



# **SPACE AND COMMUNITIES IN BYZANTINE ANATOLIA**

**PAPERS  
FROM THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL  
SEVGİ GÖNÜL BYZANTINE STUDIES  
SYMPOSIUM**

**EDITED BY  
NIKOS D. KONTOGIANNIS AND TOLGA B. UYAR**

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**ISTANBUL, 24-26 JUNE 2019**

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AND TOLGA B. UYAR**



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## ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>AA</b>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
<b>AbhBerl</b>	<i>Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin, Abhandlungen</i>
<b>ActaIRNorv</b>	<i>Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia, Institutum Romanum Norvegiae</i>
<b>AHR</b>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<b>AJA</b>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<b>AJP</b>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<b>AJS Review</b>	<i>The Journal of the Association for Jewish Studies</i>
<b>AnatAnt</b>	<i>Anatolia Antiqua</i>
<b>AnatSt</b>	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
<b>AntTard</b>	<i>Antiquité Tardive</i>
<b>AB</b>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
<b>ANRW</b>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt</i>
<b>ANMED</b>	<i>Anadolu Akdenizi: arkeoloji haberleri= News of archaeology from Anatolia's Mediterranean areas</i>
<b>AnzWien</b>	<i>Anzeiger: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien, Philologisch-historische Klasse</i>
<b>ArtB</b>	<i>Art Bulletin</i>
<b>AST</b>	<i>Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı</i>
<hr/>	
<b>BABesch</b>	<i>Bulletin antieke beschaving</i>
<b>BCH</b>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
<b>BEFAR</b>	<i>Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome</i>
<b>BHG</b>	<i>Biblioteca hagiographica graeca, edited by F. Halkin. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. SubsHag 47. Brussels, 1957; repr. 1969</i>
<b>BIAA</b>	<i>British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara</i>
<b>BMGS</b>	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
<b>BMMA</b>	<i>Bulletin of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York</i>
<b>BSA</b>	<i>The Annual of the British School of Archaeology at Athens</i>
<b>ByzF</b>	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
<b>ByzSorb</b>	<i>Byzantina Sorbonnensia</i>
<b>BZ</b>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<hr/>	
<b>CahArch</b>	<i>Cahiers archéologiques</i>
<b>CCSG</b>	<i>Corpus christianorum, Series graeca</i>
<b>CFHB</b>	<i>Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae</i>

<b>CSHB</b>	Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae
<b>CRAI</b>	<i>Comptes rendus des séances de l'année de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>
<b>CSCO</b>	Corpus scriptorium christianorum orientaliū
<b>CSLA</b>	The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity (CSLA) database, based mainly at the University of Oxford
<hr/>	
<b>ΔΧΑΕ</b>	Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἐταιρείας
<b>DenkWien</b>	Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften
<b>DOC</b>	Bellinger, A. R., Grierson P., and Hendy M. F. <i>Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection</i> . Washington, DC, 1966–1999
<b>DOP</b>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<b>DOS</b>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Studies</i>
<b>DOSeals</b>	<i>Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art</i> , edited by N. Oikonomides and J. Nesbitt. Washington, DC, 1991–
<hr/>	
<b>ΕΕΦΘεσσ</b>	Ἐπιστημονικὴ ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Φιλοσοφικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Ἀριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης
<b>EP</b>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> . 2nd ed. Leiden; London, 1960–2002
<b>EJOS</b>	<i>Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies</i>
<b>EME</b>	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
<b>EO</b>	<i>Echos d'Orient</i>
<hr/>	
<b>HEROM</b>	<i>Journal on Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture</i>
<b>HTR</b>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<b>HT</b>	<i>History and Theory Journal</i>
<b>HZ</b>	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
<b>Hugoye</b>	<i>Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies</i>
<hr/>	
<b>IEph.</b>	<i>Die Inschriften von Ephesos</i> . Vols. I–VIII, edited by H. Wankel et al. Bonn, 1979–1984
<b>IstForsch</b>	<i>Istanbuler Forschungen</i>
<b>IstMitt</b>	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen</i>
<hr/>	
<b>JbAC</b>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<b>JDAI</b>	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
<b>JECChrSt</b>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>

<b>JESHO</b>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<b>JÖAI</b>	<i>Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien</i>
<b>JÖB</b>	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i> [note: before 1969, JÖBG]
<b>JQR</b>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<b>JRA</b>	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
<b>JRS</b>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<b>JSAH</b>	<i>Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians</i>
<b>JWalt</b>	<i>Journal of the Walters Art Gallery</i>
<hr/>	
<b>KST</b>	<i>Kazi Sonuçları Toplantısı</i>
<hr/>	
<b>MAAR</b>	<i>Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome</i>
<b>MAMA</b>	<i>Monumenta Asiae Minoris antiqua</i>
<b>MASP</b>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie impériale des sciences de St.-Petersbourg, Sciences politiques, histoire et philosophie</i>
<b>MélRome</b>	<i>Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome</i>
<b>MHR</b>	<i>Mediterranean Historical Review</i>
<b>MiChA</b>	<i>Mitteilungen zur Christlichen Archäologie</i>
<b>MM</b>	<i>Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana</i> , edited by F. Miklosich and J. Müller. 6 vols. Vienna, 1860–1890
<b>MonPiot</b>	<i>Monuments et mémoires, Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Fondation Eugène Piot</i>
<hr/>	
<b>OCP</b>	<i>Orientalia christiana periodica</i>
<b>ODB</b>	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> , edited by A. Kazhdan et al. 3 vols. New York; Oxford, 1991
<b>OHBS</b>	<i>The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies</i> , edited by E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, and R. Cormack. Oxford, 2008
<b>ÖJh</b>	<i>Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen institutes in Wien</i>
<hr/>	
<b>PBSR</b>	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
<b>PG</b>	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca</i> , edited by J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1857–1866
<b>PBW</b>	<i>Prosopography of the Byzantine World</i>
<b>PLRE</b>	<i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> . Vol. 1, edited by A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, and J. Morris. Cambridge, 1971; Vols. 2–3, edited by J. R. Martindale. Cambridge, 1980–1992
<b>PNAS</b>	<i>Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences of the USA</i>
<b>PO</b>	<i>Patrologia orientalis</i>
<b>PoDIA</b>	<i>Proceedings of the Danish Institute at Athens</i>

<b>ProcBrAc</b>	Proceedings of the British Academy
<hr/>	
<b>RAC</b>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i>
<b>RACr</b>	<i>Rivista di archeologia cristiana</i>
<b>RArch</b>	<i>Rivista di archeologia</i>
<b>RBK</b>	<i>Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst</i> , edited by K. Wessel. Stuttgart, 1963–
<b>REB</b>	<i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i>
<b>REG</b>	<i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
<b>RendPontAcc</b>	<i>Atti della Pontificia accademia romana di archeologia, Rendiconti</i>
<b>RQ</b>	<i>Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte</i>
<b>RSBS</b>	<i>Bizantinistica. Rivista di studi bizantini e slavi</i>
<hr/>	
<b>SBMünch</b>	Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse
<b>SBS</b>	<i>Studies in Byzantine Sigillography</i>
<b>SC</b>	Sources Chrétiennes
<b>SEG</b>	<i>Supplementum epigraphicum graecum</i> , edited by P. Roussel et al. Leiden, 1923–
<b>SGS 1</b>	<i>Change in the Byzantine World in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Papers from the First International Sevgi Gönül Symposium</i> , edited by A. Ödekan, E. Akyürek, and N. Necipoğlu. Istanbul, 2010
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<b>SoSchrÖAI</b>	Sonderschriften des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes
<b>SOPJ</b>	<i>Syriac Orthodox Patriarchal Journal</i>
<b>Spolia reincarnated</b>	<i>Spolia reincarnated: afterlives of objects, materials and spaces in Anatolia from antiquity to the Ottoman era</i> , edited by I. Jevtić and S. Yalman. Istanbul, 2018.
<b>StP</b>	<i>Studia Patristica</i>
<b>Synaxarium CP</b>	<i>Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: Propylaeum ad Acta sanctorum Novembris</i> , ed. H. Delehaye. Brussels, 1902
<b>Syria</b>	<i>Syria. Archéologie, art et histoire</i>
<hr/>	
<b>Teubner</b>	Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana

<b>The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia</b>	<i>The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia: From the End of Late Antiquity until the Coming of the Turks</i> , edited by P. Niewöhner. New York, 2017
<b>TIB</b>	<i>Tabula imperii byzantini</i> , edited by H. Hunger. Vienna, 1976–
<b>TM</b>	<i>Travaux et mémoires</i>
<b>TÜBA-KED</b>	Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi Kültür Envanteri Dergisi
<b>TürkArkDerg</b>	Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi
<hr/>	
<b>VizVrem</b>	Vizantiiskii vremennik
<hr/>	
<b>ZDMG</b>	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
<b>ZNW</b>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
<b>ZPapEpig</b>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
<b>ZRVI</b>	<i>Zbornik radova Vizantološkog Instituta</i>
<b>ZLU</b>	<i>Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti</i>



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NIKOS D. KONTOGIANNIS and TOLGA B. UYAR

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The volume at hand contains twenty-six papers (stemming from some twenty-nine presentations) whose diversity and wide scope made our work both gratifying and challenging. We have tried to the best of our ability to apply uniform standards to all the texts by referring to established practices (*ODB* for historical names; *Hesperia* for the transliteration system of Greek words; *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition, for citation and style issues; *Dumbarton Oaks' Byzantine publications* for the list of abbreviations) while also allowing for the authors' liberties (e.g., when referring to Anatolia vs. Asia Minor). We truly appreciate the hard work that Jacob Chizzo put into copyediting and proofreading all the texts. Deniz Sever-Georgousakis undertook compiling the index, while Gediz Deren Öktem and Merve Özkılıç put together the general bibliography. Last but not least, we are indebted to Burak Şuşut, who oversaw the design and production of the book, and to Deniz Yasemin Önen, the GABAM academic administrator who made sure that the whole publishing process went smoothly. As always, we happily share with our coauthors and collaborators the accolade but keep full responsibility for any shortcomings or failings our reader may come across.



## PREFACE

---

ÖMER M. KOÇ

Honorary President of the Symposium

Convened for the first time in 2007, the International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium had its fifth session in 2019 with the theme *Byzantine Anatolia: Space and Communities*. I believe it is an admirable way to commemorate my late aunt Sevgi Gönül (1938–2003), whose support for Byzantine Studies and Cultural Heritage proved a lasting impact for intellectual life in Turkey. These triennial Symposia are by now a well-established institution that attract and bring together the greatest scholars from our country and around the world. At the same time, they demonstrate a steadfast devotion to innovation and the advancement of the field.

For the Fifth Symposium the scientific advisory board turned to the land and people of Anatolia. Being one of the main provinces of the Eastern Roman Empire, it became the core land of the Byzantine state after the Arab conquests, and its powerbase in the struggle to reinsert itself as a Mediterranean power. From the end of the eleventh century the area witnessed the conflicts between the Byzantine entity(s) and the Seljuk/Turkish principalities, which finally ended in the fifteenth century with their integration into the Ottoman realm. Under this summarily political history lies a more fascinating reality: the diverse matrix of regional settlements in Anatolia, the changes and adaptations to environmental and socio-economic realities, and the cultural and political expressions of actively engaged populations. The wealth of archaeological material gradually coming to light promises exciting new perspectives and breakthroughs in field studies, particularly historical and art historical research. New material, coupled with innovative approaches, undoubtedly reformulates traditional standpoints and reshapes our understanding of the Empire's core provinces.

As always, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Vehbi Koc Foundation, Koç University-Stavros Niarchos Foundation Center for Late Antique and Byzantine Studies (GABAM), Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED), the members of the symposium's Scientific Advisory Board and Executive Board which made this symposium and its accompanying publication possible. Furthermore, I am grateful to all the participants, who greatly contributed to the scientific quality of this symposium with their papers.

# Epigraphy of Contested Spaces: Doctrinal Identities, Imperial and Local Agencies in an Inscribed Letter of Justinian (IEph 1353)\*

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Arkadiy Avdokhin  
HSE University, Moscow

## Introduction

Often imposing and monumental, inscribed letters of emperors were a significant part of urban landscapes of Imperial and Late Antique cities. From Rome to Ephesus, to Antioch and to Thessalonike, they would be placed in prominent nodes of cityscapes, positioned to capture the attention of city dwellers and visitors.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> No comprehensive study of inscribed Late Antique imperial constitutions has been done to date, as J. H. Oliver, *Greek Constitutions of Early Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri* (Philadelphia, 1989) does not extend beyond Gallienus. An edition is in preparation by a team led by R. Haensch in Cologne. For important general observations and a discussion of a selection of texts, see D. Feissel, “Épigraphie et constitutions impériales: Aspects de la publication du droit à Byzance,” in *Epigrafia medievale greca e latina. Ideologia e funzione: atti del seminario di Erice (12–18 settembre 1991)*, ed. G. Cavallo and C. Mango (Spoleto, 1995), 67–98 = D. Feissel, *Documents, droit, diplomatique de l’Empire romain tardif*, Bilans de recherche 7 (Paris, 2010), 14–42. A stock-taking is offered in S. Corcoran, “State Correspondence in the Roman Empire: Imperial Communication from Augustus to Justinian,” in *State Correspondence in the Ancient World: From New Kingdom Egypt to the Roman Empire*, ed. K. Rander (Oxford, 2014), 172–210. The visual aspect of imperial epigraphy in the

As important contributors to the “written spaces” of metropolitan centers and smaller cities, the epigraphically rendered imperial constitutions (alongside other administrative inscriptions) were, as we increasingly realize, far from passive mirrors of imperial legislation (which itself was taking shape, to a significant degree, in response to local requests and petitions).<sup>2</sup> The input of urban communities and institutions – local elites and administration – was paramount in choosing which edicts to publish as inscriptions, where, and how exactly, to display them, and what the lettering, relative size, and epigraphic context of the inscribed *sacrae* would be.<sup>3</sup> The imperial regulation of at least some of these aspects (such as the narrowing down of appropriate range of scripts used or necessitating local authorities to display certain constitutions in certain places) highlights exactly this – the vigorous and keen agency of cities and other localities in managing the epigraphic display of imperial constitutions.<sup>4</sup> Local agency needed channeling and trimming rather than prompts and instigations. Urban communities would archive memories of imperial favors (with interesting exceptions, however)<sup>5</sup> and visually showcase their perceived significance for their own citizens, as well as awe-stricken visitors to gaze at, and refer to.

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Roman empire, including in Late Antiquity, as well as local agencies, are discussed in relevant contributions to the important collection of papers *Selbstdarstellung und Kommunikation: Die Veröffentlichung staatlicher Urkunden auf Stein und Bronze in der römischen Welt: Internationales Kolloquium an der Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik in München (1. bis 3. Juli 2006)*, ed. R. Haensch (Munich, 2009). For a wider thematic and chronological frame of discussion, see now the useful synthesis in N. Melvani, “State, Strategy, and Ideology in Monumental Imperial Inscriptions,” in *Inscribing Texts in Byzantium: Continuities and Transformations*, ed. M. D. Lauxtermann and I. Toth (London; New York, 2020), 162–188.

- 2 For administrative inscriptions in general (including imperial epigraphy) in the Roman empire, see Haensch, *Selbstdarstellung und Kommunikation*. For the concept of “written space” in application to Roman epigraphy, see *Written Space in the Latin West, 200 BC to AD 300*, ed. G. Sears, P. Keegan, and R. Laurence (London, 2015).
- 3 For local agency, see, e.g., C. Eilers, “Inscribed Documents, Un-inscribed Documents, and the Place of the City in the Imperium Romanum,” in Haensch, *Selbstdarstellung und Kommunikation*, 301–312; see also the bibliography on Ephesus below. The importance of the particular layout and fonts in imperial constitution is persuasively analyzed, e.g., in D. Feissel, “Un rescrit de Justinien découvert à Didymes (1er avril 533),” *Chiron* 34 (2004): 285–365 = Feissel, *Documents*, 250–324; F. Manservigi and M. Mezzetti, “The Didyma Inscription: Between Legislation and Palaeography,” in *Understanding Material Text Cultures: A Multidisciplinary View*, ed. M. Hilgert (Berlin, 2017), 203–242. For epigraphic display in Late Antiquity, see Ch. Roueché, “Written Display in the Late Antique and Byzantine City,” in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. E. Jeffreys, F. K. Haarer, and J. Gilliland (Aldershot, 2006), 1:235–254.
- 4 An edict of Valentinian and Valens (*CTh* 9.19.3, AD 368) limited the use of the imperial script (the so-called *litterae caelestes*), see L. Iannacci, M. Modesti, and A. Zuffrano, “La ‘misteriosa’ scrittura grande dei papiri ravennati, tra prassi documentaria e pubblica legislazione,” *Legal Roots: The International Journal of Roman Law, Legal History and Comparative Law* 1 (2012): 89–120; O. Kresten, “Zur Frage der ‘Litterae Caelestes,’” *JÖB* 14 (1965): 13–20. Justinian’s Novella 8 (AD 535) stipulated that imperial pronouncements be placed within the premises of churches empire-wide, see Feissel, “Épigraphie et constitutions,” 93–94.
- 5 The classic example case is of course the “Archive Wall” in Aphrodisias, where a growing selection of imperial edicts was collected and displayed, see e.g., C. Kokkinia, “The Design of the ‘Archive Wall’ at Aphrodisias,” *Tekmeria* 13 (2016): 9–55 (with further bibliography). For an instance of displaying epigraphically a negative resolution of a local query, see Eilers, “Inscribed Documents.”

Imperial and Late Antique Ephesus, as the capital of the province of Asia and, increasingly significantly, one of the ancient cradles of Christian faith in the region, housed an impressive array of imperial constitutions inscribed and put up in its urban space.<sup>6</sup> Some were monumentally presented, such as Antoninus Pius's letter to Ephesians at the Bouleuterion,<sup>7</sup> or the tripartite edict of Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian at the Octagon.<sup>8</sup> Others, although not as strikingly imposing in terms of their sheer size, were displayed in key points of Ephesus's central thoroughfares and public spaces, such as the Agora and the Bouleuterion (as seats of local councils, who apparently did the choosing) and, at a later stage, on the Embolos, the Hall of Nero, and, ultimately, the newly Christian public spaces of the Church of the Virgin Mary (also known as the Council Church) and the Church of St. John. The majority of the latter inscriptions are Justinian's rulings, which are also the largest corpus of imperial epigraphy of a given emperor found in Ephesus.<sup>9</sup>

In what follows, I will look at one instance of interaction between imperial and local agency in the epigraphic display of emperors' rulings in Late Antique Ephesus. I will discuss an inscribed letter of Justinian as a product of local agency and argue that the spatial context of its display (rather probably the premises of the Church of St. John) had significant implications for Ephesus's contested urban space where the doctrinal parties of pro-Chalcedonians and miaphysites clashed. I will offer a reading of the spatial and conceptual impact of the inscription as growing out of a synthesis of the imperial agenda to seek union with, or at least submission of, non-Chalcedonians, and of the interests of St. John's clergy to elevate their sacred site and exercise control over other Christian communities of the city (Chalcedonian and miaphysite), including that of the Church of the Virgin Mary. I will suggest therefore that the inscription, as seen and read within the increasingly Christianized written space of sixth-century Ephesus, can be best made sense of as a statement of a specific group in the city that was in a competitive, often hostile, dialogue with others, and in constant interaction with the imperial power, negotiating doctrinal identities, seeking favors, showcasing perceived loyalty, brokering power.

6 See the briefer notes in Feissel, "Épigraphie et constitutions," 94–98 and a detailed discussion, alongside a catalogue of surviving inscriptions, in D. Feissel, "Épigraphie administrative et topographie urbaine: L'emplacement des actes inscrits dans l'Éphèse protobyzantine (IVe–VIe s.)," in *Efeso paleocristiana e bizantina—Frühchristliches und byzantinisches Ephesos*, ed. R. Pillinger, R. Harreither, and G. Jenewein (Vienna, 1995), 121–132. P. Nowakowski, "A New Imperial Letter: Concerning the Churches of John and Mary in Ephesus? A Re-edition of IG XII 6, 2 928," *ZPapEpig* 204 (2017): 72–77 has recently attempted to expand the corpus of imperial epigraphy from Late Antique Ephesus by adding an inscription surviving elsewhere. A classic analysis of the Late Antique urban space of Ephesus (as well as other key imperial cities) is given in F. Bauer, *Stadt, Platz und Denkmal in der Spätantike: Untersuchungen zur Ausstattung des Öffentlichen Raums in den Spätantiken Städten Rom, Konstantinopel und Ephesos* (Mainz, 1996).

7 *IEph* V 1491, AD 145.

8 *IEph* I 43, AD 372–378.

9 Feissel, "Épigraphie administrative," nos. 6 (*IEph* IV 1326 and 1353), 25–26 (*IEph* VII 4133 A–B and unedited fragments), possibly 31–32 (*IEph* VII 4306 A–B). For edition, Italian translation, and short commentary, see *Le costituzioni giustinianee nei papiri e nelle epigrafi*, ed. M. Amelotti and Z. Migliardi, 2nd ed. (Milan, 1985), 105–109, 122–127 (nos. 4–6, 11–15).

### Inscription (IEph 1353): Text, placement, agency

The text inscribed on a sizeable (64×53 cm)<sup>10</sup> white marble plaque in easily visible (2–2.5 cm), elegant letters, reads:

(cross and *tabula ansata*)

[έν ὄνόματι τοῦ δε]σπ(ότου) ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. βασιλεὺς(ς)  
 [Φλ(άουιος) Ἰουστινιανού]ς Ἀλ<α>μανικούς Γοτθικούς Γερ-  
 [μανικούς Ἀλανικούς] Εὐάνδαλικούς Ἀφρικούς ἐνδοξος  
 [νικητῆς καὶ τρ]οπεοῦχος ἀεισέβαστος Αὐγουστ(ος)·  
 5 [πάσαις ταῖς ἐκκλη]σίαις τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως τὴν  
 [δέουσαν πρ]οσῆκει τιμὴν προσάγεσθαι, καὶ κατὰ τοῦ-  
 [τω καὶ τῷ σ]εβασμίῳ οἴκῳ τοῦ ἀποστόλου  
 [Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἐν Ἐ]φέσῳ διακειμένῳ κατὰ τὴν δύνα-  
 [μιν ἡμ]ῶν προνοία τοῦτο μὲν τοῦ μακαριω-  
 10 [τάτου προ]έδρου τοῦτο δὲ τοῦ περιβλέπτου  
 [ἀνθυπάτου τῆς Ἀσίας - - -]

[In the name of] our Lord Jesus Christ. The emperor  
 [Fl(avius) Justinianus] Alamanicus, Gothicus, Ger-  
 [manicus, Alanicus,] Vandalicus, Africus, the glorious  
 [conqueror and tr]iumphator, always-venerable Augustus.  
 [To all the ch]urches of orthodox faith  
 [the due ho]nor should be offered, there-  
 [fore also] to the reverend house of the apostle  
 [John, the one that in E]phesus lies, according to [our] pow-  
 er, under the supervision, first, of the most bless-  
 ed president [i.e., the bishop of Ephesus], and second, of the *vir spectabilis*,  
 [proconsul of Asia - - -]<sup>11</sup>

The inscribed ruling is considered as Justinian's in the majority of editions and studies, and is broadly dated ca. AD 533–565. I embrace this attribution and dating in my discussion below.<sup>12</sup>

10 Only the upper part of the inscription survives, which, with the breadth of 53 cm, would clearly catch the eye of the beholder.

11 *IEph IV 1353 = Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes d'Asie Mineure*, vol. 1, ed. H. Gregoire (Paris, 1922), no. 107 = Amelotti and Migliardi, *Costituzioni*, no. 4 = Feissel, "Épigraphie administrative," no. 6 = SEG 36, 1032 = Packard Humanities Searchable Greek Inscriptions (henceforth *PHI*), Ephesus 2906 (<https://epigraphy.packhum.org/text/250640?hs=560-569>). The Greek text given is a synthetic version offered in *PHI* 2906 that combines readings from *IEph* and Amelotti and Migliardi, *Costituzioni*, with a few emendations, notably in l. 10 Feissel's [ἀνθυπάτου τῆς Ἀσίας - - -] suggested in D. Feissel, "Inscriptions chrétiennes et byzantines," *REG* 100 (1987): 347–387, at 350 no. 398. Translation is mine.

12 For editions and commentary, see note 11. An additional argument in favor of attribution to Justinian can be

Before I discuss the doctrinal rhetoric of the text of the inscription, it is essential to unpack the implications of its spatial context. Regretfully, we are only left with, at best, likely general conjectures as to its architectural and epigraphic context. Although its main fragment was found at the southern wall of the Arkadiane – a major urban thoroughfare in post-fourth-century Ephesus – in the vicinity of the port, it is unlikely that the find spot indicates its original position. As Denis Feissel has shown, no other Late Antique imperial constitutions were found on the Arkadiane; it was therefore most certainly reused there at a later point.<sup>13</sup> The Justinianic inscription must have come from one of those spatial contexts where other Late Antique imperial *sacrae* were displayed – the Embolos, the Hall of Nero, the Church of the Virgin Mary (with two edicts securely attributed to Justinian), or indeed the Church of St. John (where, as Feissel plausibly suggests, some of Justinianic edicts displayed elsewhere could have been kept in copies, judging by their fragments surviving in the atrium).<sup>14</sup>

While it is impossible to establish definitively the original location of the inscription, its content strongly points towards one possibility from the above list as more probable than the others. As the inscribed text concerns the granting of imperial benefits (apparently specified in the missing lower part) to the Church of St. John, and as this church underwent a major renovation on Justinian's bidding and funding, it seems natural to suggest that the inscription was displayed on its premises (or at least its copy could be made available in the basilica's atrium). This would be in good keeping with the pattern of selecting and epigraphically displaying relevant imperial constitutions at another major Ephesian sacred site – the Church of the Virgin Mary (eight survive) as the city's cathedral in the first part of the sixth century.<sup>15</sup>

In the act of inscribing and inserting the imperial letter into the space of the Church of St. John, a complex web of agencies and agendas would have been set into play, with at least two discernable. The first is Justinian's, whose Novella 8 of AD 535 explicitly decreed epigraphic display of legislation in churches (something we see practiced even earlier).<sup>16</sup>

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a Justinianic inscription from Jerusalem that has strong similarity to *IEph* IV 1353 in its phrasing, see *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, vol. 1.1, ed. H. M. Cotton et al. (Berlin, 2010), no. 785. Nowakowki, "A New Imperial Letter," 75 is noncommittal regarding the attribution, and suggests Justinian or one of his successors as a range of possibilities, a view he also expresses in entry E00745 in *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity* database (<http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E00745>). E. K. Chrysos, "The Title *Βασιλεύς* in Early Byzantine International Relations," *DOP* 32 (1978): 29–75, at 74, is skeptical because of the use of *βασιλεύς*.

13 For the find spot and the original location of this inscription, see Feissel, "Épigraphie administrative," 124–125.

14 *Ibid.*, 125–130; for a list of Justinianic inscriptions in Ephesus, see p. 177 n9 above.

15 For the churches, see now A. Degaspari, *Die Marienkirche von Ephesos. Die Bauskulptur aus frühchristlicher und byzantinischer Zeit* (Vienna, 2013); N. Karydis, "The Evolution of the Church of St. John at Ephesus During the Early Byzantine Period," *ÖJh* 84 (2015): 97–128; *idem*, "The Development of the Church of St Mary at Ephesos from Late Antiquity to the Dark Ages," *AnatSt* 69 (2019): 175–194 (with further bibliography). For the imperial texts inscribed in the cathedral, see Feissel, "Épigraphie administrative," 127–128, 131–132 (nos. 22–29).

16 For Novella 8, see p. 176 above. Justinian's edict "Against the Heretics" (CJ I.1.6, AD 533) was famously sent out to metropolitan cities across the empire with an emphatic ruling to display them in central churches,

Second, and by no means less significant, would have been the agency of the clergy of St. John's, who, while tapping into the emperor's commandment, would be following their own, and local, agenda. The two major churches of Ephesus – the Church of the Virgin Mary and the Church of St. John – were involved in an ongoing rivalry, competing for imperial benefits, local importance, and broader appeal to pilgrims. Eloquent evidence of this competition is preserved in an inscription from among the epigraphy of the Church of the Virgin Mary: an administrative statement settling a dispute between the two sites of worship.<sup>17</sup> Circumstantial non-epigraphic evidence for the rivalry has also been adduced in scholarship.<sup>18</sup>

A vivid manifestation of this competition (that eventually led to the move of the episcopal see to St. John's in the seventh century) could be the parallel accumulation of easily visible, material and textual, signs of emperors' support and involvement with the churches in the form of imperial epigraphy. As the clergy and episcopacy of the Church of the Virgin Mary were archiving and displaying inscribed imperial memories (two of Justinian's letters alongside the bishop Hypatios's pastoral letter survive, apparently commissioned and displayed as a unit), St. John's would have been wise to follow suit.<sup>19</sup> Showcasing Justinian's benefits to St. John's would be a natural step to take for its clergy. By displaying Justinian's edict, they would be boosting the inscribed, and publicly visible, record of imperial benevolent presence within the space of the church. The epigraphic presence survives now as made up of at least one imperial edict, but the original collection would probably have been more larger.<sup>20</sup>

Although locating the inscription in the Church of St. John remains possible rather than positively established, this interpretation opens possibilities to approach the inscribed edict as an instance of epigraphic agency of a religious community of one of the major churches in sixth-century Ephesus. Through the inscription, as I will suggest, this community, while involved in a competitive dialogue with its counterpart from another, and more ancient, church, was engaging Christian viewers and readers from across the Chalcedonian versus miaphysite divide that would gather at the premises of St. John's.

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as *Chronicon Paschale* 18.78 indicates, see R. Scott, "Malalas and Justinian's Codification," in *Byzantine Papers (Proceedings of the First Australian Byzantine Studies Conference Canberra, 17–19 May 1978)*, ed. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and A. Moffatt (Canberra, 1981), 12–31, at 16–17.

17 *IEph* IV 1332, VII 4134 and various smaller fragments. Contrary to interpretation followed in the majority of editions and studies, this may not be the bishop Hypatios's letter, a reading problematized by Feissel, "Épigraphie administrative," no. 27 (listed as "lettre épiscopale (?)") and Feissel, "Les actes de l'Etat impérial dans l'épigraphie tardive (324–610): prolégomènes à un inventaire," in Haensch, *Selbstdarstellung und Kommunikation*, 97–128 (listed as no. 34 "Acte se référant à une constitution concernant l'Eglise d'Ephèse").

18 Karydis, "The Evolution," 114 interprets the episode involving John of Hephæstropolis I discuss below on p. 187 as evidence for the competition. I thank Ine Jacobs for pointing out this reference to me.

19 For the imperial epigraphy in the Church of the Virgin Mary and bishop Hypatios's agency behind it, see p. 179n15 above.

20 *IEph* IV 1292 and VI 2956, alongside unpublished fragments, see Feissel, "Épigraphie administrative," 132 no. 30.

## Justinianic Ephesus: Doctrinal landscape and contested spaces

When we turn to the text of the inscription – quite apart from its spatial context – competition, tension, and strife make themselves felt in a more pronounced manner. In its opening part, the imperial letter ostensibly singles out “churches of the orthodox faith” (ἐκκλησίαις τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως) as its addressees. The recipients of the letter, and, in practical terms, sixth-century readers of the rescript, would be offered a frame of constructing themselves as imperial subjects compliant with the “orthodoxy” of belief as defined in Justinian’s religious policies.

The phrasing of the “orthodox churches,” it would seem, relies on earlier trends to flag up “orthodox”/catholic credentials of individuals and cultic structures via epigraphy – a pattern traceable both in Asia Minor and beyond.<sup>21</sup> A particularly close *comparandum* comes from fifth-century Miletos, where an inscription marks off premises as well as the actual building of a church “of the orthodox” (τῶν ὀρθοδόξων ἐκκλησία[ς]).<sup>22</sup> In imperial epigraphy, however, this seems to be a significantly less attested development, of which the present instance (alongside a parallel in a Justinianic inscription in Jerusalem) are among the earliest instances.<sup>23</sup>

The reference to “orthodox churches” in a document issued and inscribed around or after AD 533, on the face of it, is straightforward. It ushers in an easily recognizable set of dogmatic premises and ecclesiastic alliances. Exactly from AD 532/533 on, Justinian vigorously implemented a policy of seeking reunion with the large, rich, and strategically significant areas of Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor that had been doctrinally alienated as miaphysite in the aftermath of the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451, and through imperial policies that ensued.<sup>24</sup> This strand in Justinian’s religious agenda would be put into practice through alternating tactics of diplomatic enticement, coercion, and persecution. Immediately relevant here is, quite naturally, the conference with leaders of miaphysites held in Constantinople in AD 532/533, which involved the prospective bishop of Ephesus,

21 No comprehensive study of inscriptions that mark orthodox/catholic churches in Greek has been done so far. For a selection of epigraphic usages of the Greek ὀρθόδοξος, many of them from funerary contexts and almost none from architectural contexts in Asia Minor, see J. Ogereau, “Authority and Identity: Christian Inscriptions from Macedonia,” in *Authority and Identity in Emerging Christianities in Asia Minor and Greece*, ed. C. Breytenbach and J. M. Ogereau (Leiden, 2018), 217–239, at 225.

22 *Inchriften von Milet*, Teil 2, ed. P. Herrmann et al. (Berlin; New York, 1989), nos. 959–960 = Grégoire, *Recueil*, no. 220 ter.

23 A similarly phrased introductory part to a Justinianic edict inscribed and displayed in the cathedral of the Nativity in Jerusalem (AD 533–565) offers a direct parallel to this formula (ταῖς...ἐκκλησίαις ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως), see p178n12.

24 The bibliography is vast; see, e.g., W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement: Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1972), 143–183, chap. 4 “The Henotikon of Zeno, 451–484”; W. H. C. Frend, “Eastern Attitudes to Rome during the Acacian Schism,” *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976): 69–81; D. Deliyannis, “The Roman Liber Pontificalis, Papal Primacy, and the Acacian Schism,” *Viator* 45.2 (2014): 1–16; V. Menze, *Justinian and the Making of the Syrian Orthodox Church* (Oxford, 2008). For the policy of Justin I towards non-Chalcedonians, see A. A. Vasiliev, *Justin the First: An Introduction to the Epoch of Justinian the Great* (Cambridge, MA, 1950), 134–253, chap. 4 “The Religious Policy of Justin.”

Hypatios (AD 519–540/541) as a secretary of the Chalcedonian party.<sup>25</sup> Through these and similarly high-profile tasks, it is apparent that Hypatios won Justinian's profound confidence that may have been part of his religious as well as bureaucratic legacy from Justin I.<sup>26</sup>

The Ephesian epigraphic landscape suggests that Hypatios plunged straight into action in the aftermath of the AD 532/533 developments. It is highly probable, as Feissel has argued, that there is Hypatios's personal agency in choosing, commissioning, and displaying two of Justinian's constitutions addressed to the bishop alongside his own address to the "faithful" of the city inscribed within the crucial space of the Church of the Virgin Mary.<sup>27</sup> The inscriptions would strongly reinforce Hypatios's perceived standing as an appointee of the emperor entrusted to follow through with his policies, and a powerful patron of the city's poor and dispossessed (as his letter on the issue of burials inscribed in the Church of the Virgin Mary indicates).

What, however, would be the intended use of Hypatios's versatile skills as Justinian's trustworthy, evidently skilled, and high-profile administrator in sixth-century Ephesus? What kind of Christian community – or, rather, communities – did the newly appointed bishop come to find there?

The historical record of doctrinal developments in late fifth- to early-sixth-century Ephesus is disconcertingly thin. Yet, what emerges from the patchy insights of dispersed sources (mainly miaphysite writings of the sixth century) is a vision of a city wrought with doctrinal tensions and partisan strife between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian (miaphysite) communities.

These tensions would be endemic to Ephesus as well as fueled from the outside. Although our insight into the life of miaphysite communities of Late Antique Ephesus is limited, one kind of source does shed dramatic light on how the city would become an arena of doctrinal opposition and contestation over ecclesial power. It is the record of non-Chalcedonian bishops of the city and the historical memory of their confrontation with pro-Chalcedonian central power.<sup>28</sup> Leaving aside the earlier bishops like Timothy, a disciple of Paul, whom both parties were eager to claim for themselves, in the post-Chalcedonian fifth century we are faced with a clearly discernible miaphysite episcopal succession. After John (tenure ca. 457), of whom we do not know many details beyond his doc-

25 See S. Brock, "The Conversations with the Syrian Orthodox under Justinian (532)," *OCP* 47.1 (1981): 87–121; Menze, *Justinian*.

26 For Hypatios's career and the exceptional personal trust of Justinian, see now S. Destephen, "La chute d'Hypatios, archevêque d'Éphèse (519–540/541)," *REB* 67 (2009): 131–149 (with further literature); for his theology, see P. J. Alexander, "Hypatios of Ephesus: A Note on Image Worship in the Sixth Century," *HTR* 45.3 (1952): 177–184; S. Mariev, "Hypatios of Ephesus and Ps.-Dionysios Areopagites," *BZ* 107.1 (2014): 113–138.

27 See p179n15.

28 My account below follows E. Honigmann's groundbreaking reconstruction of episcopal succession in Late Antique Ephesus in his *Évêques et évêchés monophysites d'Asie antérieure au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 127, *Subsidia* 2 (Leuven, 1951), 119–122; important also is R. Janin, "Éphèse," in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, vol. 15, ed. R. Aubert and É. van Cauwenbergh (Paris, 1963), col. 554–561, at 557–558.

trinal allegiance,<sup>29</sup> there was Paul (AD 457–476/477), who was deposed by Chalcedonians, and no smaller figure than Timothy Ailouros, the miaphysite patriarch of Alexandria, who took the trouble to go to Ephesus and convene a council to have Paul reinstated in AD 475.<sup>30</sup>

The confrontation became fiercer in the sixth century, and a narrative of persecution is clearly developed in Late Antique miaphysite sources: pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor's *Syriac Church History* (568/569 AD) and, subsequently, in Jacobite writings (primarily the *Chronicles* penned by pseudo-Dionysios of Tel-Mahre's in the late eighth century and Michael the Syrian's in the twelfth century).<sup>31</sup> One of the central figures for the anti-Chalcedonian historical memory in Ephesus in this epoch is probably the bishop Theosebios. He is remembered on par with other outstanding members of miaphysite episcopate and clergy in an episode of the *Chronicle* of pseudo-Dionysios that covers AD 502/5–519, and on a list of miaphysites persecuted in 518/519 when Theosebios was banned as bishop. It is also Theosebios who was at the center of a dramatic episode known from various (pro- and anti-Chalcedonian) sources that involves the bishop and the imperial power. Theosebios was summoned to Constantinople with the demand to receive the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, an act of seeking doctrinal unity that was part of Justin I's attempts to remedy the division engendered by the Akakian Schism and the aftermath of Zeno's *Henotikon*.<sup>32</sup> In practical terms, Theosebios was probably asked to accept or, at least, state his opinion regarding the pope Hormisdas's *libellus* issued in AD 515.<sup>33</sup> A "scandal" ensued, as Theosebios enclosed himself in a church, prayed embracing the altar, and died on the third day.<sup>34</sup> Anti-Chalcedonian bishops continued to be appointed in the later sixth century, an aspect of ecclesial policy that continued to powerfully indicate the constant presence of the miaphysite Alexandria behind Ephesian developments. Famously, John of Ephesus, whom the staunchly miaphysite Jacob of Pesilta (Baradaeus) (ca. 500–578) consecrated as titular bishop of the city, loomed large in Justinian's politics of seeking reunion

29 This John is called a "heretic" (i.e., non-Chalcedonian) in Evagrius Scholastikos's *Ecclesiastical History* 3.6, probably to differentiate from another Chalcedonian John we know in fifth-century Ephesus.

30 Honigmann, *Évêques*, 119.

31 For pseudo-Zachariah, see the English translation, discussion, and commentary in Zacharias of Mytilene, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor: Church and War in Late Antiquity*, ed. and tr. G. Greatrex, R. R. Phenix, and C. B. Horn, *Translated Texts for Historians* 55 (Liverpool, 2011); for pseudo-Dionysios, see Pseudo-Dionysios of Tel-Mahre, *Pseudo-Dionysios of Tel-Mahre, Chronicle (known also as the Chronicle of Zuqnin), Part III*, ed. and tr. W. Witakowski, *Translated Texts for Historians* 22 (Liverpool, 1996). For Michael the Syrian, see Michael I the Syrian, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166–1199)*, 4 vols., ed. and tr. J.-B. Chabot (Paris, 1899–1924); D. Weltecke, *Die "Beschreibung der Zeiten" von Mor Michael dem Grossen (1126–1199): eine Studie zu ihrem historischen und historiographiegeschichtlichen Kontext*, CSCO 594 (Leuven, 2003). For a wider Late Antique Christian tradition and ideology of persecution, see now *Heirs of Roman Persecution. Studies of a Christian and Para-Christian Discourse in Late Antiquity*, ed. É. Fournier and W. Mayer (London; New York, 2020).

32 Vasiliev, *Justin I*, 184.

33 Menze, *Justinian*, 33.

34 *Collectio Avellana* 216 (AD 519). The episode may have taken place while Theosebios was en route to Constantinople, as Honigmann, *Évêques*, 120, suggests after analysis of various evidence.

with the miaphysites, and of enforcing Christian unity against “paganism”, irrespective of John’s doctrinal commitments.<sup>35</sup>

Alongside internal doctrinal tensions, Ephesus was a place where controversial councils were held on a number of important occasions, most notably the ecumenical council of Ephesus (AD 431) and the pro-miaphysite council of AD 449 (branded the “Robber” council in the pro-Chalcedonian historiography, the vitriol of the label suggestive of how much ire it inspired). These momentous convocations brought influential the-orists of the Christian doctrine alongside their followers into the city, and into confrontation with each other. Suffice it to invoke here the tumultuous developments around the council of Ephesus when a rival council was gathered by the anti-Chalcedonian John of Antioch. The Chalcedonian bishop of Ephesus, Memnon, was deposed in its course – an act of partisan strife between doctrinal parties whose leaders, while coming from beyond, powerfully stirred internal unrest in the city and no doubt caused great commotion in its populace.<sup>36</sup>

Ephesus was therefore a city where doctrinal clashes were raging in the second half of the fifth and in the early sixth century (as well as later), with conflicting episcopal ordinations inevitably suggesting conflicting – Chalcedonian and miaphysite – communities (E. Honigmann goes so far as to state that the city was likely dominated by the miaphysite population in the period).<sup>37</sup> This difference in doctrinal allegiances of the urban populace would not only be engendered by the vicissitudes of episcopal succession, when anti- and pro-Chalcedonian bishops took turns holding tenure. As *comparanda* from other major cities in Late Antiquity clearly suggests, rival ordinations of bishops would be rather possible in Ephesus, at least for certain stretches of time, with one bishop representing the pro-Chalcedonian community, the other the miaphysite.<sup>38</sup> This, however, remains a conjecture (although an extremely likely one), as we do not possess direct evidence from Ephesus due to the lamentable state of the surviving historical record. What is certain, however, is that in Ephesus, tensions between pro- and anti-Chalcedonians would be rife in the fifth and sixth centuries, and the city would be a divided space to live. So would

35 For Jacob, see D. D. Bundy, “Jacob Baradaeus: The State of Research, a Review of Sources and a New Approach,” *Muséon* 91 (1978): 45–86. For John of Ephesus, a popular figure in scholarship, see, e.g., S. A. Harvey, *Asceticism and Society in Crisis: John of Ephesus and the Lives of the Eastern Saints* (Berkeley, 1990); C. Shephardson, “Martyrs of Exile: John of Ephesus and Religious Persecution,” in Fournier and Mayer, *Heirs of Roman Persecution*, 277–295.

36 For the episode, as well as for the dramatic broader developments in AD 431, including popular violence, see R. Price, “Politics and Bishops’ Lists at the First Council of Ephesus,” *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 44 (2012): 395–420.

37 Honigmann, *Évêques*, 122.

38 Examples abound, particularly in the instances of major schisms and doctrinal strife, such as the “Arian controversy” (e.g., Damasus and Ursinus in Rome, see p.185 below), the Melitian schism in Egypt (e.g., the Melitian Theonas versus the Alexandrian “catholic” Achilles ca. AD 335, see Epiphanius, *Panarion* 5.11.4–6), or the controversies between homoian and two Nicene communities in fourth-century Antioch that led to parallel ordinations see my discussion below and the bibliography on pp.185–186 below.

also be its central churches of the Virgin Mary and of St. John, frequented by people who would be variously affiliated in terms of their doctrinal adherences.

In a number of recent studies, the analytical lens of contested spaces/places has been elaborated in application to the spatial politics of claiming urban spaces, including sacred structures, in the course of doctrinal conflict in Late Antiquity.<sup>39</sup> Partisan confrontations that were sparked off by schismatic differences or more profound doctrinal watersheds between Christian communities across the Late Antique Mediterranean would often evolve into contestations over where these communities belonged within cityscapes, which parts of it – or none – they could claim for themselves, which churches and martyria they could use for liturgical and devotional celebrations. Controversy over church spaces by conflicting doctrinal or ecclesial parties within the same city are immediately relevant to my discussion here. Gaining the right to make use of central, as well as other, urban churches was at stake for the conflicting communities already in the fourth century AD, and dramatic vicissitudes of the imperial favor towards different sides of doctrinal conflicts and schism were a major contributing factor. The more comprehensively conceived, and wider-known, legislation against (mainly non-Nicene) “heretics” across the empire, such as Theodosios I’s edicts of the 380s and 390s (such as *CTh* 16.5.6, 12, 14), was only one strand in the drawn-out conflicts over Christian communities’ access to church spaces based on their – often perceived – doctrinal allegiances. Part of this trend had been, for example, legislation by the homoian-minded Valentinian and Valens that had discriminated against pro-Nicene communities.<sup>40</sup>

Conflicts over various Christian communities coming into, and out of, possession of ecclesiastical structures are on historical record across the empire, in North Africa, Italy, and Asia Minor. The clash between Ambrose as the leader of pro-Nicene Christians of Milan and the local homoian congregation (“Arians”) over the possession of the Nova/Portiana Basilica in AD 385/386 is well-known.<sup>41</sup> In Carthage, “catholics” (i.e., pro-Nicene and anti-Donatist communities) repossessed Basilica Maiorum/Restituta in AD 390 after a prolonged period of loss of access to it, when Theodosian legislation was enforced by local

39 E.g., N. Andrade, “The Processions of John Chrysostom and the Contested Spaces of Constantinople,” *JChSt* 18.2 (2010): 161–189; or the methodologically sophisticated study of C. Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places: Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy* (Berkeley, 2014), who significantly relies in her interpretation on W. Mayer and P. Allen, *The Churches of Syrian Antioch (300–638 CE)* (Leuven; Paris; Walpole, MA, 2012). For a broader discussion of religious conflicts in Late Antique urban spaces, see, e.g., B. Isele, *Kampf um Kirchen: Religiöse Gewalt, heiliger Raum und christliche Topographie in Alexandria und Konstantinopel (4. Jh.)* (Munich, 2010); *Spätantiker Staat und religiöser Konflikt: Imperiale und lokale Verwaltung und die Gewalt gegen Heiligtümer*, ed. J. Hahn (Berlin; Boston, 2011); *Religious Practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City (4th–7th cent.)*, ed. A. Busine (Leiden, 2015).

40 See, e.g., S. L. Lander, *Ritual Sites and Religious Rivalries in Late Roman North Africa* (Cambridge, 2017), 145–146.

41 The identity of the basilica as well as the dating has been debated, as sources are inconsistent; see, e.g., A. Lenox-Conyngham, “The Topography of the Basilica-Conflict,” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 31.3 (1982): 353–363; M. Colish, “Why the Portiana?: Reflections on the Milanese Basilica Crisis of 386,” *JChSt* 10.3 (2002): 361–372.

administration.<sup>42</sup> In Rome, the conflict that flared between Damasus and Ursicius after AD 366 led to the fractioning of the urban space, and to parties involved in street violence over specific basilicas, such as the Basilica Iulii controlled by pro-Ursinians in AD 368.<sup>43</sup> In Constantinople, the conflict between the “orthodox” Gregory of Nazianzos’s congregation at the Church of St. Anastasia and its “Arian” (homoian) community involved tensions over the use of the church by the two communities.<sup>44</sup> In fourth-century Antioch, sources allow a comparatively detailed reconstruction of the spatial dimension of conflict between a thoroughly fractured Christian populace of the city (with splits not only between homoian and homoian Christians, but within the Nicene party itself).<sup>45</sup> After the period of control over urban churches, including the key sites such as the Great Church or the Palaia, granted under Valentinian and Valens to homoian communities and their bishops, such as Leontios (344–358) and Euzoios (360–376), change came under Theodosios I. Although churches were being repossessed by the Nicenes of the city, internal strife between their two conflicting communities led to the bishop Meletios’s failed attempt to unite them, which resulted in various churches being controlled by various communities. It was only under the bishop Flavian (381–404) that one of the Nicene communities got the upper hand and controlled most of the urban churches. Flavian, alongside his other remarkable measures to shape the religious landscape of Late Antique Antioch in keeping with his doctrinal allegiances, relied on epigraphic celebration of repossession of cultic sites in the interest of one of the city’s religious communities. In the cruciform Kaoussie (Qausiyeh) Church, he had three mosaic inscriptions put up in AD 387 that claimed the structure belonged to his (i.e., newly “orthodox,” pro-Nicene) community by putting his own name onto the lavishly decorated floor.<sup>46</sup>

In this comparative perspective, it becomes quite clear that central episcopal churches in cities, riddled as they were with doctrinal tensions, became foci of contestation between conflicting communities and their leaders. Direct, if limited, insight of doctrinal contestation over churches in Late Antique Ephesus is also available. One piece of evidence comes from a tantalizing if brief account in a letter of the “Nestorian” party preserved in the acts of the council of Ephesus. The pro-Chalcedonian bishop Memnon – to be deposed by miaphysites in the course of the turbulent proceedings – controlled major churches of the city refusing access (ἀγίας ἐκκλησίας ἀποκλείσαντος) to his doctrinal rivals and their supporters.<sup>47</sup> Another episode has immediate chronological and topograph-

42 Lander, *Ritual Sites*, 145–146.

43 See, e.g., M. Sághy, “Scinditur in partes populus: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome,” *EME* 9.3 (2000): 273–287, esp. 279–280.

44 Sokrates, *Church History* 5.7; see also R. Snee, “Gregory Nazianzen’s Anastasia Church: Arianism, the Goths, and Hagiography,” *DOP* 52 (1998): 157–186.

45 As discussed in detail in H. C. Brennecke, *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer: Der Osten bis zum Ende der homöischen Reichskirche* (Tübingen, 1988), 87–157, whose account I follow here.

46 For the building inscriptions of the bishop that style him as “the most holy (ἁγιωτάτου) bishop Flavian,” see Shepardson, *Contested Spaces*, 202; Mayer and Allen, *Churches*, 41–42, nos. 1, 3–4.

47 *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, vol. 1.5.1, ed. E. Schwartz (Berlin; Leipzig, 1927), 14. For Memnon, see

ical relevance to my discussion. In AD 541, John of Hephaestopolis, a miaphysite priest on a mission across the Eastern regions of the empire to enlist clergy into the miaphysite hierarchy, ordained at least seventy priests at the atrium of St. John's.<sup>48</sup> Although found in a partisan account of John of Ephesus, who clearly sought to highlight the influence of the miaphysite party, the narrative does not ring improbable (particularly if we do not make a point of following the numbers, with which John is notoriously liberal). It is significant that the event took place by night, which indicates its secrecy. Apparently, miaphysites were not allowed to enter the premises yet chose to trespass, a strategy John of Hephaestopolis followed on his other missions of ordaining clergy elsewhere. This instance of forced access to sacred spaces invested with local significance shows how high stakes were for all the doctrinal parties of the spatial contestation in Late Antique Ephesus.

The Ephesian marble plaque inscribed with Justinian's letter that addressed its readers and viewers in the Church of St. John emphatically as adherents of the orthodox – imperial – faith, would be an eloquent element of contested ritual space of the church. The meaning of the inscribed text would be constructed on a number of conceptual and spatial levels. First, its phrasing self-consciously operated through the divide between “orthodox” versus “heretical” churches. The inscription construed its readers as Christian communities and individuals who would be compliant with Justinian's policy of a unified, empire-wide, orthodoxy. The litany of the emperor's triumphal titles that is also part of the opening formulas (Alamanicus, Gothicus, Germanicus, Alanicus, Vandalicus, Africus, the glorious conqueror and triumphator) equally conjured up the image of a singular, vigorous imperial power that controlled a unified empire and majestically included Ephesian viewers into its orbit. Strikingly, however, this language of unity would be dramatically clashing with the actual difference of religious commitments of miaphysite versus Chalcedonian communities in a city riddled with doctrinal division. This conflict would be playing out potentially with further drama as the viewership of the inscription in the Church of St. John would almost certainly be shaped by people from the conflicting doctrinal parties. As one of the key sacred sites at Ephesus, St. John's would very probably have attracted both miaphysites and Chalcedonians. It could also be a church on which the two communities and their leaders laid successive claims, particularly as the episcopal see of Ephesus was taken, in a dramatic succession, by pro- and anti-Chalcedonians. As much as the (sub)urban spaces of Late Antique Ephesus on the whole, St. John's was a contested space, and the epigraphic display of Justinian's prescript added to the controversy conceptually, visually, and spatially. It was a material reminder of the contestation over significant spaces in the course of the partisan strife between miaphysites and Chalcedonians, a verbal expression of the emperor's religious policy, and a visual statement of its powerful presence within urban and sacred spaces.

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p184n36 above.

48 John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, 25 (John of Hephaestopolis). Originally noticed in C. Foss, *Ephesus after Antiquity: A Late Antique, Byzantine and Turkish City* (Cambridge, 1979), 88n88, and repeated in Karydis, “The Evolution,” 114. For John of Hephaestopolis, see Harvey, *Asceticism*, 103–106.

## Brokering reconciliation?

Quite apart from the inscription's divisive emphases it can be, and probably was, read in a paradoxically reconciliatory manner, however, as Justinian's policy towards miaphysites famously relied on remarkably conflicting approaches of seeking reconciliation and serving retaliation.<sup>49</sup>

My discussion above of contestation over church spaces by doctrinally opposed communities has primarily been focused on instances of the dramatic vicissitudes of various communities' privilege to claim for themselves a significant church. Did the developments on the ground, however, predominantly involve shifts of the right to use and access sacred premises, or the simultaneous presence of doctrinally different groups?

The complex doctrinal amalgamation of pious congregations in liturgical spaces, although typically glossed over in the strongly partisan accounts from different sides of the conflicts, does surface suggestively in Late Antique miracle accounts, as Phil Booth has recently demonstrated.<sup>50</sup> The Blachernae cult site of the Sts. Sergios and Bakchos in late fifth- to early sixth-century Constantinople, as the two versions of their miracles explicitly indicate, was significantly more fluid in doctrinal terms than Late Antique episcopal sources would typically admit.<sup>51</sup> This division within liturgical spaces and settings was a ground for contestation and negotiation in the writings of authors like John Rufus or Severos of Antioch, who were more closely engaged with the theological difference and its liturgical implications.<sup>52</sup> The incubation shrine was equally attractive to, and accommodating of not only an "Arian" Exakionite but also those doctrinal groups that would brand each other heretics over the legacy of the council of Chalcedon. As the two extant Greek versions of the miracles of Sts. Sergios and Bakchos were apparently produced by a miaphysite and a Chalcedonian community, they offer a doctrinally defined perspective on a number of accounts of miraculous healings highlighting the instances of the presence of "heretics" at the shrine. Tantalizing, however, is the fact that both collections were apparently compiled, and in circulation, at one and the same shrine of Sts. Sergios and Bakchos in the capital, which was therefore a place densely populated, and frequented, by adherents of presumably conflicting cults. In the liturgical space of the healing shrine, however, their presence was far from mutually unacceptable. Rather, it was acknowledged, if grudgingly, by the respective authors – as probably also the intended readers – as a nor-

49 See, e.g., Frend, *The Rise*, 255–295; J. Meyendorff, "Justinian, the Empire and the Church," *DOP* 22 (1968): 43–60; Menze, *Justinian*.

50 Ph. Booth, "Orthodox and Heretic in the Early Byzantine Cult(s) of Saints Cosmas and Damian," in *An Age of Saints? Power, Conflict and Dissent in Early Medieval Christianity*, ed. P. Sarris, M. Dal Santo, and Ph. Booth, Brill's Series on the Early Middle Ages 20 (Leiden, 2011), 114–128.

51 For the theological theorizing of the liturgical divide between Chalcedonians and miaphysites in these and other authors, see Booth, "Orthodox and Heretic," 122 (with further details and bibliography). For a wider analysis of the problems of using sources by partisan bishops, see É. Rebillard, *Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200–450 CE* (Ithaca, 2012).

52 Booth, "Orthodox and Heretic," 122 (with further details and bibliography).

mal aspect of the place's "theologically multivalent" quality (to cite W. Mayer's fortunate wording).<sup>53</sup>

This complex, miaphysite and Chalcedonian, makeup of the pious audiences in the sixth-century Constantinopolitan church, which defied doctrinal borderlines between the two communities as forcibly underlined in contemporary prescriptive episcopal writings, may be offering us a rare insight into how liturgical space would be functioning as a lived space of devotion in Late Antiquity.<sup>54</sup> The doctrinally accommodating healing practices at the shrine of Sts. Sergios and Bakchos also introduce the context of the miaphysite versus Chalcedonian divide that is immediately relevant to my discussion of the Justinianic inscription in Ephesus. The communities of Chalcedonians and miaphysites, therefore, would often find themselves trespassing the doctrinal division line within liturgical spaces, of which the Church of St. John in sixth-century Ephesus was definitely one.

This pattern of religious accommodation achieved, and probably fostered, in liturgical and sacred contexts, was profoundly aligned with Justinian's broader agenda of establishing unity within the increasingly split empire.<sup>55</sup> Alongside Justinian's harsher takes and enactments, the reconciliatory stance was a bulwark of the emperor's religious policy. The imperial agenda of enforcing orthodoxy was couched in the language of doctrinal exclusivism that, paradoxically, held potential for ambiguity – after all, "churches of orthodox faith" was a signification that no doubt all doctrinal communities of Late Antique Ephesus would eagerly embrace when reading Justinian's inscribed letter.

### **Conclusions: Doctrinal agendas, epigraphic agencies**

In this context of conflicting, and conflating, doctrinal allegiances of the religious communities vying for control over ecclesial structures in late antique Ephesus, the dynamics between the local and imperial agency in selecting, inscribing, and displaying the imperial edict within the sacred space of St. John's seem particularly significant. As Justinian was sending out his edict of favors to the Church of St. John, he was simultaneously pressing the point of doctrinal orthodoxy and compliance that tapped into his wider religious policies. The edict, almost certainly itself a response to a local request of the church's clergy, was displayed within the church's premises with a view to boosting its perceived importance within the hierarchy of Ephesus's churches (primarily in competition with the Church of the Virgin Mary). Through the inscription, the clergy (whose doctrinal position we admittedly do not know, and which could be subject to change) would be addressing a mixed, and fluctuant, viewership of miaphysites and

53 W. Mayer, "Antioch and the Intersection between Religious Factionalism, Place and Power," in *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity*, ed. N. Lenski and A. Cain (Aldershot, 2009), 357–367, at 365.

54 For a programmatic discussion of the methodology of "lived religion," see J. Rüpke, "Lived Ancient Religion: Questioning Cults and Polis Religion," *Mythos* 5 (2011): 191–206.

55 For a recapitulation on the important topic, see Booth, "Orthodox and Heretic," 124–128; for sixth-century politics of inclusion towards non-Nicene Goths, see G. Greatrex, "Justin I and the Arians," *StP* 34 (2001): 72–81; Mayer, "Antioch," provides relevant regional examples.

Chalcedonians. In bringing home the message of St. John's significance within the sacred landscape of Ephesus, the inscription framed the imperial message of doctrinal exclusivity in ways that could be contextually different, adapting to doctrinally different viewers. Justinian's inscribed edict therefore was involved in a complex matrix of messages, agencies, viewers' perspectives, commitments, and spatial conflicts, of which, once inscribed, installed, and read, it instantaneously became part.