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Neighbors of Christ: Saints and their *Martyria* in Constantinople and Jerusalem

Introduction

In the late fifth century, Matrona, a noblewoman from Perge in Pamphylia, was facing a crisis. Married to a husband she did not like, she left for Constantinople in order to conduct a saintly life of praying and fasting, day and night. Her husband Domitianus was deeply angered, and even more so when Matrona decided to disguise herself as a eunuch and enter the monastery of Bassianus.¹ But she was soon discovered and asked to leave. Matrona left once more (and once more in drag) this time for Jerusalem² – her husband as ever in hot pursuit. Sending him on the wrong track south to Mount Sinai, she settled in a pagan temple near Beirut, preferring the presence of ghastly demons over that of her lawfully wedded husband. Once she succeeded in driving out all the evil spirits, however, Matrona longed for nothing more than to return to Constantinople to find Bassianus, her spiritual advisor, even though she knew that her husband Domitianus would probably be in the city as well. Pondering over suitable alternative locations to go, Matrona fell asleep. In a dream, three armed men appeared to her, competing with each other as to who would be chosen to take her for a wife. Matrona refused, for God was by now her only bridegroom, and, according to her sixth-century *Vita*, the whole matter appeared to her to be very improper. Nevertheless, she asked the three knights for their names. It turned out the oldest was called Alexander, another Antiochus, and the youngest Constantine. At the end, the men put an end to their dispute by casting lots. It fell to the youngest, Constantine.³ When Matrona woke up, she perceived what the revelation of the vision meant; she gave up going to Alexandria or Antioch, and left for Constantinople, where she established a monastery.⁴ Years later Matrona died in the odor of sanctity *and* as a legal citizen of Constantinople,⁵ a city which had gladly ac-

¹ Cf. *Vit. Matr.* 4, cf. Patlagean 1976, 612–615.

² Cf. *Vit. Matr.* 13–14. The *Vita* mentions, among other churches, Justinian's *Nea* which provides a *terminus post quem* of 543.

³ Cf. *Vit. Matr.* 25.

⁴ *Vit. Matr.* 36. The monastery was located within the Theodosian land walls in a place called Severiana and was completed in 413. The name may derive from Severus, a patron of Bassianus, cf. Berger 1988, 526.

⁵ *Vit. Matr.* 36: νόμιμος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως οικήτωρ γενομένη. The *Vita* suggests that the possession of land in Constantinople made Matrona a lawful resident of the city.

cepted her in the pantheon of living holy men and women, and venerated her as a saint soon after her demise.

The *Jacobite Synaxarion* (Codex Parisinus 4869) records an originally Coptic legend transmitted in Arabic about a woman called Sophia living in Constantinople at the time of the Emperor Arcadius and John Chrysostom, who was her alleged spiritual advisor. Even though the manuscript witness is late, Michel van Esbroeck proposed that the legend itself dates to the late fifth century. Sophia bore three sons, but, after the death of her parents and husband, sought counsel from Chrysostom as she did not want to remarry and was at the same time afraid to join a monastery fearing the disapproval of her children. Distraught, Sophia lay prostrate before a large cross, and, like Matrona, eventually fell asleep. In her dream it was the Virgin Mary who appeared to her and said that if Sophia wanted to please God, he would not call her in this city. She, the Virgin, would have Sophia speak to her son. When Sophia woke up, she discovered that she had been transferred to Jerusalem.⁶

Both female figures, legendary as they may be, are remarkable. Matrona stands out because she is caught in a bigamous love affair – one that still does not leave enough room for her husband. She is obviously enamored with the heavenly bridegroom, but at the same time she is deeply in love with the city of Constantinople. This city, however, is not fit to house her alleged contemporary, Sophia, who is transferred in a cloud to Jerusalem. The Holy City is, according to the story's subtext, a place much more suitable to house Sophia, the Holy Wisdom, within its walls. It is remarkable that in the Matrona legend Jerusalem does not qualify as a destination for her. In Sophia's case, however, Jerusalem is the *only* option during her lifetime. However, after her death, Sophia, Wisdom, returns to Constantinople, which, as I will show, plays an important part in the logic of the narrative.

How can these two legends about holy women help us to understand the role that saints – living as well as deceased – played in the two cities? The following pages aim to demonstrate how during the assumed lifetime of Matrona and Sophia, i.e., in the second half of the fifth century, a fundamental change occurred in Jerusalem concerning the relationship between saints and city – and how this change was directly influenced by contemporary developments in Constantinople.

Holy Women between Constantinople and Jerusalem

At the end of the fourth century, the pilgrim Egeria, a woman much more 'real' than Matrona and Sophia, but nevertheless quite elusive considering the numerous questions her pilgrim account leaves us with, was travelling to the Holy Land. Returning from an excursion into the Judean desert, she passed through a remote desert valley where she discovered a hermit's cell. This is how she presents her quest for more in-

⁶ Cf. van Esbroeck 2001, 132–133.

formation: “You know how inquisitive I am, and I asked what there was about this valley to make this holy monk build his cell there. I knew there must be some special reason.”⁷ The pilgrim learned that this was the valley of Kerith where the prophet Elijah was once fed by the ravens.⁸ She had good reasons to ask, for she was assuming that there could not be a place, which was so clearly marked and honored by a hermitage, without carrying any deeper religious meaning. Following Egeria’s footsteps, it becomes clear that every holy place, even the fairly minor ones, were kept in the collective memory of the monks and pilgrims and commemorated by a landmark. Her mind-set was typical of the antique attitude towards the *lieux de mémoire* of the Graeco-Roman world; what Lucan had remarked in a different context and at a different time, *nullum est sine nomine saxum*⁹ (there is no stone which does not carry a name, i.e., its specific history), was also true for the late antique Holy Land. Egeria’s account also makes it clear that ‘stones’ which were *not* connected to Biblical history (and they were not numerous to begin with) did not incite much interest in late antique pilgrims. By paying reverence to the holy places the Biblical narrative could be illustrated and verified. The past merged into the believers’ individual presence when they directly experienced the physical places that had once been in contact with Old Testament prophets or with the Messiah.¹⁰ Jews and Christians alike interpreted Psalm 137 as an admonition to keep up the importance of the Holy Land’s *omphalos*, not only as a metaphor but as a physical place: “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem ...”.¹¹

The city was surrounded by a multitude of holy places and it emerged as the epicenter of Christian yearning not least because collective memory kept alive their precise and genuine location.¹² Whether this historic exactness was (as in some, or perhaps even many cases) a recent invention, was not questioned by late antique pilgrims and was unimportant for them, just as it shall not concern us here in this study. The sources speak of almost archaeological endeavors, not only the zealous

7 *Itin. Eg.* 16,3: *Tunc ego, ut sum satis curiosa, requirere cepi, quae esset haec uallis ubi sanctus, monachus nunc, monasterium sibi fecisset; non enim putabam hoc sine causa esse* (trans. Wilkinson 1999, 128).

8 Egeria rendered the name of the brook to ‘Corra’ in Latin; cf. 1 Kings 17:3–6.

9 Lucan *Phars.* 9,973 – referring to the plains of the Scamander and the fallen city of Troy.

10 Cf. Halbwachs 2008, 1.

11 Cf. Assmann 2009, 21, see especially Ps 137:5–6: “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither! Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.”

12 Cf. Stroumsa 1989, 17. The image of Jerusalem as the navel of the world, however, can be traced back to no earlier than the Hasmonean revolt of the second century BC. The reading of the reference in Ezekiel (9:37), *tabbur ha-‘arets*, generally translated as ‘navel of the world,’ is doubtful as the verbal root *t-b-r* is not attested in early Semitic, and its translation as ‘navel’ postdates the Septuagint, cf. Alexander 1999, 104–110. Rabbinic sources from Late Antiquity often mention Jerusalem as an *omphalos*. The sixth-century Madaba mosaic map presents – in opposition to the real topography – the Church of the Holy Sepulcher at the very center of the city – clearly as the *omphalos* of Christianity.

late antique ‘archaeologists’ Macarius and Helena in Jerusalem¹³ – one can also find the same mind-set when Egeria tried to link a deserted Bedouin campsite to a resting place of the Israelites, or when Jerome’s companion Paula identified the ruins of Biblical Dor,¹⁴ or, back in the capital, where the princess Pulcheria stood at the edge of a Constantinopolitan excavation trench unearthing the relics of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste.¹⁵

In Palestine, the discovery of more and more holy places¹⁶ is directly connected with the desire of more and more pilgrims who wanted to visit them and the attitudes of the Church of Jerusalem which gradually understood the symbolic capital of its sacred space, promoted it, and sometimes had to create it.¹⁷ Despite the constant power struggle between the metropolis in Caesarea and the Bishopric of Jerusalem, no major competition between the different episcopal sees regarding rights of ownership of the various holy sites is recorded. In a lengthy letter to the provincials of the East,¹⁸ Constantine had stated that the holy places belonged to the churches.¹⁹ During the reign of Theodosius I, the administration of such sites became a more important economic factor as they enjoyed tax exemptions after a law dated to 381,²⁰ and with its elevation to a Patriarchate at the Council of Chalcedon, Jerusalem eventually presided over the three Palestinian provinces which contained most of the holy places.²¹

13 On the discovery of the Tomb of Christ, cf. Hunt 1997.

14 Cf. Hier. *Ep.* 108,8,2.

15 Sozom. *HE* 9,2, cf. also Bowes 2008, 1.

16 This can be illustrated by comparing the geographical focus of different pilgrim accounts: whereas the pilgrim of Bordeaux did not visit the holy places around Mt Sinai, Egeria’s account gives an evocative description. Egypt became a goal of Christian pilgrimage only in the late fourth century, Egeria, Melania the Elder, Jerome and Paula being among its first visitors. The Galilee region became integrated in the typical pilgrimage routes even later, the pilgrim of Piacenza (c. 570) being one of the first authors who wrote about important places such as Nazareth (*Itin. Plac.* 4–7, esp. 5).

17 Cf. Hunt 1997 (for the growing understanding of holy places discovered by Macarius of Jerusalem), Drijvers 2004 (for Cyril of Jerusalem and the promotion of holy space), and Wilkinson 2002, 61 (for the house of Pilate, St Sophia, and the *lithostroton* as an example for a deliberate change of location of a holy site).

18 Cf. Euseb. *VC* 2,24–42. For a commentary to the *Letter to the East*, its authenticity, composition, and distribution, cf. Cameron/Hall 1999, 239–242.

19 Euseb. *VC* 2,40: Καὶ μὴν καὶ τοὺς τόπους αὐτοὺς [...] τίς ἂν ἀμφιβάλοι μὴ οὐχὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις προσήκειν, ἢ οὐχὶ καὶ προστάξειεν ἅν.

20 *Cod. Theod.* 16,2,26: *Universos, quos constiterit custodes ecclesiarum esse vel sanctorum locorum ac religiosi obsequiis deservire, nullius adtemptationis molestiam sustinere decernimus [...].*

21 Cf. Price/Gaddis 2005b, 15, and Wilkinson 2002, 59; Phoenicia and Arabia were administered from Antioch.

A City of Saints

Before casting a closer look at the holy sites in Jerusalem it is necessary to return to Constantinople and to briefly summarize the evidence on the ground. Even though the physical remains of many Constantinopolitan churches have vanished beneath the layout of the modern city, and even though the sources are often much later and interwoven with legends, enough exists to reconstruct the ecclesiastical landscape in Constantine's new capital.²² For the reign of Theodosius II the *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae*²³ mentions fourteen churches,²⁴ of which twelve are listed in the description of the city's *regiones*. For some of these churches, the *Notitia* does not give specific names.²⁵ Then there was the church named St Sophia²⁶, and two churches dedicated to St Irene.²⁷ Both Sophia and Irene, of course, did *not* commemorate respective female saints. The dedication to the Holy Wisdom, the incarnated *logos*, may partly be due to the lack of local saints in fourth-century Constantinople, but in general patron saints were rather unusual except for places which actually contained relics or *martyria*. For the fourth-century inhabitants of Constantinople, however, it was clear that Sophia and Irene were not persons.²⁸

Turning back to the *Notitia* (and leaving the church of Anastasia²⁹ aside for a moment), four churches commemorated specific saints: Menas,³⁰ Paul,³¹ Acacius (a martyr from Nicomedia)³² and the originally Constantinian Church of the Holy Apostles,³³

²² Cf. Bowes 2008, 103.

²³ The *Notitia* dates to approximately AD 447–450, cf. Bury 1916, 442–443, and Havaux 2017, 6–9, arguing for an earlier dating to AD 425–427.

²⁴ *NUC* 242.

²⁵ In the *Caenopolis* (*NUC* 237), in the *Homonea* (237), in the thirteenth *regio* (Sycena) (240), and in the fourteenth *regio* (241).

²⁶ *NUC* 231.

²⁷ *NUC* 231 and, in *regio* 7, 235.

²⁸ Cf. Proverbs 8:22–25. Cf. Grégoire/Kugener 1930, 16 with n. 1, for a similar case of the church of St Irene in Gaza: “Les premières églises chrétiennes portèrent, comme les temples, les édifices et autres locaux publics de l’époque hellénistique, des inscriptions ou enseignes. Le sens de celles-ci devait être à la fois symbolique et profane. Les noms de Σοφία, Ειρήνη, et même Μαρία se prêtaient parfaitement à cet usage. Plus tard on crut que les églises portant ces ‘vocables’ étaient consacrées à ‘sainte Sophie’ ou à ‘sainte Irène’.”

²⁹ *NUC* 235.

³⁰ *NUC* 233.

³¹ *NUC* 235. The church of St Paul commemorated Bishop Paul of Constantinople (AD 342–350), whose remains were buried there c. 381, cf. Woods 2001, 207. Sozomen (*HE* 7,10) and Socrates Scholasticus (*HE* 5,9) reveal, however, that by the mid-fifth century the population of Constantinople was convinced that the church in fact contained the relics of Paul the Apostle.

³² *NUC* 237. The church may date to the time of Constantine, cf. Mango 1986, 34. Even though the existence of a church at the time of Constantine's death has been called into question, there seem to be no doubt of the existence of a church (and a cult) of St Acacius at the place of the church by the time of John Chrysostom's episcopate (AD 398–404) who held two sermons in the church,

containing the relics of Luke and Andrew (transferred there in 357 or in 360³⁴) as well as Timothy.³⁵ Constantine also perhaps commissioned the reconstruction of the earlier church of Irene, the enlargement of the shrine to Acacius, and the new foundation to Mocius outside the city walls, who was a Constantinopolitan martyr from the time of the Diocletianic persecutions.³⁶ However, the evidence for this is all mid-fifth century or later, “well after”, as Kim Bowes remarks, “the Constantinian myth-machine was set into motion.”³⁷ Constantinopolitan bishops were rather reluctant builders: the church dedicated to Bishop Paul, mentioned in the *Notitia*, is said to have been founded by Macedonius, while Sozomen mentions Chrysostom dedicating a church to two of Bishop Paul’s secretaries.³⁸ Gregory Nazianzen’s short-lived episcopate saw the foundation of his ‘alternative see,’ the house-church Anastasia, named in reference to the hoped-for resurrection of a true, pro-Nicean faith.³⁹ When St Marcianus (d. 471) came to Constantinople, he re-built the Anastasia – this time not identifying the *patrocinium* with an ideological concept, but with a saint, Anastasia, whose relics were brought into the church in a public procession.⁴⁰

The fifth century witnessed an enormous rise in the number of religious buildings, many of them commissioned by members of the court: Arcadia, the sister of Theodosius II, ordered the construction of a church (and monastery) dedicated to Andrew, called ‘by-the-judgment’ (ἐν τῇ Κρίσει).⁴¹ Her sister Pulcheria added a church to Lawrence in the 420s;⁴² a church to Euphemia was located at the former palace of the eunuch Antiochus in the area between the hippodrome, the *Mese*, and the Binbirdirek Cistern, another one for the same saint was begun by Licinia Eudoxia, the daughter of Theodosius.⁴³ The veneration of Stephen in Constantinople

cf. Woods 2001, 203–204. He proposes that the Church of St Acacius was in fact a church built by Acacius, a member of the Constantinian entourage who demolished the pagan sanctuary at Mamre and supervised the building of the new Constantinian church there, cf. Euseb. *VC* 3,52.

³³ *NUC* 238. On Constantine’s church building activities, cf. Marinis 2022, 181.

³⁴ Cf. Woods 1991, 286–292.

³⁵ Cf. Woods 1991, 290.

³⁶ Cf. Woods 2001, 204, and Johnson 2022, 214.

³⁷ Cf. Bowes 2008, 107.

³⁸ Cf. Bowes 2008, 107. The church of Paul is somewhat confusing as Paul was Macedonius’ great enemy and the church was eventually dedicated to the former by Theodosius as a means of proclaiming a final pro-Nicean victory. Furthermore, although Paul is said to have built it, he was also proclaimed bishop there and thus the construction may date to before his first elevation in 338. On the church of the *Notarii*: Sozom. *HE* 4,3 with Janin 1953, 391–392.

³⁹ Cf. Snee 1998, 158–160, and Bowes 2008, p. 117 with n. 373.

⁴⁰ Cf. Saradi 1995, 97 with n. 45.

⁴¹ Cf. Janin 1953, 34.

⁴² Marcellinus Comes *Chron.* a.c. 439, a.c. 453, cf. also Janin 1953, 312–315. The basilica of St Lawrence built by the empress Pulcheria and completed in 453 stood close to the Golden Horn, near modern Ayakapı (according to Janin 1953, 303–4) or farther to the northwest, at modern Balat (according to Berger 1988, 530). It must have been fairly close to Matrona’s nunnery, cf. *Vit. Matr.* 38.

⁴³ Cf. Neumann/Belting 1966, 107.

has a complex and sometimes contradictory literary tradition. It appears that the first church was built by the praetorian prefect Aurelianus. However, he could not procure Stephen's relics, so he had to make do with the body of a contemporary living holy man, the monk Isaac. It appears, as suggested by Paul Magdalino, that the empress Eudocia had intended to place the relics of Stephen which she brought from Palestine in her new palace-church in the tenth region, but these relics seem to have wound up in Pulcheria's church to Lawrence.⁴⁴ The court advisor Paulinus is attested as the founder of the monastery of SS Cosmas and Damianus in AD 439 which was later renovated by Justinian.⁴⁵ In 462, the consul Studios, a Roman patrician who had settled in Constantinople, built a church consecrated to John the Baptist. Literary sources from the same century mention churches to Thomas⁴⁶ and Theodore.⁴⁷ A certain Baras who came from Egypt to Constantinople during the reign of Zeno (474–491 AD) is said to have founded another monastery of John the Baptist. The aristocrat Eusebia had constructed a *martyrion* outside the city where she placed her own coffin as well as the relics of the Forty Martyrs which were later re-discovered by Pulcheria. A family friend of Eusebia's, the praetorian prefect Caesarius, added a church to Thyrsus, another Asia Minor martyr. In AD 394 his predecessor as prefect, Rufinus, had completed a similar project on his estate in Chalcedon with a *martyrion* for Peter and Paul whose relics he had obtained during a trip to Rome.⁴⁸ A poem of 76 hexameter lines which is preserved in the *Palatine Anthology* and on the capitals of the later church mentions that it was the empress Eudocia who founded a church to Polyeuctus,⁴⁹ a military saint martyred at Melitene in the mid-third century. It was enlarged and splendidly rebuilt by Anicia Juliana, perhaps in order to stress her family links with Eudocia.⁵⁰ This sixth-century 'Temple of Byzantium' followed the Old Testament descriptions of the measurements of the Temple.⁵¹ To this evidence we can add the shrines for deceased Constantinopolitan holy men: starting with a Theodosian monastery to Dios, a monk from Syria, moreover the rivalry between Saturninus and Victor for housing the monk Isaac, who died in 406,⁵² and also the saint-like veneration

⁴⁴ Cf. here below as well as Bowes 2008, 112, and Magdalino 2001, 58–59 and 61–64.

⁴⁵ *Proc. Aed.* 1,6.

⁴⁶ *Vit. Matr.* 29.

⁴⁷ *Vit. Matr.* 33. The church was situated on the Mese in the vicinity of the church of St Sophia and was rebuilt by Sphoracius following a fire, perhaps after 465, cf. Mango 1993b, 25–28.

⁴⁸ Cf. Bowes 2008, 111–112.

⁴⁹ For the archaeological remains of the church near the Şehzade Camii in Istanbul's Saraçhane quarter, cf. Mango/Ševčenko 1961, 243–247.

⁵⁰ Cf. Harrison 1989, 33. The poem states that Eudocia did not build the church as large not because of any restraint or lack of resources, but because she had a divine premonition that her family and descendants would have the knowledge and resources to provide grander embellishment.

⁵¹ Cf. 1 Kings 6–7, 2 Chron 3–4, as well as Ezekiel's heavenly temple (40–43), cf. Harrison 1989, 137–139. Cf. also Nadine Viermann's contribution in this volume.

⁵² Saradi 1995, 88–90, Janin 1953, 84, and Krausmüller 2022, 200.

of Isaac's successor Dalmatius,⁵³ and – similarly – the veneration for Alexander Acoemetus⁵⁴ and his successor Marcellus. In summary, until the end of the fifth century, one can trace churches and *martyria* for at least 27 saints in Constantinople (plus the Forty Martyrs), with two places for Andrew, John the Baptist, and Euphemia, and two, perhaps three, for Stephen. Additionally, one could mention the by-then personified patrons Anastasia, Irene, and Sophia.⁵⁵ Finally, for the sixth century, further churches to Diomedes, Peter and Paul, and Sergius and Bacchus would have supplemented the ecclesiastical landscape of Constantinople. What is remarkable is the city's attempt to add local saints to the urban pantheon. The martyrs Aca-cius, Mocius, and, although of a different time, Bishop Paul were among them – but also living holy men and women like Matrona who were accepted with open arms and after their deaths venerated in the city's collective memory: "[T]he new capital, so conscious of acquiring the mark of nobility, achieves a nobility worthy of its universal prestige."⁵⁶

A City of Christ

At the end of the fourth century, Egeria eagerly reported on *lieux de mémoire* in the Holy Land. A list derived from her account offers a slightly different picture to that we have just encountered in Constantinople, as it features numerous Old Testament figures who had lived or died there. All in all, she mentions a number of *loca sancta* that located precisely the assumed dwelling-places of almost thirty saintly figures.⁵⁷ When it comes to Jerusalem, however, Egeria's focus narrowed. Every single place she mentioned, was related to Christ alone.

The first account which informs us about the Christian topography of Jerusalem, the pilgrim of Bordeaux, did still record two categories of sights: firstly, a large corpus of buildings and landmarks encountered on or in close vicinity to the Temple Mount, and secondly those which are related to Christian salvation history. From his itinerary it becomes clear that the new Christian Jerusalem was contrasted to the Jerusalem of old – with King Solomon functioning as some sort of intermediary. However, the Bordeaux Pilgrim is our sole witness to buildings or objects on the Tem-

⁵³ On the so-called monastery of Dalmatius, cf. Saradi 1995, 90–91.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Vit. Alex. Acoi.* 43 with Caner 2002, 274.

⁵⁵ To put it in Michel van Esbroeck's words: "[w]hile Constantine had simply built the church of Peace, the name became Saint Irene." Cf. van Esbroeck 2001, 139, see also Socr. *HE* 1,16.

⁵⁶ Van Esbroeck 2001, 135.

⁵⁷ The account mentions sites connected with Moses (*Itin. Eg.* 2,1), Elijah (4,2), Aaron (4,4), Joshua (5,4), Joseph (7,7,9), Reuben, Gad and Manasseh (10,4), Balak the son of Beor (12,10; it should be "son of Zippor", cf. Wilkinson 1999, 124 with n. 2), Balaam the Seer (12,2), Job (13,1), Melchizedek (13,4), Abraham (14,2), John the Baptist (15,1), Thomas (17,1), King Abgar and his servant Ananias (17,1), Rebecca and Eleazar (20,4), Helpidius (20,5), Terah, Sarah and Lot (20,9), Nahor and Bethuel (20,10), Rachel (20,11), Jacob (21,1), and Laban (21,4).

ple Mount, a space that becomes suspiciously empty within a very short time, certainly by Egeria's visit in AD 381–384. If we combine the fourth century accounts, i.e. the pilgrim of Bordeaux, Egeria's description of the Jerusalemite liturgy, and the Armenian lectionary, we get a picture of the city's religious topography.

The Bordeaux pilgrim mentioned various sets of pools, e.g. at Bethesda and at Siloah, which will be examined below – even though they did not carry any deeper meaning in his account. Going south he entered the Mt Sion area where Egeria in her day would see the Church of Holy Sion. The Bordeaux Pilgrim only mentioned the house of Caiaphas with the column of flagellation in it – there was no church yet at this spot. He passed by the house of Pilate, i.e. the city's *praetorium*, also only a 'place' in communal memory, not yet a church. His next sight was the new *basilica* built by Constantine and the rock of Golgotha. On the ascent of the Mount of Olives, Egeria noted a church.⁵⁸ Both of our pilgrims noted the Constantinian church on top of the mountain, the so-called Eleona commemorating the Ascension; a localization, however, which had yet to be defined as Egeria mentions both the church and additionally the actual place where the Lord ascended to Heaven, the so-called *Imbomon* – which very shortly after Egeria's visit would be transformed into a church through the patronage of the Roman matron Poemenia. Finally, both pilgrims mentioned Bethany with the vault in which Lazarus was laid – also no church building yet in their times, but soon to come, commemorating the meeting between Christ and the sisters Martha and Mary.⁵⁹

If one contrasts the evidence of the fourth century with that of the early and mid-sixth century (namely the pilgrim accounts of Theodosius and the so-called Piacenza Pilgrim, dating to before 518 and c. 570 respectively), several changes can be noticed. The house of Caiaphas was now called the Church of St Peter⁶⁰ and the house of Pilate was by now a Church of St Sophia, the Holy Wisdom which inspired Christ's response to Pilate.⁶¹ The column of flagellation, once in the house of Caiaphas, had moved into the Church of Holy Sion,⁶² a place which seems to have functioned to a certain extent as a storeroom for sacred objects: the 'cup of the Apostles' was kept there as were the stones with which Stephen was martyred.⁶³ The pool of Siloah in the 570s had next to it a church commemorating the miracle of Jesus healing the blind man.⁶⁴ The twin pools of Bethesda were covered by a Church of Mary.⁶⁵ Accord-

⁵⁸ *Itin. Eg.* 36,1–2.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Itin. Eg.* 25,11; 29,3–6, Bieberstein/Bloedhorn 1994, I, 156.

⁶⁰ Theodosius 7b.

⁶¹ Theodosius 7b and *Itin. Plac.* 23.

⁶² Theodosius 7b and *Itin. Plac.* 22. Egeria saw the column of the flagellation of Christ in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Piacenza Pilgrim would even encounter a second column outside the city, cf. *Itin. Plac.* 25.

⁶³ *Itin. Plac.* 22.

⁶⁴ *Itin. Plac.* 24, cf. John 9.

⁶⁵ Theodosius 8b as well as *Itin. Plac.* 27.

ing to the Gospel of John, this was the place of Christ's healing of the paralytic, and the place was commemorated as such during the fifth century. The association with the spot as the birthplace of the Virgin (hence today's name of the church, St Anne's, the mother of Mary) must have been fairly recent at the time when Theodosius was writing.

In addition to the few actual churches of the fourth century, many of the previous holy places (the houses of Caiaphas and Pilate, the two pools) were now transformed into churches. Despite this building activity, one thing remained largely unchanged: all these churches were still closely connected to the Gospel story.⁶⁶ The importance of St Peter and St Sophia, for example, did not spring from their respective names, but from the fact that they commemorated the places of Christ's trial, just as the churches erected over the two pools testified to the exact place where the Lord had worked miracles. Unlike the evidence in other parts of the late Roman Empire, particularly Constantinople, Jerusalem did not contain any significant number of sanctuaries dedicated to Christian saints.

Introducing the Cult of Saints to the Holy City

None of this would be particularly remarkable if there had not also been a fifth-century church of St Stephen, even though it is the only 'non-Jesus-related' church that is recorded in the sources.⁶⁷ This building was connected to Eudocia, the wife of Theodosius II, who had left the court for Jerusalem once on a pilgrimage in 438–439, and then, for good, in 442/443. The church was located outside the northern city walls, and its foundation was clearly connected with Eudocia's first stay in the city and her successful *translatio* of some of the saint's relics to Constantinople.⁶⁸ The consecration of the large basilica was a major event in Jerusalem⁶⁹ and Eudocia had invited Cyril of Alexandria to conduct the service.⁷⁰ We can be certain that the empress knew about the considerable popularity of the Protomartyr throughout the whole

⁶⁶ A letter attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple in AD 363, discovered, edited and translated by Sebastian Brock, mentions a 'Church of the Confessors' (chap. 6) unique to this letter. Even if the letter is genuine (Brock assumes that it was written at the beginning of the fifth century by an author who had certain knowledge of both the historical episode and the topography of Jerusalem), the best explanation of the mention of this church seems to follow Brock in interpreting it as a mistranslation, so that underlying the Syriac was the Greek *μαρτύριον*, i.e. the term by which the Constantinian basilica of the Holy Sepulcher was generally known in these times, cf. Brock 1977, 277.

⁶⁷ Cf. also Klein 2019, 106–114.

⁶⁸ Cf. below; on the consecration, cf. John Rufus *Vit. Petr. Hib.* 49 with Clark 1982, 141–156, and Leyerle 2002, 350.

⁶⁹ For the construction of the church, cf. Socr. *HE* 7,47,3 and Evagr. *HE* 1,22.

⁷⁰ Cf. Clark 1982, 151, Horn 2006, 75, and Bitton-Ashkelony/Kofsky 2006, 49–50.

Empire,⁷¹ and it is likely that she recognized that a space dedicated exclusively to the saint was still missing within the sacred topography of Jerusalem. After all, the martyr's bones had been discovered already in 415⁷² and were still being temporarily stored in the Holy Sion, a church actually commemorating the events of Pentecost.⁷³

It seems that in Jerusalem the veneration of Christ was – for understandable reasons – so important and dominant that the commemoration of saints and martyrs was less distinctive than in other cities of the early Byzantine Empire. And indeed, the sacred topography for such places of remembrance remained extraordinarily vague. Besides Eudocia's foundation, we can only find a very small number of sacred places which were not connected directly to the life and passion of Christ: Palladius of Helenopolis and Rufinus of Aquileia mention that a shrine on the eastern Mount of Olives was dedicated to John the Baptist, although the information we possess is far too limited to be able to locate it.⁷⁴ Unlike in other cities, most of the early monasteries in Jerusalem did not carry the name of a specific saint. Eudocia built a hospice with a chapel dedicated to St George; this again formed an exception.⁷⁵ It is interesting to note that a fifth-century Coptic encomium on St George is attributed to a certain Theodosius, Bishop of Jerusalem. The text is generally thought to be authentic,⁷⁶

71 Stephen's death was interpreted as an echo of the Crucifixion. Therefore, the church of Stephen donated by Eudocia can be interpreted as resembling the revelation of the True Cross by Helena and the erection of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher by Constantine. Cf. Clark 1982, 142, as well as Hunt 1982, 212 and 220. Several other church foundations in honor of St Stephen allegedly made by Eudocia belong to the realm of myth. This is particularly true for those church foundations associated with depositions of St Stephen's foot (on this cf. the erroneous remarks in Holum 1982, 195, and Hunt 1982, 233), for example, in Safranbolu in Paphlagonia. A dedicatory inscription confirming the empress' involvement was first mentioned by Doublet 1889, 293–299, and has since been assumed to be genuine by Elizabeth Clark, Kenneth Holum and especially Enrico Livrea, who dedicated an entire article to it, trying to justify its linguistic oddities (cf. Livrea 1996). Only Mango 2004, 24 with nn. 14–16, and *passim*, observed that the inscription is a nineteenth century forgery.

72 For the case of Stephen, it is noteworthy that the discovery of the relics of James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem, in 351 on the Mount of Olives, apparently had no impact on the localization of the Pentecost events at Mount Sion (assumed to be James' house). The saint's relics were collected and briefly placed in the Church of Holy Sion. Apparently, the obsession with finding the exact position of holy places only concerned Christ and not saints and martyrs, as we also shall see in the case of Stephen; cf. esp. Rubin 1999, 154–155, and Abel 1919, 480–499.

73 Among the relics and holy objects presented to the Piacenza pilgrim in the Church of Holy Sion, there was also a reliquary of the head of the martyr Theodota, cf. *Itin. Plac.* 22. For the discovery of St Stephen's relics, see Hunt 2001, 171.

74 Cf. Bieberstein/Bloedhorn 1994, III, 416.

75 Cf. Cyr. Scyth. *Vit. Ioann.* 204,9 and Bieberstein/Bloedhorn 1994, II, 51–52. Blake Leyerle suggested that Eudocia's foundation of St Stephen also included an important hospital; cf. Leyerle 2002, 360 and 369–372.

76 The first account of George's martyrdom is said to have been written in Greek by Pasicrates, allegedly the servant of the saint, a source which existed in a Syriac translation in the seventh century which shows close resemblances to an early-fifth century Coptic version preserved in the Bodleian and edited and translated by E.A. Wallis Budge in 1888; cf. Budge 1888, xxxi. This collection of

and its author has thus to be identified with the anti-Chalcedonian monk-made-patriarch of 452–453, i.e. during the time Eudocia resided in the city. If the text is indeed genuine, one may suggest a certain mutual influence between the literary preoccupation with George and the attribution of Eudocia's hospice, as the empress maintained close contact with the anti-Chalcedonian party while living in Jerusalem.⁷⁷

The remaining evidence for the veneration of saints in Jerusalem is meager. A chapel dedicated to the military saint Menas was founded by a Roman noblewoman, Bassa.⁷⁸ From Cyril of Scythopolis' description it becomes clear that this chapel was built in imitation of Eudocia's church of St Stephen – perhaps directly influenced by the empress's foundation. The monk Theognius, who came to Jerusalem in AD 454/455, stayed at a monastery on the Mount of Olives which had been founded shortly before his arrival by the noblewoman Flavia, who also build a church to the martyr Julian.⁷⁹ Again, this church post-dates the church of St Stephen by more than a decade.⁸⁰ The distribution of these chapels shows a concentration of *martyria* on the Mount of Olives. This is confirmed by the sixth-century pilgrims⁸¹ who mention certain tombs there,⁸² however, all of these were small, mostly private shrines. We know of a monk, Gabriellus, who stemmed from Euthymius' monastery in the desert and became a protégé of Eudocia's in Jerusalem after she was back on the Chalcedonian path. This Gabriellus used to withdraw for certain periods of the year to a recluse's

the Coptic tradition on St George also contains an encomium written by a certain Theodosius, Bishop of Jerusalem, for which neither Budge nor Georg Röwekamp in the respective *LACL* entry found reasons to assume that it might not be genuine (cf. Budge 1888, xxvii): as this bishop is referred to in the encomium on St George by Theodotus of Ancyra (*fl.* 431–432) and as there is no reason to suppose an interpolation of the name (cf. Budge 1888, 236 with n. 1), it is likely that the alleged author of the text is indeed referring to the monk Theodosius who was raised to the Patriarchal see in 452. From John Rufus' *De obitu Theodosii* we know that the anti-Chalcedonian patriarch fled to Egypt after 453 – which would explain the transmitting of the text in Coptic – until the imprisonment of Abba Romanus in Antioch made Theodosius leave his hiding place and travel to the city on the Orontes (John Rufus, *De obit. Theod.* 2–3). For the Coptic scribes of the manuscripts a false attribution to Theodosius would also make no sense, as due to the secrecy and brevity of his presence in Egypt he remained a fairly elusive character to the Egyptian anti-Chalcedonians.

77 I have argued elsewhere that Eudocia's support for the anti-Chalcedonians of Palestine was backed and approved by the court of Marcian and Pulcheria, cf. Klein 2018.

78 A letter dating to late AD 453 from Pulcheria to Bassa is preserved among the post-conciliar documents in the Greek acts of Chalcedon, cf. *ACO* 2,1,3:494–495.

79 Cyr. Scyth. *Vit. Theog.* 241,20.

80 Finally, Cyril again mentions a shrine of the military saint Theodore with a *terminus ante quem* of 532; however, such a chapel is not attested archaeologically. Cf. Cyr. Scyth. *VS* 185,4 with Bieberstein/Bloedhorn 1994, II, 98. It is important to note that the fact that although no more places of remembrance are recorded in the sources, this does not necessarily mean that they did not exist. The small number of mentions may result from the nature of the sources; the few examples are mostly recorded by Cyril of Scythopolis who was an insider to the area.

81 Theodosius 6.

82 For James, Zacharias, Simeon, cf. Theodosius 9; for Zebedee and Cleophas, cf. *Itin. Plac.* 16; for Pelagia, cf. *Itin. Plac.* 16; and for Hesychius, cf. *Itin. Plac.* 27.

cell on the Mount of Olives, where he had set up a martyr's shrine.⁸³ Places like this are clearly not comparable to Eudocia's basilica which was, according to Cyril of Scythopolis, so enormous as to host a very large congregation. It is obvious that there was a difference between this building and the small private shrines on the Mount of Olives, none of which is attested *before* the beginning of the construction of St Stephen's church.⁸⁴ Most of the places commemorating saints were erected by Roman noblewomen (such as Melania, Flavia, and Bassa), i.e. not by the clergy of Jerusalem but from outsiders to the city like Eudocia herself. She was the first founder in the city who acknowledged the growth in importance of the public veneration of relics and saints which had begun at the end of the fourth century. Coming from the center of power in Constantinople with its numerous churches, this cult of saints was well-known to her.⁸⁵ A second novelty of Eudocia's foundation is that Stephen's stoning was located in a *different* place to that in which the basilica was placed. Every single church built in Jerusalem before the 440s was meticulously located at what was thought to be the exact place hallowed by divine presence. As a result of this, the late antique religious buildings in Jerusalem are characterized by a near-obsession with the search for the 'correct place.' The church of St Stephen, in contrast, was placed at the main arterial road leading to Neapolis and Damascus, thus resembling a pattern of building large churches outside the city centers as in Rome or Milan⁸⁶ rather than following the local traditions in Jerusalem. With this choice of location, the new church was both influenced by the city's street layout and proved influential itself: everyone who entered the city had to pass by it, and many wrote about it.⁸⁷

Nevertheless, the construction of Eudocia's church in Jerusalem still shows how dominant the connection between *places of events* and *places of remembrance* was in

⁸³ Gabrielus built himself a small hermitage where he used to withdraw at Epiphany and where he died as a miracle worker and was also buried there. Cyril of Scythopolis mentions his knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Syriac (*Vit. Euth.* 56,6–18).

⁸⁴ The exception here are Melania's endeavors to promote her own *martyrion* for the same relics.

⁸⁵ Cf. Brown 1981, 92–95. Even after Eudocia's time, the veneration of saints and martyrs remained somewhat tentative. The legend of the discovery of the relics of Jacob in the Kidron Valley was clearly modelled on the discovery of St Stephen, even though the account claims that it already happened during the reign of Valens. However, no chapel for Jacob is attested before the eighth century. Finally, a church for John the Baptist is not attested before the Sassanid devastation of the city (AD 614) and John Moschus mentions a church of SS Cosmas and Damianus for the year 615, once again maybe in the Kidron Valley. Moreover, Biblical figures were remembered in Jerusalem as well, from the sixth to the tenth century: a grotto was shown to be the prison of Jeremiah and a memorial place of Isaiah existed in the Kidron Valley, both not included on the normal pilgrim routes, cf. Bieberstein/Bloedhorn 1994, I, 158–159 as well as III, 234 and 408. For the implications of the growing cult of saints for Jerusalem, cf. Kretschmar 1977, 111. For Eudocia's political activities in the Holy Land, see the monographs by Binns 1994, Bitton-Ashkelony/Kofsky 2006 and Horn 2006 as well as Kofsky 1997, 209–222.

⁸⁶ Cf. Krautheimer 1983, *passim*.

⁸⁷ Similarly, Eudocia's church of St Polyeuctus in Constantinople was carefully positioned on a processional route on the Mese from the Forum of Theodosius to the Church of the Holy Apostles, cf. Harrison 1989, 34.

people's minds: from the sixth century onwards, a tradition appears identifying the place of the Church of St Stephen as the exact location of the martyr's stoning.⁸⁸ A little later, the local priests were even able to show pilgrims the stones of Stephen's martyrdom in the church – perhaps those the Piacenza Pilgrim had seen at Sion, although there has never been a lack of stones in Jerusalem. As a consequence, the northern city gate, today's Damascus Gate, changed its name to St Stephen's Gate in Eudocia's times. We may draw comparisons to similar phenomena in Constantinople where the church commemorating Bishop Paul was a hundred and fifty years later thought to be a church to St Paul the Apostle; whereas the church to Acacius, as already demonstrated by David Woods,⁸⁹ was in fact a church originally built by a member of Constantine's entourage, the *comes* Acacius, and relatively soon was thought to be commemorating the martyrdom of St Acacius.⁹⁰ And, of course, the *Vita Sophiae* mentioned in the beginning, provided an alternative, perhaps more easily comprehensible, tradition for the Church of St Sophia. It is not surprising that in the same period, a second Sophia tradition was also evolving which described the death of Sophia during the reign of Emperor Hadrian: a saint who had three martyr daughters, aptly named Pistis, Elpis, and Agape.⁹¹

The construction of Eudocia's church to St Stephen also constituted a new form of congregational space by its sheer size which surpassed all of Jerusalem's churches except for the Constantinian basilica. It goes beyond enhancing places of remembrance with religious buildings in the manner of Jerusalemite building tradition before her. Whether this was a deliberate action or not, is impossible to tell. The evidence shows that in the years after Eudocia's death, the strict observation of correct locations had become more blurred. For Jerusalem this was completely new – and somewhat visionary. When after a long break of imperial activity Justinian decided to launch a vast building program in the city,⁹² his main church, the *Nea*, was in fact a church dedicated to the Virgin and inaugurated on the feast day of Mary's presentation in the Temple, but it did not commemorate a particular spot in which the event had taken place and/or was preserved in local tradition. In the position for his church, Justinian thus had a free choice, and the *Nea*'s location should rather be seen as an imperial response to the growing population in the city⁹³ as it extended the colonnaded *cardo* to the south, that is to an area that had not been densely populated before.

⁸⁸ Bieberstein/Bloedhorn 1994, II, 231–232.

⁸⁹ Cf. above note 32.

⁹⁰ Cf. Bowes 2008, 113 for similar thoughts on the places of remembrance of St Philip and St Celerina in Constantinople.

⁹¹ Cf. van Esbroeck 2001, 129–134.

⁹² Trampedach 2001, 108–110.

⁹³ Binns 1994, 92, and Stathakopoulos 2008, 310.

New Saints for Constantinople

While Eudocia's decision to build a church dedicated to St Stephen in Jerusalem may have been surprising for this city (though very much in line with the empire-wide cult of saints), her Church of St Polyeuctus in Constantinople seems a more surprising choice. When she reached the capital in the fall of AD 439, she carried with her a precious gift for the city:

Eudocia, the wife of the emperor Theodosius, returned from Jerusalem to the imperial city, bringing with her the relics of the most blessed Stephen, the first martyr, which were placed in the basilica of St Lawrence where they are venerated.⁹⁴

The entry in the *Chronicon* of Marcellinus Comes gives no explanation for why relics as important as those of Stephen brought to the capital by someone as important as Eudocia were deposited in a church commemorating a different saint, St Lawrence, and built by a different founder, Pulcheria. Kenneth Holum has argued that Theodosius' sister had founded this church upon Eudocia's arrival to receive the newly translated relics, and that "in this way Pulcheria turned Eudocia's downfall to her own profit."⁹⁵ The latter claim can be easily dismissed, as the deposition in AD 439 could hardly be connected with Eudocia's alleged downfall of 443. Nevertheless, it is odd that – if Pulcheria was indeed Eudocia's rival – the latter permitted for no obvious reason that her sister-in-law earned the merits for the successful translation, especially as Eudocia had her own church of St Polyeuctus constructed roughly at the same time. Although the rivalry scenario is tempting, no contemporary source reports any enmity between the two *Augustae* "who appear[ed] to be one," as Cyril of Alexandria put it. There is no reason to interpret the latter line as a sarcastic statement, as Holum did.⁹⁶ If one steps aside from the notion of competition between the two *Augustae*, and accepts that they even may have cooperated (appearing to be one), the sources arguably make more sense. Sozomen, who was very keen on portraying Pulcheria in panegyric terms, did not mention a church dedicated to St Lawrence. It is true that his *Historia ecclesiastica* terminates in the year AD 439, however, there must have been a church foundation structurally complete enough to house the relics by that time. The historian's silence can be explained with a later entry in Marcellinus Comes' *Chronicon*: only in 453, fourteen years after the deposition of the relics of St Stephen in Constantinople, did Pulcheria's church receive the relics of St Lawrence sent from Pope Leo I from Rome in the wake of the negotiations at the

⁹⁴ Marcellinus Comes, *Chron.* a. 439(2): *Eudoxia uxor Theodosii principis ab Hierosolymis urbem regiam remeavit, beatissimi Stephani primi martyris reliquias, quae in basilica sancti Laurentii positae venerantur, secum deferens*. The confusion between Eudoxia and Eudocia is a common mistake in the sources, from the dating and the context it is clear that 'Eudocia' must be meant in this instance.

⁹⁵ Holum 1982, 137; cf. 196 for an alleged foundation in AD 439.

⁹⁶ Cf. *ACO* I,1,3,77,79–80.

Council of Chalcedon.⁹⁷ Therefore, Sozomen could not have reported on a Church of Lawrence, since it did not exist as such at the time of his writing. On the other hand, the statement concerning the year 439 made by Marcellinus Comes is likewise not wrong, as in his times the church was, of course, dedicated to and known as St Lawrence. From the available evidence it seems that both Pulcheria and Eudocia built churches in Constantinople without exactly knowing which relics would eventually wind up in them. This does, of course, not mean that these buildings were mere blank canvasses, but rather that both *Augustae* had certain hopes and aspirations concerning the relics that they desired for their religious foundations. One could compare these pious hopes to the grand plan of the Church of the Holy Apostles a century earlier, which ideally would have housed relics of twelve important saints, an enterprise that proved unrealistic as time went on.⁹⁸ Moreover, it appears possible to determine the envisaged patron saints of these two churches, which must have been under construction in the 430s:⁹⁹ I would suggest that for Pulcheria's church it was St Lawrence from the very beginning. In comparison with this saint, however, St Polyeuctus, who eventually became commemorated in Eudocia's church, appears as a rather minor figure. The fitting match for the deacon Lawrence was, of course, none other than the deacon Stephen. Scholars have speculated on the connection between the empress and the saint: Polyeuctus was martyred in the hometown of the desert monk Euthymius, a figure of authority for Eudocia in Palestine. However, there is nothing to suggest that the empress met the desert monk during her pilgrimage of AD 438/439, let alone came under his influence.¹⁰⁰ It is possible to assume that she had never even heard the name of St Polyeuctus until her second stay in the Holy Land. Upon her return to the capital in 439, the relics of Stephen were deposited in Pulcheria's church. If we accept that the empresses collaborated, this act is not surprising: the conjunction of the two saints made sense, both were deacon-martyrs, whose relics were housed together in Rome.¹⁰¹ Perhaps Eudocia and Pulcheria had hoped to accelerate the translation of Lawrence's relics to Constantinople by offering the bones a place near to Stephen – or, Pulcheria's church simply was closer to completion, assuming that Eudocia's foundation may have fallen behind due to her absence of approximately a year and a half. It is likely that the cooperation between the two empresses continued after Eudocia left Constantinople for good: she still had funds at her disposal,¹⁰² which clearly exceeded those of ordinary pilgrims, and

⁹⁷ Cf. Marcellinus Comes, *Chron.* a. 453(5).

⁹⁸ Cf. Mango 2009, 53 and 55–57.

⁹⁹ Cf. Magdalino 2001, 61–65, suggesting that the Church of St Polyeuctus may have been planned to be dedicated to some other saint.

¹⁰⁰ Eudocia's first stay in Jerusalem was relatively short; I will discuss the chronology of this pilgrimage elsewhere.

¹⁰¹ According to the *translatio* of the bones of St Stephen from Constantinople to Rome (dating, most likely, to the late eighth century); cf. Costambeys/Leyser 2007, 279–281.

¹⁰² Cf. John Rufus *Vit. Petr. Hib.* 166.

she owned property in the Holy Land, and perhaps resided in a suitable palace in Bethlehem.¹⁰³ Moreover, there is reason to assume that at least two church buildings in Jerusalem and Constantinople respectively show interaction between the Holy Land and the capital dating to after the time of Eudocia's second departure: Eudocia's Constantinopolitan church received relics of St Polyeuctus only after the empress had met Euthymius in the Judean Desert in the late 440s, and the Jerusalemite Church of St Stephen was decorated with costly capitals (either directly imported from Constantinople or executed in Constantinopolitan style).¹⁰⁴

New Saints for Jerusalem

The stimulus for the veneration of saints in Jerusalem came from outside. What may be a mere coincidence is that most of these important outsiders who built churches in honor of saints in the city (Eudocia, Melania, and Bassa), all had at times switched their allegiance to the anti-Chalcedonians. Even though the difference between the cult of saints among Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians has not been explored, the latter's interest in making the saints at home in Jerusalem appears remarkable, especially when we combine this with the possibility that the anti-Patriarch Theodosius really authored an encomium on St George, and that, of course, Peter the Iberian – the anti-Chalcedonian *par excellence* – carried a large box of relics of Persian martyrs with him when he escaped from Constantinople to Jerusalem.¹⁰⁵

In this context, Michel van Esbroeck's dating¹⁰⁶ of the Sophia legend to the fifth century, relating to the riots of 451–453, makes perfect sense. The Virgin Mary had transferred the widow Sophia from Constantinople to Jerusalem, the only place where Sophia could be reunited with God. It was also predicted that Sophia would return to the capital, after her death.¹⁰⁷ For the anti-Chalcedonians, wisdom was widowed from all that kept her in Constantinople: only in Jerusalem did the faith remain intact. "[O]rthodoxy originate[d] in Jerusalem; and Sophia of Constantinople [was] no longer justified by her roots [...] but through the [J]erusalemite preservation in the fertile soil of the true doctrine of the Holy City."¹⁰⁸ It is not surprising that the church in the *praetorium*, the place of Christ's trial, was built in the 450s and named St Sophia, nor is the proposed date of the writing-down of the legend, the reign of the Miaphysite emperor Anastasius, when – in the eyes of the Miaphysites – Sophia could at last return home.

¹⁰³ *Vit. Bars.* 93,4.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Verstegen 2018, 71.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. John Rufus *Vit. Petr. Hib.* 26–28 and 31–35.

¹⁰⁶ Van Esbroeck 2001, 138.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. van Esbroeck 2001, 133.

¹⁰⁸ Van Esbroeck 2001, 137.

If there was an actual connection between the cult of saints, religious affiliation, and building politics, we might ask what the Chalcedonian response to this might have looked like. And indeed, we can trace a reaction of the spearhead of pro-Chalcedonians in the Jerusalem area, the desert monastery of Euthymius, located in close proximity to the Holy City. In the wake of the turmoil of AD 451–453, all of these outsider/anti-Chalcedonian foundations of churches and *martyria* of saints were seized by monks from the desert: Euthymius had his disciple Gabrielius join Eudocia at St Stephen's,¹⁰⁹ Bassa's church of St Menas received the Euthymian monk Andrew as a supervisor,¹¹⁰ and Flavia's monastery was run by the Chalcedonian Theognius.¹¹¹ Moreover, a little later, in AD 473, i.e. twenty-two years after Chalcedon, thirteen years after Eudocia's death, the time was ripe for the generation of an entirely new saint for Jerusalem: Euthymius himself.¹¹²

Things unfolded quickly after his death: at the recommendation of Chrysippus, guardian of the Cross and a former disciple of Euthymius, the Patriarch Anastasius, a former monk of the desert monasteries, invited Martyrius and Elias, two disciples of Euthymius, to attend his dead body, leaving Fidus, a disciple of Euthymius and now a deacon of the latter's monastery, with the "responsibility for building a burial vault for the translation of the precious remains to a becoming place."¹¹³ He employed craftsmen and workers from Jerusalem who demolished the hermit's original cave and built a large vaulted chamber with Euthymius' tomb in the middle. The Patriarch had already sent the tombstone in advance along with a silver crucible and surrounding railings. On 7 May, he came down to the monastery and translated the relics to the prepared place, carrying them in his own hands.¹¹⁴

It had taken Euthymius' disciples three and a half months to present Jerusalem and its surroundings with its newest saint: Euthymius, the Chalcedonian hero, father of the monks, colonizer of the desert. The step from 'living holy man' to 'venerated saint' was just a small one. For understanding both the foundation of Eudocia's church to St Stephen, but also the veneration of contemporary living saints in Jerusalem, it is the religious landscape of Constantinople that may give us further answers.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Cyr. Scyth. *Vit. Euth.* 53,5–54,11. Gabrielius also became the executor of Eudocia's will.

¹¹⁰ Cf. also Cyr. Scyth. *Vit. Euth.* 53,5–54,11. Bassa was apparently quicker to join the Chalcedonian cause, as Pulcheria addressed her in a letter asking her to convince Eudocia to defect from Miaphysitism.

¹¹¹ Cf. Cyr. Scyth. *Vit. Theog.* as well as Paul of Elusa, *Vit. Theog.* 5.

¹¹² Cf. Cyr. Scyth. *Vit. Euth.* 59,16–61,4.

¹¹³ Cyr. Scyth. *Vit. Euth.* 60,27–61,3.

¹¹⁴ Cyr. Scyth. *Vit. Euth.* 61,18–62,1.

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