

ACEPHALOI

Extremist anti-Chalcedonians in Egypt who refused to recognize the Alexandrian patriarchs who accepted the HENOTICON. They first appear in history in 482 as Egyptian monks who opposed PETER III MONGUS's rapprochement with Constantinople (Zacharias Rhetor *Historia ecclesiastica* 6. 2). Their name denoted their community of purpose without the need of a personal leader, and least of all a Henotacist patriarch (see Leontius of Byzantium, *De sectis* 5, col. 1230). It is possible that these dissidents adopted the name of other irreconcilables who after the Formula of Reunion in April 433 rejected both [CYRIL I](#) and JOHN OF ANTIOCH (see [Liberatus](#) of Carthage *Breviarium* 9. 41).

At the end of the ACACIAN SCHISM, "Acephaloi" was used as a term of abuse by the Jerusalem Chalcedonians against SEVERUS OF [ANTIOCH](#) and his followers (*Sacrorum conciliorum collectio*, Vol. 8, col. 1085, recording popular outcries when John, the [patriarch](#) of Jerusalem [516-524], visited the principal church at [Tyre](#) on 16 September 518). In 520, a petition to Emperor Justin from "the clerics and abbots and landowners of the province of Syria Secunda, and representatives from the patriarchates of [Antioch](#) and Jerusalem associated "acephaloi' with "Eutychians' and others whose excommunication they demanded" (*Collectio Avellana* 232a, p. 704).

The Acephaloi were condemned as a sect by the Home Synod of Constantinople in June 536 (*Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio*, Vol. 8, col. 891). They continued to exist when THEODORUS was consecrated Monophysite [patriarch](#) of Alexandria in the summer of 575 (Severus, *History of the Patriarchs*, PO 5, p. 474). The clear separation between Chalcedonians and Monophysites in Egypt after the reestablishment of the Chalcedonians' patriarchate in 537 robbed the Acephaloi of most of their purpose, but they lingered on into Muslim times.

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