

Immediately after the council, it emerged that many of his former adherents were not at all prepared to treat their own dogmatic positions with similar flexibility. Monks in particular, under the leadership of Theodosius, were outraged by the adoption of what was in their eyes a Nestorian creed and by their own bishop's approval of it. Upon returning from Chalcedon, Juvenal was immediately called upon to recant, which he refused to do, intimating that he had merely carried out the emperor's will. While Juvenal fled and took refuge in Constantinople, the rebels elevated their leader Theodosius to be the bishop of Jerusalem and immediately set about reshaping the hierarchy of Palestine in accordance with their positions.¹¹ Not until Emperor Marcian systematically intervened on behalf of his council in 454 was the rebellion

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9 The following documents survive: a synodikon of Bishop Martyrius of Jerusalem to Bishop Peter Mongus of Alexandria [Zach. HE 5,12]; the text of the so-called Palestinian Union [Zach. HE 5,6]; a letter of Palestinian monks to Bishop Alcison of Nicopolis [Evagr. HE 3,31;33]; a letter of the archimandrites Sabas and Theodosius to Emperor Anastasius [Cyr. Scyth. VS 57]. Narrative sources are limited primarily to the monks' lives of Cyril of Scythopolis. On these, see Trampedach 2005, 285–292.

10 Zach. HE 3,3 clearly makes this connection. Juvenal's support of the Chalcedonian ekthesis [ACO II.1,2, 128 – 130] was not insignificant: the bishop of Jerusalem was important already simply because of his seniority – he had been bishop since 422: Honigmann 1950, 237. For the promotion of Jerusalem in Chalcedon cf. Leuenberger-Wenger 2019, 66; 312 – 314.

11 Juvenal retorted to the rebels that opposition to himself, who supported the resolutions of the imperial council, was opposition to Emperor Marcian: Zach. HE 3,5 [p. 109,17 – 22]. On the implication for the freshly acquired status of the patriarchate: Klein 2018b, 257. The monks obviously preferred a monastic form of Christological mysticism that had more in common with a Miaphysite theology than the Chalcedonian theology of separate natures: Solzbacher 1989, 185. Incidentally, it was precisely because of the disruptions resulting from the impossibility of regulating among different groups of monks that Chalcedon had canonically placed the ecclesiastic hierarchy over the monastic hierarchy, cf. Wipszycka 2018 passim. On the sources and scholarship on the rebellion: n. 5.
put down: Juvenal returned, and Theodosius fled.\textsuperscript{12} Thanks to imperial support, Juvenal’s position within his church was now relatively secure, but a comprehensive reconciliation apparently did not occur. It seems that hold-outs among the monks maintained anti-Chalcedonian positions for a long time. However, in Palestine, in contrast to Egypt and Syria, this did not result in inextricable tensions that might have destabilized the region over the long term. The peculiar composition of Palestinian monastic groups, which were recruited primarily from outside the region and thus were less capable of mobilizing and influencing the faithful of Palestine, as well as shared concern for the sacred sites, which transcended doctrinal controversy, made the conflict in the Holy Land take a less radical course than in neighboring regions.\textsuperscript{13}

Nevertheless, a critical attitude toward Chalcedon within Palestine was not at all exclusively restricted to the monks. This emerged clearly in 475: the usurper Basiliscus had driven Emperor Zeno from Constantinople and in his search for supporters of his policy he relied on those who had consistently opposed the council of 451. Basiliscus therefore not only recalled the Egyptian leader of the Miaphysites, Timotheus Aelurus, from exile, but also scrapped the Council of Chalcedon in an \textit{enkyklion}.\textsuperscript{14} Anastasius of Jerusalem, the successor of the deceased Juvenal, approved this document and was by no means the only one. Yet when uprisings in Constantinople forced Basiliscus to annul the \textit{enkyklion} in an \textit{antenkyklion}, nothing is known of the approval of this second document by Anastasius. When Zeno again steered a Chalcedonian course after Basiliscus’ fall in 476 and hordes of bishops hastened to excuse their prior acceptance of the \textit{enkyklion} before Patriarch Acacius of Constantinople, it was Anastasius who refused to do so, as Zacharias Rhetor stresses.\textsuperscript{15}

Anastasius, under whom internal tensions in Palestine had apparently continued to fester, died early in 478. His successor Martyrius successfully reconciled the hostile parties in the same year. The so-called \textit{Palestinian Union} simply avoided taking a

\textsuperscript{12} Marcian’s crucial part in the suppression of the rebellion is indicated in a synodal letter of Juvenal [ACO II.5, 9,1–29] and a letter of thanks written by Pope Leo [Leo M. Ep. 126 (ACO II.4, 81,31–82,13)].

\textsuperscript{13} Cf. Kennedy 2000, 601; Leuenberger-Wenger 2019, 401–402; Moss 2016; 68–69; Perrone 1998a, 15–16, 20–21; Roldanus 1998, 128; Solzbacher 1989, 196–197; Winkelmann 1980, 98–99. Furthermore, the Council of Chalcedon was less discredited in Palestine than in Egypt, where it was associated with a hierarchical defeat on account of the deposition of their regional leader, Dioscorus of Alexandria.

\textsuperscript{14} Cf. Cod. Vat. gr. 1431,73 [p. 49,1–51,30]; Evagr. HE 3,4; Zach. HE 5,2. On the origins, content, and transmission of the \textit{enkyklion}: Blaudeau 2003, 156–163. The sources usually indicate that Basiliscus was influenced by Timotheus Aelurus.

\textsuperscript{15} Zach. HE 5,5. Cf. also: Simplic. \textit{Ep. ad Acac.}, 121,25–30. The \textit{antenkyklion}: Cod. Vat. gr. 1431,74 [p. 52,1–20]; Evagr. HE 3,7. Anastasius would have benefited from the new doctrinal development in the event that a new ecumenical council, being pushed by Aelurus, was about to be convened in Jerusalem. Patrich 1995, 301 explains that only the bishop’s advanced age protected him from persecution after Zeno’s imperial and Chalcedonian restoration. According to Fedalto 1988, 1001, Anastasius died in January 478. In contrast to other players, the bishop had not even been condemned by a synod, while simple metropolitan bishops, like Paul of Ephesus, were indeed punished.
clear position regarding the controversial Council of Chalcedon: while the councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, and Ephesus I are explicitly accepted, the same is not true of the synod of 451, although it is not explicitly condemned. Keeping quiet about the crucial, controversial point proved to be a viable way for leaders in Palestine to acknowledge shared ecclesiastical convictions while putting an end to the disputes over Chalcedon. Therefore, the Union became the direct model for a famous edict of Emperor Zeno: with the Henotikon of 482, Zeno hoped to achieve church unity between the moderate Chalcedonian Acacius of Constantinople and the moderate anti-Chalcedonian Peter Mongus of Alexandria. Just like the Union, the Henotikon explicitly only recognized the councils of 325, 381, and 431, but avoided at the same time explicit condemnation of Chalcedon. Instead, it mentioned an anathema of Nestorius and Eutyches, which was already accepted by all sides. Since this document actually succeeded in producing a settlement between Constantinople and Alexandria, Zeno soon extended the validity of the edict: on this basis, broad ecclesiastical unity was quickly achieved in the eastern empire.

While the Henotikon soon encountered resistance in the conflict-ridden areas of Egypt and Syria – the disputes over Chalcedon had played out here much more rigidly than in Palestine, which destroyed an overall willingness of many of those involved to compromise – Martyrius of Jerusalem had no difficulty approving the edict. Since it traced its origin directly back to the Palestinian Union, it did not lead to tensions in Palestine. On the contrary, the ecclesiastical unity of the Henoti-

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18 Martyrius of Jerusalem [letter of Martyrius to Peter Mongus: Zach. HE 5,12] and Peter Knapheus of Antioch soon approved the Henotikon; Zach. HE 6,1 explicitly refers to this church unity. Although the popes in Rome did not join the compromise, ecclesiastical unity in the very part of the empire over which the emperor actually had control was achieved.
kon stabilized conditions in Palestine, which were laid on a quite similar foundation of reconciliation. Accordingly, Martyrius’ successor Sallustius even actively defended the compromise against Bishop Euphemius of Constantinople, whose contacts to the church of Rome threatened the ecclesiastical unity achieved by the Henotikon, which cannot have been in Jerusalem’s interest. Together with the bishop of Alexandria, Sallustius passed on to the new emperor, Anastasius, a letter from Euphemius to Rome and thus brought him under suspicion of political-doctrinal disloyalty.¹

It nonetheless soon appeared that neither the Palestinian settlement nor the empire-wide compromise of the Henotikon were particularly stable. Emperor Anastasius held Zeno’s course and even systematically expanded his conciliatory policy: the Henotikon ought no longer to serve only as a stopgap to open controversy, but as a common basis on which the disputing parties could positively agree despite their differences over Chalcedon.² But hardliners in both doctrinal camps increasingly expressed criticism of the document, which according to their respective positions did not go far enough in rejecting Chalcedon or in embracing it.²¹ Anastasius’ own frequent interventions in ecclesiastical politics bear some responsibility for the hardening of these fronts until his death in 518. And the church of Palestine appears as a dynamic factor in this process, too, as it developed more and more into the real defender of Chalcedon in the East. In 492, under the supporter of the Henotikon, Sallustius, the distinctly Chalcedonian Theodosius and Sabas were appointed archimandrites of the monks of Palestine. Just two years later the two monks found an ally in the like-minded Elias, who was appointed bishop of Jerusalem after the death of Sallustius.²² Elias was a moderate Chalcedonian who approved the Henotikon, but he did not keep silent about Chalcedon: he wished to recognize the council explicitly for its condemnation of Nestorius and especially for the condemnation of Eutyches. The bishops Macedonius of Constantinople and Flavian of Antioch took a

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¹ Zach. HE 7,1. Nothing more is known about Sallustius.
² Evagr. HE 3,30 [p. 125,32 – 126,8] reports that in the emperor’s effort to restore peace in the Church, he neither publicly proclaimed nor condemned Chalcedon, but for the most part gave individual bishops free rein within the limits of the Henotikon.
²¹ The theological fronts actually grew further apart in the wake of the Henotikon: under Zeno, doctrinal differences were still relatively small, and the churches fairly evenly divided between Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians. From 482, and particularly under Anastasius, the disintegrative effects of the document became ever more obvious. In addition to existing tensions, the interpretation of the Henotikon with respect to Chalcedon became a matter of dispute. Haacke 1953, 126 – 130 already observed this further differentiation of positions in the first part of Anastasius’ reign. For the structural problems of the Henotikon cf. Kötter 2014a passim.
²² All three were students of Euthymius, who had supported the council during the rebellion of the Palestinian monks. Cf. Chitty 1966, 89 – 90. The archimandrites served as the link between the monks and the clergy. They were appointed by the bishop of Jerusalem; in the case of Sabas and Theodosius, this occurred under pressure from the monks [Cyr. Scyth. VS 30 (p. 114,23 – 26)]. On the role of the archimandrites: Bacht 1953, 296 – 299; Patrich 1995, 287 – 290; Rousseau 1997, 43 – 44. In particular on Sabas: Patrich 1995, 37 – 48, 287 – 299. It is impossible to say now whether these appointments led to the doctrinal reorientation in Palestine or are indicative of existing trends.
When Emperor Anastasius took a new, more clearly anti-Chalcedonian stance in his religious policy after 507, the three bishops were ultimately deposed. Ironically, it was Elias who had been at least indirectly responsible for this, by breaking the compromise of the *Union* in 507 and permitting the Chalcedonian monk Nephalius to expel anti-Chalcedonian groups of monks from their monasteries in Palestine. A certain Severus set out for Constantinople in order to lead protests against this and soon became the emperor’s most important theological advisor.²⁴

While Severus now worked against the bishop of the imperial capital, Macedonius, Flavian in Syria came into conflict with Severus’ partisan Philoxenus of Hierapolis, a conflict in which Elias also became embroiled. As the disputes within the different regions worsened and expanded, Macedonius finally fell in 511, and Flavian shared his fate just one year later.²⁵ Elias, however, was able to defend himself against his enemies’ machinations. He relied on the support of Sabas and Theodosius: the former even campaigned for his bishop directly in the capital.²⁶ It was none other than Severus who succeeded Flavian as bishop of Antioch in 512. It comes as no surprise that Elias, who enjoyed the support of the Palestinian monks, refused to accept him into ecclesiastical communion and thus ultimately stood in the way of the emperor’s goal of achieving renewed, comprehensive church unity in the East. Anastasius accordingly had great interest in forcing the bishop of Jerusalem to recognize Severus, which by no means prevented Elias from refusing the bishop of Antioch repeatedly.²⁷ Therefore, in 516 – or rather: finally, in 516 – Emperor

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²³ On the collaboration of Macedonius, Flavian, and Elias: Cyr. Scyth. VS 50 [p. 140,18 – 24]. Cf. also Liberat. 18,128.

²⁴ Zach. VS, 102–103. According to the interpretation of the doctrinal reversal by Perrone 1980, 151–173, the banishment was its initial event. It remains an open question whether the presence of Severus in the capital gave impetus to the Miaphysite reorientation of Anastasius’ religious policy or whether the stage had already been set for it, as argued particularly by Meier 2009, 241–247. Cf. further Dijkstra/Greatrex 2009, 233–234 and Moss 2016 *passim*, who points to the fact that there was occasional disagreement between Anastasius and Severus as well; after becoming bishop of Antioch, Severus had *nolens volens* to adapt a more conciliatory position vis-à-vis the dogmatic disputes of his time. Nevertheless, his positions were still not acceptable to his determined Chalcedonian opponents.


²⁷ Anastasius had, for instance, provided the deliverers of a *synodikon* from Severus to Palestine with a military escort. The envoys were nonetheless driven away by Sabas’ and Theodosius’ monks. Severus then turned to Anastasius and informed him of the incident. Cf. Evagr. *HE* 3,33; Cyr. Scyth. VS 56 [p. 148,22 – 149,6].
Anastasius had Elias deposed. In consideration of the bishop’s conduct since 512, this must have required massive state intervention, which the emperor could afford only after putting down a fairly serious revolt in the Balkans. Elias moreover appears to have lost the unconditional support of his monks, without whom he could not hold out against the growing imperial pressure.

Elias’ successor John would discover just how important Sabas and Theodosius were for the position and stance of the bishop of Jerusalem: John owed his office entirely to the fact that he had promised the emperor and his representatives in Palestine that he would enter into communion with Severus. Sabas and Theodosius, however, convinced the bishop in turn to feign acquiescence to this demand, whereupon John was released from custody. The planned ceremony at which he would express ecclesiastical unity with Severus was thwarted: Sabas and Theodosius gathered their followers together, appeared jointly with the bishop before the congregation of Jerusalem, placed Severus under anathema, and explicitly recognized Chalcedon. The surprised *dux Palaestinae* preferred to beat a hasty retreat to Caesarea.

Emperor Anastasius indignantly summoned Sabas and Theodosius (but not John!) to Constantinople. The two monks disobeyed this order, and instead sent the emperor a manifesto in which they threatened to spill their own blood rather than allow themselves to be forced into unity with heretics. Anastasius had no choice but to take

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29 At least Flavian of Antioch had repeatedly made concessions to his opponents, which can be traced in the sources. Corresponding information for Elias is lacking; that he had finally officially rejected the Council of Chalcedon, as Theoph. AM 6003 [510/1, 153,24 – 25] claims, is unlikely in light of subsequent developments: he still refused to enter into communion with Severus. But the confusion over an allegedly forged anathema of Elias against Chalcedon [Evagr. *HE* 3,31] at least suggests the bishop’s engagement in support of the council was not always certain. Elias had perhaps made concessions that went too far in the eyes of his monks, which is why they distanced themselves from him. A passage of Zach. *HE* 7,10 might be interpreted to that effect: Elias supposedly responded to a letter of Severus’. Cf. Trampedach 2005, 273 – 276.

30 Cyr. Scyth. VS 56 [p. 150,8 – 152,12]. Cf. Bacht 1953, 285 – 286; Frend 1972, 151 – 153; Patrich 1995, 306 – 309. A nephew of Anastasius who was also present was able to escape the unpleasant situation by making a large donation of money. Bishop John may be regarded as one of the more or less ‘luke-warm’ supporters of the imperial dogmatic course, who Severus in Syria had tried to avoid (with good reason) promoting to higher ecclesiastical ranks: Van Nuffelen & Hilkens 2013, 565 – 569.

their threat seriously. Since, on the one hand, its sacred sites gave Palestine great ideological significance for the entire empire and, on the other, it was unanimous in its rejection of Severus and therefore at least largely peaceful, the emperor acquiesced to events and left the region alone.\(^3\) The Chalcedonians had prevailed in Palestine. Accordingly, it was a synod in Jerusalem in 518 that was among the first to confirm the new direction taken in the imperial ecclesiastical policy of Emperor Justin after Anastasius’ death.\(^3\)

### The Autonomy of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem

A large part of the conflict-ridden dynamics of the development of the late-antique Church derived from the attempts of individual churches to intervene in the development of others and/or in the development of the doctrine and hierarchy of the imperial Church.\(^3\) Since the rights of individual churches in their dealings with others throughout the empire were not fixed, but rather were based on experience and the degree to which they could be enforced, individual bishops tended to broaden their own scope for action by meddling in the internal affairs of other communities. Such testing of ecclesiastical power relations was likely to succeed only if it could count on secular enforcement to sanction it. To that extent, Jerusalem had to defend its autonomy in the hierarchical-doctrinal controversies of the post-Chalcedonian period not only against other churches, but especially against the imperial monarchy, whose authority made ecclesiastical intervention in the affairs of other churches possible in the first place.\(^3\) Structurally, a patriarchate’s ability to assert itself depended primarily on its relationship with the imperial capital. Already in 451, it was primarily Emperor Marcian’s desire for unity that had rewarded Juvenal for changing sides at

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\(^3\) Cf. Cyr. Scyth. VS 57 [p. 158,3–7], who, however, incorrectly explains the emperor’s retreat as resulting from pressure imposed by Vitalian. Vitalian had actually been defeated by that point, the precondition for Anastasius being able to depose Elias at all. It had probably been intimated to the emperor that there would be a high number of casualties if he proceeded further on his path. Cf. Grillmeier 2004, 72–75.

\(^3\) The players in Jerusalem did not even wait for the emperor’s command before taking such a step: Sabbatt. 28; 30; Cyr. Scyth. VS 60 [p. 162,13–18]. Cf. Grillmeier 2002, 8–9; Heyer 1984, 82.

\(^3\) Kötter 2014b, 8–20.

\(^3\) On the principles behind imperial intervention: Bringmann 1998, 64–65; Ullmann 1976, esp. 1–9. The legal basis was the emperor’s responsibility for *ius publicum*. Christian authorities did not have a consistent theory of their own with which to oppose him, and the New Testament’s statements about the imperium [cf. Jn 18 36; Rom 13 1–7; Rev 18] are inconsistent. Cf. Meyendorff 1989, 29. It nonetheless seems that the segmented structure of the Church could not be transformed smoothly into an empire-wide organization, particularly since only a player outside the Church could grant this organization an empire-wide sanction. The voluntary subordination of individual bishops to others, on the other hand, could not be taken for granted and was difficult to enforce by purely ecclesiastical means. Enforcement from outside with imperial resources, however, frequently led to resistance. Cf. Kötter 2014b, 8–13.
the Council of Chalcedon with jurisdiction over the ecclesiastical provinces of Palestine. Juvenal himself knew very well to whom he owed his rank; he indicated it clearly to the rebellious monks in Palestine. He likewise owed his reinstatement in 454 to Emperor Marcian. By fleeing to Constantinople, Juvenal himself had brought about the emperor’s intervention in the internal affairs of Palestine, to his own advantage.

Marcian thereby demonstrated that individual emperors could theoretically re-order affairs in Palestine according to their own will at any time. The precondition for that was the will to do so: Marcian, for example, cannot have had any interest immediately after Chalcedon in directly calling his ecclesiastical efforts into question. He therefore directed all his energy towards reinstating Juvenal and expelling his rival bishop Theodosius. That decisive imperial intervention in Palestine continued to be effective was demonstrated half a century later by Emperor Anastasius, who, in 516, succeeded in deposing Bishop Elias. But it is also clear in both Marcian’s and Anastasius’ case that it was by no means sufficient for the emperor merely to make his will known in order to countermand the will of the local players in Palestine. The events following the deposing of Elias, and the fact that this issue was addressed only after Anastasius had put down a rebellion in the Balkans, suggest that the emperor had to rely on considerable coercive force in 516 to remove Elias from office.

Intervention in Palestine was costly, and therefore, authorities in Constantinople did not rush to resort to it. A glance at the situations in which emperors and their ecclesiastical allies avoided intervention makes this clear: above all, the fact that Bishop Anastasius of Jerusalem did not renounce the Enkyklión of Basiliscus of 475 is noteworthy in this context. But it is all the more remarkable that Emperor Zeno left him alone in this respect, despite his own decidedly Chalcedonian course after his restoration to office. It is moreover striking that Elias’ deposition in 516 took place a considerable time after that of his allies Macedonius in 511 and Flavian in 512. Lastly, we can confirm that after the final condemnation of Severus by Sabas, Theodosius, and John in 517, Emperor Anastasius was willing to punish the rebels, but in light of their explicitly expressed readiness for martyrdom he abandoned

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36 Cf. n. 11. It is hardly a coincidence that Juvenal fled to Constantinople.
37 Emperor Marcian had already emphatically confirmed ‘his’ council in four decrees: ACO II.1, 3, 119–124. He also interceded with Leo of Rome for the approval of the conciliar decrees, since the pope had refused to recognize the entire council on account of his rejection of ‘canon 28’. Marcian informed Leo that the opponents of Chalcedon would exploit Leo’s ambivalence to make a united front against the council: cf. ACO II.1,2, 61,7–16. As Chalcedon encountered increasing resistance in the East, Rome’s explicit approval of its dogmatic content became ever more important.
38 This also explains the late date of Elias’ deposition (516) in comparison to those of his allies Macedonius (511) and Flavian (512). These coercive measures, however, proved to be ineffective against John of Jerusalem – or at least were not more effective than the intimidation by his monks.
39 Paul of Ephesos and Peter Knapheus of Antioch were deposed, while the bishops of the diocese of Asia begged Acacius of Constantinople for forgiveness for their defection: Evagr. HE 3,8–9. Nothing like this is known for Anastasius of Jerusalem.
this plan relatively quickly. Although Palestine’s resistance was one reason for the ultimate failure of Anastasius’ religious policy, as will be shown below, the emperor was not prepared at this point to intervene decisively in the internal affairs of the church of Jerusalem and Palestine.40

There were various reasons for this repeated reluctance on the part of the emperors to involve themselves in Jerusalem. First of all, a comparison with other large episcopal sees in the empire shows that the effectiveness of imperial intervention in specific ecclesiastical regions was determined by geographical factors: the greater the distance between a region and the imperial centre Constantinople, the less likely (or at least the more costly) successful intervention became. For Constantinople, it was far easier to intervene in Antioch than in Alexandria or Jerusalem. The patriarchs of the Syrian metropolis in particular were especially dependent on imperial favor in the post-Chalcedonian period.41 Furthermore, during the reign of Anastasius, the Syrian church exhibited a second characteristic that made intervention there easier, and easier to justify: doctrinal positions in the jurisdiction of Antioch were far more fragmented than in Jerusalem or Alexandria.42 The emperors, in general, tended not to take action in ecclesiastical-political issues on their own initiative. Evagrius emphasizes a certain reluctance on the part of Anastasius, and this may have been intensified by the negative reception of Zeno’s Henotikon in Rome, as the popes complained that the document lacked a sufficient ecclesiastical-institutional basis. It is thus no surprise that the measures of Anastasius’ religious policy responded to initiatives and petitions from within the Church, making his ecclesiastical actions dependent on ecclesiastical impetus. That opened up more opportunities for intervention in the deeply divided region of Syria than in the doctrinally far more homogeneous (or at least quieter) Palestine. While Flavian of Antioch was undermined by his internal enemies in Syria, Elias of Jerusalem did not face such a threat to the same extent.

But it was not only that excuses for intervention in Palestine were lacking: the relative cohesion of Palestine also made intervention riskier and effective intervention more difficult. Thus, after 482, the emperors no longer attempted to take an active role in directing ecclesiastical relations in Alexandria, which was largely dominated by the Miaphysites. Likewise, in Palestine, success against the unified

40 This despite the fact that Sabas and Theodosius did not hold back harsh criticism in their letter to Anastasius [Cyr. Scyth. VS 57]. Anastasius’ intervention may have seemed too costly precisely because of the monks’ declared readiness for martyrdom and their reference to the holy sites.

41 Anastasius had been involved in all episcopal appointments in Constantinople and Antioch since his accession. The emperor had even actively approved Flavian’s elevation, despite his later deposition: Theoph. AM 5991 [498/9, 142,9 – 12]. Imperial influence in the investiture of Severus is well known.

42 Both positions, Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian, were widely held in Syria, both among monks and in the church hierarchy. Thus the bishops of Antioch were permanently dependent on imperial support. Cf. Kötter 2013, 87, 231–232, 243–245.
Chalcedonians after 507 at the latest could not be guaranteed even by the deployment of military coercion, all the more since such action would have endangered the holy sites. Anastasius briefly succeeded in reorganizing affairs in Palestine in 516; however, it is characteristic of the situation that the local monks around Sabas and Theodosius could put more pressure on the new bishop, John, than the imperial deputy, the dux Palaestinae, could. Thus, Jerusalem was able to demonstrate its independence of development under Anastasius: all by itself, this relatively small region successfully denied Severus ecclesiastical communion for the entire duration of his time in office. For Emperor Anastasius and Severus structural reasons made it difficult and ultimately too risky to pursue their objectives in the Holy Land by force.

In all this, Jerusalem admittedly was hardly the highest priority in the emperors’ ecclesiastical-political measures. Zeno had already demonstrated in 476 that the disobedience of the bishop of the Holy City might have to be accepted, when he failed to force Bishop Anastasius to approve his measures against Basiliscus. Also, with respect to Emperor Anastasius, there is no doubt that he could have brought about a change in Palestine by force. Sabas and Theodosius presumed as much when they declared themselves ready to die as martyrs before the prospect of such imperial intervention. But Anastasius was not prepared to shed blood to force Jerusalem to support his policy. The ecclesiastical unity of the really key sees had ultimately been attained under Severus: Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch were in communion. The mere fact that Elias became the focus of imperial interest only long after Macedonius of Constantinople and Flavian of Antioch had been ousted supports this picture of the secondary importance of Palestine, as does the lack of clarity regarding the jurisdictions of Antioch and Jerusalem, still observable in the post-Chalcedonian period. Especially in the struggle of Severus’ ally Philoxenus against Flavian of Antioch, the synods convened against Flavian were also directed against Elias; they thus were synods of the entire political dioecesis Oriens. It appears that the intent was to decide the cases of the two patriarchs together. The extent to which that challenged Jerusalem’s autonomy, which had obtained its rank in 451 against the will of Antioch, is illustrated by the fact that, as new bishop of Antioch, Severus attempted to force Elias of Jerusalem to enter into communion. The violent Chalcedonian reaction of Palestine to Severus’ appointment as bishop of Antioch at least in part derived from a need to dissociate itself from its Syrian ecclesiastical rival.

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43 The same is naturally also true of the bishops of Rome. Their case, however, is structurally different: since Rome was not directly under Anastasius’ rule, he could not have forced it to accept Severus even if he wanted to.
44 Cf. n. 31.
45 Cf. Evagr. HE 2,4, who attempts to represent Antioch’s loss of Palestine as a mutually agreed compromise. Juvenal had in fact claimed far greater territories for Jerusalem as early as 449: Honigmann 1950, 221–215, 224–227. Nonetheless, the measure can only be seen as a defeat for Antioch. Evagrius’ assessment merely reflects his Antiochene perspective.
The Influence of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem

It is difficult to assess Jerusalem’s influence on imperial-ecclesiastical developments because the bishops of Jerusalem, in contrast to their peers in Rome, Constantinople, or Alexandria, never claimed the power to make declarations binding to the entire Church.\(^{46}\) Their demands instead always emerged from specific local and regional contexts, as in the case of the struggle against Anastasius, Severus, and Philoxenus.\(^{47}\) Nonetheless, Jerusalem played its part in the development of the imperial Church after Chalcedon: the church of Jerusalem was decisively involved in the fundamental divisions with respect to the reception of Chalcedon. Juvenal’s expulsion in 451, for example, was one of the factors that led to imperial-ecclesiastical approval of the Council of Chalcedon in the first place: Leo of Rome, in particular, had at first been reluctant to recognize the council on account of its hierarchical measures, which favored Constantinople. Not until Emperor Marcian impressed on him the necessity of at least professing the creed of Chalcedon in light of the anti-Chalcedonian uprisings in Egypt and Palestine was Leo ready to oblige; his support thus ensured the reception of the council despite initial resistance from many quarters.\(^{48}\) Since endorsing Chalcedon meant the pope also lent his support to Juvenal, it was the very resistance that the new patriarch encountered in Palestine that ultimately led to the recognition of his new ecclesiastical role.

The next stage in the reception of Chalcedon was influenced by Jerusalem far more directly: Zeno’s Henotikon had followed the example of the Palestinian Union of Martyrius of Jerusalem, which made the Palestinian church the direct inspiration for imperial-ecclesiastical policy. Hence, as long as the Henotikon was able to produce doctrinal compromise across the empire, it also stabilized the position of Jerusalem within the imperial Church.\(^{49}\) Therefore, Bishop Sallustius was prepared to discredit Euphemius, his peer in Constantinople, when he distanced himself to an

\(^{46}\) Rome formulated claims of primacy that included the preeminence of the declarations of the popes. Therefore, the bishops of Rome had a far more immediate interest in the unity of the Church than the bishops of other major churches, who – even against outside intervention – relied much more heavily on ecclesiastical sectionalism.

\(^{47}\) In 511, Sabas petitioned the emperor on Elias’ behalf not to give up the tenets of Chalcedon, but that hardly entailed a claim to general leadership in religious policy by Jerusalem. The request derived instead from Sabas’ intercession on Elias’ behalf in the specific situation: the monk had traveled to the court primarily to petition the emperor for leniency for Elias on account of his contact with Flavian of Antioch. For a detailed account of the delegation and Sabas’ conversations with the emperor, see Cyr. Scyth. VS 50 – 54. Cf. Patrich 1995, 303 – 305, 311 – 313; Trampedach 2005, 279 – 284. Cf. n. 26.

\(^{48}\) For the letter of Emperor Marcian to Pope Leo: ACO II.1,2, 61,7 – 16. For Leo’s acceptance (solely) of the doctrinal rulings of Chalcedon: Leo M. Ep. 114 [ACO II.4, 70,19 – 71,22]. The pope reveals categorically that it was only the threat from the opponents of the council that moved him to approve it.

\(^{49}\) The Henotikon would show, however, that Palestine, marked as it was by specific traditions, could not serve as a model for the entire empire. Cf. Kötter 2014a, 166 – 167.
alarming degree from the conciliatory document. The church of Jerusalem attempted, insofar as its means permitted, to ensure imperial support. This obviously was possible only as long as there was at least a rough common doctrinal basis between the Holy Land and the emperor in Constantinople.

Finally, the Chalcedonian volte-face of imperial religious policy under Justin in 518 was provoked by the failure of Anastasius’ anti-Chalcedonian policy, in which Jerusalem played an important role. Anastasius’ failure was due to ecclesiastical-political dynamics that had, inter alia, originated in Palestine. Thus, Severus’ flight from Palestine to the capital in 507 had helped radicalize the ecclesiastical parties and thereby discredited the Henotikon as a conciliatory document. It was above all the triumph of Sabas, Theodosius, and John, who successfully evaded the emperor’s and Severus’ grasp, that will have given impetus to the Chalcedonian cause throughout the empire. Severus, for example, encountered resistance in his own jurisdiction on account of his radical doctrinal position; developments in neighbouring Palestine will have scarcely mitigated it. To put it bluntly: the failure of Anastasius’ religious policy does not date to the Chalcedonian restoration under Justin, but rather began with the successful resistance of the seemingly secondary patriarchate of Jerusalem. The question of how Justin might have responded in ecclesiastical-political terms had all the patriarchates of the East been unified with regard to the Theologumena of Severus must at least be considered.

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50 Justin’s motives are not entirely clear. Possibly, he was put under pressure by the Chalcedonian comes foederatorum, Vitalian, like Anastasius before him: Gray 1979, 46; Haacke 1953, 141. Justin’s Illyrian origins are often cited as a potential source of sympathy for Roman positions. Cf. Capizzi 1969, 37; Jones 1964, 268; Meyendorff 1989, 208. Menze 2008, 18–22 at any rate considers it difficult to view the emperor as a staunch Chalcedonian a priori. Prior to 518, he was probably indifferent. Other reasons than his personal disposition must have influenced his decision to break with the course taken by Anastasius. Besides pressure from Vitalian, the “gestörtes Verhältnis zwischen Kaiser und hauptstädtischer Bevölkerung” (Meier 2007, 229) under Anastasius might be cited.

51 Severus himself only unwillingly recognized the Henotikon. He made clear what he thought of the emperor’s constant efforts towards compromise in a letter to a friendly monk: “What has thrown the churches into confusion down to the present day is this, the fact that those who are in power halt between the two sides, and wish always to please both sides” [Sev. Ant. Ep. CL 37 (p. 292–293)].


53 Zach. HE 7,12 sees broad church unity under Severus’ influence as actually achieved. According to Zach. HE 8,1 [vol. 2, 16 – 18], the imperial official Amantius attempted to use this as an argument in 518 to convince Justin to change his pro-Chalcedonian policy: Chirographum trium patriarcharum et episcoporum complurium dicionis vestrae nondum aruit, qui scripserunt et synodum anathematizavereunt.
On the significance of Chalcedonian Palestine for the course of empire-wide ecclesiastical affairs, we may conclude by citing an instructive example: around 512, Palestinian Chalcedonian monks wrote a letter to the Illyrian bishop, Alcison of Nicopolis, who had played a central role in the defection of Illyrian bishops from communion with the church of Constantinople. These bishops placed themselves under the wing of Rome, which led Pope Hormisdas to assert stricter Chalcedonian positions vis-à-vis the eastern churches and the imperial efforts of reconciliation, and to rule out any concessions on the part of Rome in increasingly blunt terms.⁵⁵ The position of Rome, which was influenced and emboldened by the Chalcedonian revival in the East, would prove decisive in 518/19 for resolving the so-called ‘Acacian Schism’ between Rome and Constantinople.⁵⁶ Rome’s experience of the Chalcedonian revival in the East primarily came from the Balkans; this region, however, was apparently in touch with developments in Palestine. Palestine’s resistance thus made ripples far beyond the territory of the patriarchate of Jerusalem and its goal of merely preserving its internal autonomy.

**Conclusion**

Did Jerusalem succeed in transforming its ecclesiastical elevation in 451 into enhanced significance? The reign of Anastasius demonstrates that the church of Jerusalem, even in the event of conflict with players supported by the emperor, was capable of preserving its independence of development. Various attempts at encroachment could ultimately be thwarted by Palestine’s relatively uniform doctrinal position. It also emerges, however, that, in the eyes of others, Jerusalem did not play a particularly central role: Emperor Anastasius could quite easily refrain from decisively enforcing his policy in the Holy Land, probably not least because he wished to avoid shedding blood at the holy sites. The patriarchate had thus asserted itself as an independent player, but, admittedly, it stood to benefit from Palestine’s secondary importance regarding the strategy of the emperor and of the other patriarchates.

Accordingly, the bishops of Jerusalem refrained from formulating any similarly far-reaching demands with respect to their own influence on the development of the church as a whole, in contrast, for example, to the bishops of the ‘two Romes’. Palestine was well aware of its prominent position as the church of the Holy Land, of course – Sabas and Theodosius stressed precisely that when they at-

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⁵⁴ This letter is in Evagr. *HE* 3,31;33.
⁵⁵ Hormisdas wrote to his Gallic colleague Avitus of Vienne in 517 about what further actions he believed the growing ecclesiastical resistance in the East required: in light of the situation, a delegation was necessary either to persuade those in power in Constantinople to change course or to discredit them in the eyes of the opposition in the East: Avell. 137,12.
tempted to prove the correctness of their doctrinal positions to the emperor in 517\textsuperscript{57} – but we do not see Palestinian players making fundamental demands for any sort of supra-regional leadership of the Church on that basis. On the other hand, the developments in Palestine were hardly bereft of all significance for other churches or for the emperors: it was definitely noted what happened in Palestine, and, above all, it was noted how Constantinople reacted. In the period under consideration, the church of Jerusalem repeatedly gave impetus to or promoted developments that had ramifications beyond the narrow confines of Palestine. The region was thus far from being on the absolute periphery of ecclesiastical politics. However, a brief comparison with the other great episcopal sees of the empire\textsuperscript{58} further qualifies this conclusion: while Jerusalem may not have been on the periphery, in its significance for the development of the imperial Church, it was definitely the most peripheral of the many centers vying for power and influence.

**Bibliography**


\textsuperscript{57} Cf. n. 32.
\textsuperscript{58} For a detailed comparative analysis of the five major episcopal sees of the time, see Kötter 2013, 224–254.


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