Josias Simler and the Fathers

The »Scripta veterum latina« (1571)

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On 3 September 1571, the rector of the Chur Latin school, Johannes Pontisella, wrote to congratulate Josias Simler on the publication of his Scripta veterum latina, a collection of patristic texts generated by the Nestorian and Eutychian controversies.1 Pontisella places Simler in a chain of anti-heretical writers raised up to defend »the pure and uncorrupted doctrine of the Son of God« against Satan’s attempts to subvert it. The tradition was initiated, he claims, by the apostle John, whose gospel provided the church

with a «most reliable shield» against the errors of «Ebion» and Cerinthus. In subsequent generations, it was continued first by John’s disciples Ignatius and Polycarp, then by their student Irenaeus, and finally by the theologians whose works are assembled in the *Scripta veterum*. By publishing these texts in a single volume, Simler has forged a powerful weapon to «stop up the mouth» of blasphemers – a true «hammer of heretics».

Like most of Simler’s works, the *Scripta veterum* has received scant attention from historians, yet it tells us a great deal about the nature and purpose of patristic scholarship in Zurich (and other Reformed centres of learning) during this period. The volume is ambitious in scope, bringing together Latin texts by nine fifth and sixth-century authors, some familiar, others relatively obscure. All but one of the works is accompanied by *Annotationes*, consisting of a bio-bibliographical introduction and textual commentary. In addition, the *Scripta veterum* incorporates a detailed history of early church Christological disputes, entitled *Narratio veterum et recentium controversiarum de una persona et duabus naturis Iesu Christi Servatoris nostri*. This section of the volume is of particular interest, as it demonstrates the interconnectedness of historiography and theological polemic in the late sixteenth century. For Simler and his contemporaries, the history of the early church was not just a record of distant events, but an essential point of reference in the controversies of their own day.

1. The polemical background

1.1 The Zurich reformers’ use of church history

The study of ecclesiastical history and the Fathers was an important aspect of the intellectual culture of Reformed Zurich. Twenty-one patristic works, among them texts by Augustine, Jerome, Lactantius, Tertullian and even Proclus of Constantinople, have been identified in Heinrich Bullinger’s library. His magnum opus, the
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Decades (1549–1551), includes more than 500 citations from the Fathers, while the two-volume manuscript compilation of commonplaces on which he drew throughout his career is richly stocked with patristic sources. Although the Zurich reformers are better known for their chorographies and works of secular history – not least Simler’s own De republica Helvetiorum, which went through around 25 editions in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – there was a lively tradition of ecclesiastical historiography in the city. Bullinger himself owned copies of the 1549 and 1554 Basel editions of Eusebius and his continuators, to which he alludes frequently in his works.

Like other sixteenth-century Protestants, Bullinger saw in church history a means of legitimising the Reformation, by challenging Rome’s claim to exclusive ownership of the Christian past, and discrediting theological opponents. In the early works Vergleichung der uralten und unserer Zeiten Ketzereien (1526) and De origine erroris (1539), he charts the emergence of key Catholic doctrines so as to demonstrate their unscriptural character. The same combination of church history and polemic is to be found in his Assertio orthoxa (1534), a defence of orthodox Christology.


4 Leu/Weidmann, Heinrich Bullingers Privatbibliothek, 50.
against the antitrinitarian Claude d’Aliod, and in the *Decades*, which opens with a brief discourse on the councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon. The latter theme is developed in book I of *De conciliis*, where Bullinger rehearses the history of the six ecumenical councils recognised by the Reformed. In emphasising the Zurich church’s acceptance of the trinitarian and Christological formulas hammered out at these councils, Bullinger was responding to persistent Lutheran and Catholic attempts to link the Reformed to more radical dissenting groups. *De summa trinitate et fide catholica* (1555), by Bullinger’s colleague Theodor Bibliander, provides a further example of the Zurichers’ apologetic use of church history. Through a detailed analysis of the antiheresy legislation in the Justinianic Code, Bibliander seeks to demonstrate the »catholicity« of Reformed Christians and their consequent exemption from the Roman law penalties for heresy.

The Zurich reformers did not see their reliance on the Fathers and other early church sources as at all inconsistent with the scripture principle. In *De conciliis*, Bullinger distinguishes clearly between the inherent authority of the Bible and the decrees of church councils, which are to be rejected »unless the things that they say are to be believed or done or avoided can be supported from scripture«. However, the scripture principle as understood by Bullin-
ger demands not strict adherence to the *verbum* of the Bible, but acceptance of the doctrine contained therein (*res*). When seeking to establish the meaning of scripture, the Reformed exegete may be guided by extra-biblical writers and formulations, which serve as valuable witnesses to the church’s historic understanding of biblical teaching and hence acquire a certain subsidiary authority, especially when the aim is to combat heresy. Bullinger gives the example of the term *homoousios* in the Nicene creed, which was introduced not as a »new dogma or article of faith« but »to provide greater clarity« at a time when Arianism was threatening to overwhelm the church. Although the ancient councils and Fathers are by no means infallible – Bullinger finds examples of error even in the canons of the much-venerated Council of Nicaea – their rulings on the fundamental doctrines of God and Christ are to be accepted without reservation, as the genuine teaching of scripture. Simler follows him closely on this point, plotting a middle course between unqualified acceptance of church tradition and the biblical literalism favoured by many religious radicals.

1.2 Christological controversies

The Zurichers’ engagement with early church history took place against a backdrop of hardening confessional divisions. This is especially true of the *Scripta veterum*, which had its genesis in several distinct but interlocking disputes. Perhaps the most significant of these was the exchange between the Zurich church and the Württemberg Lutherans, led by Johannes Brenz (1499–1570).

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14 *Bullinger*, *De conciliiis*, 91v: »Sciendum est autem Patres synodi [of Nicaea] in hac causa fidei, nihil prorsus suo permisisse ingenio aut suo indulsisse arbitrio, sed omnia sequutos esse scripturam. Neque enim novum dogma, aut novum fidei articulum (quod nulli licet Concilio) considerunt, quin potius quod semper orthodoxi in ecclesia dei crediderunt, Aari vero impietas iam corrupserat, repararunt, adeoque quod vetustum ac verum et confessum erat, scripturis illustrarunt muniveruntque contra Arium et contra omnes alios qui paria cum Ario sentiebant et unquam docturi erant.«

15 *Bullinger*, *De conciliiis*, 22r, 92r.
Relations between the two churches had begun to deteriorate in the late 1550s, following the collapse of attempts by Theodore Beza and Guillaume Farel to organise a German-Swiss synod, and the imposition on the Württemberg pastorate of Brenz’s confession on the Lord’s Supper. Although the dispute grew out of the long-running Eucharistic schism, it quickly came to focus on Brenz’s distinctive Christology. Both sides insisted on their fidelity to the Chalcedonian definition of Christ as one hypostasis in two natures, human and divine, but they differed radically in their understanding of this formula. According to Zwingli and all subsequent Zurich theologians, Christ’s two natures remain distinct ontologically both throughout his earthly mission and following his glorification. Although it is orthodox (and scriptural) to say that God suffered, was crucified and redeemed the world by his blood, such expressions are to be taken as a »forma loquendi«, the attribution to one nature of language that is properly applicable only to the other – what Zwingli and Bullinger term alloiosis. For Brenz, by contrast, the unity of Christ’s person necessitates a real, as opposed to merely verbal, communicatio idiomatum between his divinity and humanity: specifically, the transmission of the attribute of ubiquity to Christ’s human nature by virtue of its union with the Word. From the Reformed perspective, Brenz’s conception of the incarnation entailed an unacceptable blurring of the boundary between the creator and the creaturely that threatened to turn Christ into a tertium quid, neither fully human nor truly divine.

The appearance of Brenz’s *De personali unione* in early 1561, which exposed the extent of these differences, was the trigger for a protracted and increasingly bad-tempered polemical exchange between Zurich and Tübingen. Between 1561 and 1564, Bullinger published four works on the Christological issue: the *Tractatio verborum Domini, in domo patris mei mansiones multae sunt*; the *Responsio, qua ostenditur sententiam de coelo et dextera Dei libello Bullingeri non esse eversam, sed firmam perstare adhuc*; the *Fundamentum firmum*; and the *Repetitio et dilucidior explicatio consensus veteris ecclesiae in doctrina de inconfusis proprietatibus naturarum Christi Domini*. The controversy overshadowed the final months of Peter Martyr Vermigli, who at the time of his death (November 1562) was planning a second work against Brenz, to add to his *Dialogus in utraque Christi natura* (1561). After a lull of several years, it was reignited by the publication of Brenz’s theological testament, which subjected the Zurich church to scathing criticism. During the first half of the 1570s, Reformed Christology came under further sustained attack from Jakob Andreae (1528–1590), the chancellor of Tübingen university.

Simler’s close ties to Bullinger and Vermigli ensured his involvement in the Zurich church’s campaign against ‘ubiquitarianism’ from an early stage. In fact, he was personally acquainted with Brenz, having visited Tübingen on Bullinger’s instructions in sum-

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19 Brandy, Brenz, 45–68.
20 Heinrich Bullinger, *Tractatio verborum Domini, in domo patris mei mansiones multae sunt*, Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Elder, 1561 (HBBibl I 416); Heinrich Bullinger, *Responsio, qua ostenditur sententiam de coelo et dextera Dei libello Bullingeri non esse eversam, sed firmam perstare adhuc*, Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Elder, 1562 (HBBibl I 422 f.); Heinrich Bullinger, *Fundamentum firmum, cui tuto fidelis quivis inniti potest, hoc praesertim difficili seculo, quo dissidiis doctorumque adversariis scriptis omnia conturbata sunt, positum ad institutionem et consolationem simplicium [...],* Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Elder, 1563 (HBBibl I 425); Heinrich Bullinger, *Repetitio et dilucidior explicatio consensus veteris orthodoxae catholicaeque Christi Ecclesiae in doctrina prophetica et apostolica, de inconfusis proprietatibus naturarum Christi Domini, in una indivisa persona permanentibus [...],* Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Elder, 1564 (HBBibl I 427).
22 Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Dialogus de utraque in Christo natura*, Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Elder, 1561 (BZD C 599 f.).
mer 1553, when relations between Zurich and Württemberg were still on a relatively friendly footing. Much later, in his funeral oration for Vermigli, Simler recorded the latter’s deathbed condemnation of Brenz’s theology. Among the many works by Bullinger that Simler translated into Latin was the Zurich church’s official response to Brenz’s testament, which appeared only a few months before the *Scripta veterum*. At Bullinger’s request, he also produced, for the benefit of Theodore Beza, a Latin translation of the section of the testament dealing with the Lord’s Supper. The *Scripta veterum* was conceived of, in part, as a contribution to the on-going Christological exchange between Lutherans and Reformed, which had already spawned numerous editions of patristic florilegia, and to which Simler was to return later in his career.

The addition of a historical section, the *Narratio*, to Simler’s anthology reflects the terms of debate in the controversy, in which each side strove to associate its opponents with one or more ancient heresies. Thus while Brenz painted the Reformed as latter-day Arians and Nestorians, who reduced Christ to the rank of a mere saint, he himself was charged with reviving the error of Eutyches and other monophysites. Bullinger alludes to these ancient debates frequently in his Christological writings. In the *Fundamentum firum*, he reviews the history of the Nestorian and Eutychian controversies, while the *Repetitio et dilucidior explicatio* includes a short account of disputes concerning the incarnation from Con-

23 Andreas Mühling, Heinrich Bullingers europäische Kirchenpolitik, Bern et al. 2001 (Zürcher Beiträge zur Reformationsgeschichte 19), 51.
24 Josias Simler, Oratio de vita et obitu viri optimi [...], Petri Martyris Vermilii [...], Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Younger, 1563 (BZD C 733), 275: »Alio item die cum Bullingerus inter alia consolationis causa e Paulo dixisset, nostram politiam in coelo esse, agnosco inquit ille, sed non in coelo Brentii, quod nusquam est.«
25 Ad Testamentum D. Ioannis Brentii, nuper contra Zvinglianos publicatum, responsio brevis [...], Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Younger, 1571 (HBBibl I 569).
26 Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze, ed. Fernand Aubert et al., Geneva 1960 ff. [CTB], vol. 12, 29 (no. 818).
28 Cf. Josias Simler, De vera Iesu Christi, domini et servatoris nostri, secundum humanam naturam in his terris praesentia, orthodoxa et brevis expositio [...], Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Younger, 1574 (BZD C 877).
29 Mablimann, Die christologischen Schriften, 212, 228, 296, 324.
stantine to Heraclius. Much of the same material is recycled in the Narratio, although Simler’s work testifies to a much more intensive engagement with the ancient sources.

Just as the ubiquitarian controversy was getting underway, the Zurich church found itself confronted by another challenge to Reformed Christology, this time from eastern Europe. The dispute was sparked off by Francesco Stancaro (1501–1574), an Italian religious exile who had previously been instrumental in establishing the Polish Reformed church. After several years in Hungary, Stancaro returned to Poland in 1559, where his views on the mediatorial office of Christ became the subject of heated debate. Like Zwingli and Bullinger, Stancaro was anxious to preserve the distinction of natures within Christ’s person, but from this doctrine he drew the unacceptably »Nestorian« conclusion that Christ must have acted as mediator in his human nature alone. Stancaro regarded the suggestion that Christ’s divinity co-operated with his manhood in the atonement as tantamount to Arianism, on the basis that it turned the Word into a supplicant and, consequently, subordinated him to the Father. However, the majority of Protestants in Poland-Lithuania found Stancaro’s opinions abhorrent, and in June 1559 he was excommunicated by the commonwealth’s Reformed synod. At their Polish correspondents’ request, the Zurich divines penned two open letters denouncing Stancaro’s views, which were published in March 1561. The following year, Stancaro responded with his work De Trinitate et mediatore Domino nostro Iesu Christo, in which he lambasted Bullinger, Vermigli and Calvin for introducing inequality within the Trinity and confusing the two natures of Christ. Accustomed to being labelled Nestorians by the likes of Brenz and Andreae, the Zurichers now found themselves accused for the first time of heresies from the other end of the Christological spectrum, such as Eutychianism and monotheletism.

30 Bullinger, Fundamentum firmum, 117v–121r; Bullinger, Repetitio, 28r–30v.
32 Epistolae duae, ad ecclesias polonicas, Iesu Christi Evangelium amplexas [...] de negotio Stancariano, et mediatore Dei et hominum Iesu Christo, an hic secundum humanam naturam duntaxat, an secundum utranque mediator sit, Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Elder, 1561 (HBBibl I 421).
The task of rebutting these charges fell to Simler, who had just been appointed professor of Old Testament at the Zurich academy in succession to Vermigli. In his *Responsio ad maledicum Francisci Stancari Mantuani librum* (1563), Simler denied that the Reformed understanding of the atonement compromised God’s unity and that assigning a mediatorial function to Christ’s godhead involved a confusion of the two natures. Against the »hyper-Zwinglian« Stancaro, Simler was able to develop the Zurich church’s understanding of the unity of Christ’s person more fully than was possible in dialogue with the »Eutychians« of Württemberg. While continuing to resist any suggestion of a real communication of properties between the two natures, as proposed by Brenz, he maintained that Christ’s divinity plays a full and necessary part in his salvific mission. Although impassible, the Logos is not a bystander in the atonement, but the guarantor of its efficacy, as only one who is both human and divine can truly reconcile God with mankind.\(^3\) Like the ubiquitarian controversy, the conflict between the Zurichers and Stancaro was fought out on the terrain of early church history; indeed, the *Responsio* provides the first evidence of Simler’s interest in the ancient Christological debates that he was to explore more fully in the *Scripta veterum*. In the final part of the work, a range of Latin and Greek authors are invoked in support of the Zurich position.\(^4\) Because Stancaro had accused the Zurichers of favouring positions anathematised by the Third Council of Constantinople (680–681), Simler is also at pains to demonstrate the compatibility of Reformed teaching with that council’s pronouncements.\(^5\)

By the time of the *Responsio*’s publication, the focus of theological debate in Poland had shifted from Stancaro to another Italian exile, Giorgio Biandrata (c. 1515–1588). At this stage in his career, Biandrata was an advocate of the form of the antitrinitarianism dubbed »tritheism« by the orthodox: embracing what Stancaro insisted were the logical consequences of the Reformed doctrine of

\(^3\) Josias Simler, *Responsio ad maledicum Francisci Stancari Mantuani librum adversus Tigurinae ecclesiae ministros, de Trinitate et mediatore Domino nostro Iesu Christo [...]*, Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Elder, 1563 (BZD C 636), 7r–v.


\(^5\) Simler, *Responsio ad Stancari librum*, 10r, 29v–30r.
the mediator, he reconceptualised the Trinity as a hierarchy of three distinct beings, united in will rather than substance. To the Zurichers’ consternation, Biandrata found a ready audience among the Polish Reformed, many of whom had grown uncomfortable with the «sophistic» and non-scriptural language that they associated with the received doctrine of the Trinity. By the end of 1562, the Polish Reformed synod had splintered into orthodox and tritheist factions, led by Stanisław Sarnicki and Grzegorz Paweł respectively.

Simler spearheaded the Zurich church’s intervention in the Polish schism. In the preface to his *Responsio ad Stancari librum*, he answered the tritheist arguments set out in Paweł’s *Tabula de Trinitate*; it is likely that he also had a hand in the detailed rebuttal of Paweł’s text issued by the Zurichers in spring 1563. Simler’s status as the acknowledged Reformed authority on triadological matters was cemented by the publication in August 1568 of his massive *De aeterno Dei filio*, written at the behest of the Polish «major» or orthodox Reformed church. In *De aeterno*, Simler highlighted the emergence of a new and more subversive form of antitrinitarianism – labelled «Samosatenianism», after the third-century heretic Paul of Samosata, by the orthodox – which denied not only the consubstantiality and co-equality of the three divine persons, but even the pre-existence of Christ. For information, Simler drew on wide variety of sources, including works by the tritheists Valentino Gentile, Matteo Gribaldi and Jan Kazanowski, Lelio Sozzini’s commentary on the Johannine prologue, the *Dialogi XXX* of Bernardino Ochino and the *Sylvae* of Andrzej Frycz

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37 Simler, *Responsio ad Stancari librum*, *3v–6v*.
39 Josias *Simler*, *De aeterno Dei filio domino et servatore nostro Iesu Christo, et de Spiritu sancto, adversus veteres et novos Antitrinitarios, id est Arianos, Tritheitas, Samosatenianos, et Pneumatomachos, libri quatuor [...]*, Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Younger, 1568 (BZD C 798).
Many of these works were dispatched by Reformed contacts in Poland and Transylvania, who continued to supply him with new heretical publications well into the 1570s. Although in *De aeterno* Simler’s focus was on the doctrine of God, his defence of trinitarian orthodoxy necessarily involved some consideration of Christological issues. Significantly, he relied on the Chalcedonian Definition to counter many «Arian» objections to the full divinity of the Son, on the basis that it allowed those scriptural texts that appeared to suggest Christ’s inferiority to the Father to be referred, as was proper, to his human nature. *De aeterno* formed part of a co-ordinated Reformed campaign against antitrinitarianism, other contributions to which included the collection *Valentini Gentilis impietatum et triplicis perfidiae ac periurii brevis explicatio* (1567), edited by Beza, and Girolamo Zanchi’s *De tribus Elohim* (1572). The controversy acted as a stimulus to renewed engagement with the Fathers, whose refutations of Arianism provided the Reformed with both an inspiring model for their own efforts and a treasure trove of arguments to be redeployed against contemporary »heretics«. In August 1570, Beza published an anthology of patristic texts in defence of the Trinity, with a dedication to the Polish Reformed. The pages of *De aeterno*...
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terno itself are replete with citations from the Fathers, especially Hilary, Ambrose, the Cappadocians, Cyril and Augustine. When defending the divinity of the Holy Spirit, Simler also makes use of other extra-biblical texts, such as ancient hymns in which the third person of the Trinity is invoked. For Simler, as for Bullinger, such statements are to be valued as witnesses to the correct, »catholic« understanding of the Bible. The same applies to the technical terms (»Trinity«, »person«, »essence« and so on) that the church has adopted to express its understanding of the God, which do not add to but merely encapsulate scriptural teaching.

Although Simler cut his teeth as a polemicist in conflict with opponents based primarily in eastern Europe, the publication of the Scripta veterum was hastened by events closer to home. For decades, the Zurich church had been the chief provider of advice, theological leadership and practical support to the Reformed communities of the Rhaetian Freestate (Graubünden). Cases of Anabaptism had been reported in the Freestate’s largest town, Chur, ever since the early years of the Reformation, but the issue became particularly acute in the late 1560s, following the return to Graubünden of Georg Frell, a former employee of the Zurich printer Froschauer. Tobias Egli, the senior Reformed minister in Chur, complained in letters to Bullinger that Frell was disseminating Schwenckfeldian works, absenting himself from church services and refusing to have his newborn child baptised. Eventually the town authorities lost patience, expelled Frell from Chur and ordered the confiscation of his books. Of equal concern to Egli were the activities of religious dissidents, especially antitrinitarians, in the Reformed churches of the Rhaetian »subject lands«: the Italian-speaking territories of Chiavenna, the Valtellina and Bormio.
In Chiavenna, the newly appointed minister Scipione Lentolo took steps to discipline the radicals, but other local clergy were less than supportive; Girolamo Turriani, the pastor in nearby Piuro, went so far as to receive excommunicated former members of Lentolo’s congregation into his church. To overcome such opposition, Lentolo and his supporters appealed above Turriani’s head to the Reformed church leadership in Chur, arguing that decisive magisterial intervention was required to rid Graubünden of heresy.

Lentolo’s reports of antitrinitarian activity in the subject lands, together with his own recent experience of dealing with Frell, convinced Egli of the need for action. In June 1570, the Rhaetian Diet issued an edict requiring all inhabitants to adhere to one of the Freestate’s two recognised faiths, Catholicism and Reformed Protestantism as defined by the Rhaetic and Second Helvetic Confessions. The measure encountered resistance both in the subject lands and in Chur, where Egli’s fellow minister, Johannes Gantner, was dismissed after advocating religious toleration from the pulpit. Gantner’s sentiments were echoed by the Cremonese exile Bartolomeo Silvio, minister in Lentolo’s old parish of Monte di Sondrio. In September 1570, Silvio sent Bullinger a copy of a short tract that he had written against the edict, in which the imposition of subscription was condemned as a return to the »tyrannical« practices of the papacy. Moreover, Silvio claimed that it would harm the cause of Protestantism in the subject lands, where the Reformed were a tiny minority, by driving the »weak in faith« back into the arms of the Catholic church.

Any hopes that Silvio may have nursed of securing a sympathetic hearing for his arguments were quickly dashed; if anything, his intervention seems to have prompted the Zurichers to redouble their efforts in support of Egli’s anti-heretical campaign. In November 1570, Bullinger sent his Bündner counterpart a copy of

49 Fiume, Lentolo, 143; Taplin, Italian Reformers, 233.
51 Zurich Zentralbibliothek [ZB], Ms. F 61, 343r–348r. For a fuller analysis of the work, see Taplin, Italian Reformers, 235–237.
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Beza’s *De haereticis a civili magistratu puniendis libellus* (1554) for use against Gantner; over subsequent months, he offered Egli detailed advice on how to proceed against the radicals at the forthcoming Reformed synod, where their case was due to be heard.\(^{52}\) Public endorsement of the Rhaetian Diet’s actions was offered by Bullinger’s deputy Rudolf Gwalther, whose *Six Sermons on the Incarnation of the Son of God*, published in early 1571, were dedicated to Stefan Willi, Bürgermeister of Chur. In his preface to the work, Gwalther upheld the magistrate’s duty to maintain »unity in doctrine and in faith« (»einigkeit in der leer und im glauben«), brushing aside arguments for toleration.\(^{53}\) With the *Scripta veterum*, Simler sought to give a further boost to the Rhaetian church leadership, whose attempts to impose doctrinal uniformity continued to be opposed both by a recalcitrant minority within the synod and by notables sympathetic to Gantner and Turriani. In a letter dated 28 May 1571, Egli recalled discussing the projected work with Simler in Zurich and suggested that his correspondent dedicate it to the three Rhaetian Leagues, so as to encourage more rigorous implementation of the edict.\(^{54}\) The timing of the volume’s publication was calculated to be of maximum benefit to Egli and his supporters: it followed hard on the heels of the synodal meeting of June 1571, at which Silvio, Turriani and Gantner’s close ally Johannes Möhr were suspended from the ministry, and thereby served to give the Zurich church’s official imprimatur to those punishments.\(^{55}\)

1.3 Prefaces

In his main preface to the *Scripta veterum* – addressed, as Egli had suggested, to the Rhaetian Leagues – and in a second, shorter dedication to the Christian reader, Simler responds directly to the crisis facing the Bündner church.\(^{56}\) While praising the Rhaetians

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\(^{52}\) *Wenneker, Gantnerhandel*, 109–111; *Taplin, Italian Reformers*, 245.

\(^{53}\) Rudolf *Gwalther*, *Die Menschwerdung deß waarenn, ewigen und eingebornen suns Gottes unsers Heren Jesu Christi erklärt und ußgelegt in sechs predigen, diser zyt allerley secten nützlich züläsen [...],* Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Younger, 1571 (BZD C 835), 6v–7v. For details, see *Taplin, Italian Reformers*, 242–244.

\(^{54}\) ZB Ms. F 59, 41or.

\(^{55}\) *Taplin, Italian Reformers*, pp. 245–6.
for their devotion to liberty and support for learning, he warns that the Freestate’s geographical location makes it uniquely vulnerable to the «contagion» of heresy. From Germany it is assailed by Anabaptists and Schwenckfeldians – a clear reference to Frell and his supporters – while from south of the Alps arises the equally grave threat of antitrinitarianism, now transplanted to Rhaetian soil by Italian exiles in the churches of Piuro, Chiavenna and the Valtellina. In these movements, Simler claims to see not a new phenomenon but rather the recrudescence of two distinct ancient heresies: Eutychianism, which calls into question Christ’s true humanity; and the teachings of Paul of Samosata, which rob him of his divinity. The comment helps explain not just how Simler viewed the radical challenge, but his choice of a patristic edition as the vehicle for his response. By making the situation of the Rhaetian Reformed analogous to that of the writers featured in the *Scripta veterum*, Simler aimed to demonstrate the transferability of their arguments to the theological debates of his own day, just as Beza had done in his edition of patristic writings on the Trinity. Although this approach exposed the Fathers to anachronistic misreadings, by wrenching them out of their historical and intellectual context, it added a powerful polemical dimension to Simler’s scholarship. The establishment of a typological connection between ancient and contemporary controversies authorised users of the *Scripta veterum* to comb through its contents in search of material that, taken in isolation, could be made to validate the Reformed position on a host of contested topics.

Having identified the specific doctrinal positions that his work is intended to combat, Simler turns his attention to the broader issues at stake in the Rhaetian dispute. Like Gwalther, he justifies the

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56 On Simler’s prefaces, see Massimo Firpo, Antitrinitari nell’Europa orientale del ’500: Nuovi testi di Szymon Budny, Niccolò Paruta e Iacopo Paleologo, Florence 1977, 1–8; Taplin, Italian Reformers, 195f., 247–249.

57 *Simler, Scripta veterum*, *2v*: »Nam Eutychea dogmata nostra aetate tuentur cum Anabaptistae tum Schwenckfeldiani, quorum audio non exiguum numerum delitescere in Vindelicia et Rhetia secunda, ut hoc quidem in parte periculum vobis immineat, ne ex Germania mali contagio ad vos serpat. Caeterum non minus etiam periculi imminet vobis ab altero latere Italiam versus, nam illic ante annos aliquid impius ille Servetus, pestifera sua dogmata similia Samosathenicis furoribus, clam sparsit, ea multi fovent, ornant et excolunt, qui cum alibi locum nullum habere possint, cavendum vobis est ne ficta sanctimonia sese commendare et apud vos sibi refugium aliquod parare contentur.«
Bündner Diet’s suppression of heresy on the basis of the magistrate’s *cura religionis*, finding historical precedents for the edict in the actions of the Israelite kings and early Christian emperors.\(^{58}\) Objections to magisterial interference in religious affairs, on the grounds that faith is »free« and cannot be coerced, are dismissed as baseless, for the intention of the secular power is not to force consciences but to prevent blasphemy and maintain »the external discipline of doctrine and manners«, lest the *corpus christianum* be exposed to corruption.\(^{59}\) Although the Mosaic penalties for false prophesy and witchcraft derive from judicial laws issued specifically to the people of Israel under the old covenant, they are of universally applicability »as far as their substance is concerned«.\(^{60}\) If a ruler is obliged to protect his subjects from crimes against the body, it follows that he must guard against threats to the welfare of their souls.\(^{61}\) Toleration even of those who refrain from open profession of heresy is hazardous, as such persons may continue to disseminate their errors in secret.\(^{62}\) Following Augustine, Simler suggests that the imposition of external conformity may actually be of benefit to those affected, helping them, in the fullness of time, to embrace the orthodox faith with genuine conviction.\(^{63}\)

\(^{58}\) *Simler, Scripta veterum*, 3r, [*5v*].

\(^{59}\) *Simler, Scripta veterum*, 3r–v: »Sed cum magistratus haereticum punit, non id praecipue facit, ut vi eum rectius credere cogat. Si enim hic finis magistratui propositus esset, in nullum quantumvis sceleratum capite animadvertere liceret, sed id in puniendo spectat, ut inuiuriam seu blasphemiam maiestati Dei proccaciter factum ulciscatur, ut doctrinae et morum externam politiam conservet. Nisi vero contumaces perturbatores sanae doctrinae coerceantur, et exemplo in unum edito reliqui continentur in officio, ut etsi non idem ex verbo Dei cum caeteris sentient, saltem hoc ab ipsis extorquibil, ut vel alio se conferent, vel intra se continant suas pravas opiniones, et non modico fermento totam massam corrupcant.«


\(^{61}\) *Simler, Scripta veterum*, [*5r*], [*6v*].

\(^{62}\) *Simler, Scripta veterum*, [*6v*].

\(^{63}\) *Simler, Scripta veterum*, 3v. Cf. *Augustine, De correctione Donatistarum* (Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum [CSEL], vol. 57, Vienna 1911, 1-44; Pa-
Simler attacks the edict’s opponents as »Academici«, thereby associating them with Sebastian Castellio and other critics of Servetus’s execution, to whom the label had first been applied. According to Simler, their ultimate aim is to uproot true Christianity, with its doctrines of God, Christ and salvation, and replace it with a watered-down »philosophical« religion grounded on upright living, rather than faith. The »Academici« accuse their Reformed opponents of imposing a narrow dogmatism, but all that is demanded is adherence to the core tenets of the Gospel. Their own approach, which places in doubt even the most basic doctrinal propositions, is the diametrical opposite of Christianity; if tolerated, it will lead to a proliferation of sects and, eventually, a drift towards impiety and Epicureanism.

Although Simler avoids mentioning Silvio by name, it is clear from the contents of his second preface, in particular, that he was familiar with the latter’s treatise, which may have been passed on to him by Bullinger. Thus he is sceptical of Silvio’s claim that the Rhaetian authorities’ actions will force waverers to return to Catholicism, noting that Mass attendance is required only of those who refuse to subscribe to the Reformed confessions. Silvio’s appeal to his fellow ministers to imitate the example of Paul, who in Romans 14 advised that the »weakness« of Jewish converts be accommodated, is also given short shrift; as Simler points out, the same writer condemns those »pseudo-apostles« who made justification dependent on observance of the Law. The distinction that Silvio posits between »infant« and »adult« Christians is rejected on the authority of Irenaeus, who insists against the Gnostics on the common faith of all believers.


64 Simler, Scripta veterum, 3v.

65 Simler, Scripta veterum, 6v.

66 Simler also possessed a copy of Lentolo’s refutation of the work, the »Responsio orthodoxa« (Fiume, Lentolo, 171 f.). In a letter to the Bürgermeisters of Chur, Ambrosius Marti and Stefan Willi, he describes the »Scripta veterum« as his riposte to complaints received »muntlich und schriftlich« about the edict and the »große tyranny« of subscription (Zurich Zentralbibliothek, Ms F 46, 348–351). See Taplin, Italian Reformers, 248, n. 144.

67 Simler, Scripta veterum, 6r: »Errant autem qui haec dicunt in eo quod firmorum et infirmorum, lactentium et adultorum discrimen circa dogmata fidei statuunt,
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Silvio’s final objection to subscription – that it detracts from the authority of scripture – is the most serious. For Silvio, the entire substance of Christian doctrine is encapsulated in the Apostles’ Creed; more elaborate confessions, he suggests, have a tendency to elevate human teachings over revelation, the chief error of the papacy. In response, Simler argues that profession of the Apostles’ Creed, or even a general adherence to scripture, would be sufficient if cunning men did not seek by fraudulent means to twist the simplicity of the faith set out in them. Unfortunately, the church has found itself compelled to devise more precise creedal statements, of which the Rhaetic Confession is one, to exclude such perverse interpretations. To illustrate how scripture may be abused, Simler cites the example of the Servetians, who, while claiming to accept the biblical teaching that Christ is the son of both God and man and himself truly divine, preach a Christ who is none of those things. The refusal on principle of the edict’s opponents to
countenance "man-made" confessions is fundamentally misconceived; for their opposition to the Rhaetic confession to be justified, they must be able to demonstrate not merely that it contains extra-biblical terminology but that it contradicts scripture. Simler sees their position as foreshadowed in the attitude of earlier "heretics", specifically the Arians, who opposed the introduction of the clarifying term homoousios in order that they might "more easily impose their errors on the simple", and the Eutychians, who for similar reasons refused to countenance Chalcedon's additions to the Nicene Creed. Conversely, there are numerous early church precedents for the practice of subscription, which is endorsed by no less a writer than Hilary of Poitiers. Simler's appropriation here of patristic authority in support of the orthodox Reformed position sets the tone for the remainder of his work, the central purpose of which is to align Zwinglian Christology with the teaching of the Fathers.

postquam scilicet Deificatus est, et nomine ac postestate Dei donatus post resurrectionem a mortuis.«

70 Simler, Scripta veterum, [**6v]: "si nolunt subscriptione suam fidem hominum verbis astringere, ostendant nobis ubi a scripturis haec confessio dissentiat, confutent eam, et contrariam sententiam scripturis confirmant, nemo tam iniquus est, qui illos audire nolet scripturis pugnantes: id si non audent, an non suam pervicaciam produnt, qui ea damnant et reiciunt quae tamen confutare non possunt?«

71 Simler, Scripta veterum, [**6v]: "Porro ut olim Ariani oppugnabant τὸ οὐκοτος-σιον a Nicaena Synodo usurpatum, ut e medio sublato hoc vocabulo, quo res maxime explicabantur, facilius imponere possent simplicioribus: et ut postea Eutychiani ad tegendum suam impietatem iactabant se Nicaenam fidem sequi, Chalcedonense autem decretum quo detegebatur eorum improbitas oppugnabant: ita hodie multi piarum ecclesiarum confessiones orthodoxas non alio consilio oppugnant, quam ut liberius spar-gere possint sua prophana figmenta.«

72 Simler, Scripta veterum, [**6v]: "Neque debet molestum videri piis quod scripto testari debeant suam fidem, cum hoc adigant ecclesiam versutiae et fraudulentae sophisticaque cavillationes multorum, neque me movet quod dicunt veterem ecclesiam oris confessione contentam fuisse, cum liceat contraria ex historiis exempla proferre: et Hilarius, 'Ubique', inquit, 'scandala, ubique perfidiae sunt: hinc illud est, ut ad professionem subscribendarae fidei, aliqui eorum qui antea aliiu scripsarent cogerentur.'" The quoted passage is from *Hilary of Poitiers, De synodis* (PL 10, 479–546) 63.
2. Texts and sources

2.1 Texts

The earliest of the works published in the *Scripta veterum* is *De incarnatione Domini contra Nestorium libri VII*, by John Cassian (c. 360–432). Although Cassian spent his final years in Gaul, as a »Scythian« from the Dobrudja he was equally at home in Latin and Greek; this bilingualism, together with his extensive knowledge of monastic communities in Palestine and Egypt, equipped him to play an important role in the transmission of eastern ascetic traditions to the West. *De incarnatione* can be dated quite precisely to the summer of 430, as it formed the basis for the condemnation of Nestorius by Pope Celestine I in August that year.\(^{73}\) Simler’s text is based on the first printed edition of the work, by the antiquarian Johannes Sichardus, which was published by Andreas Cratander in Basel.\(^{74}\)

In the preface to *De incarnatione*, Cassian indicates that the work was written at the request of the Roman archdeacon Leo, later Pope Leo I (440–461). The *Scripta veterum* features two of Leo’s own writings: his letter to Flavian of Constantinople, usually known as the Tome,\(^{75}\) and a subsequent letter on Christology to the Emperor Leo I.\(^{76}\) Simler had access to the Cologne edition of Leo’s works, first published by Peter Canisius in 1546\(^{77}\) and reissued, with revisions by Laurentius Surius, in 1561 and 1569.\(^{78}\) As


\(^{76}\) ACO 2.4, 113–131; PL 54, 1155–1190.

\(^{77}\) D. Leonis papae huius nominis primi opera, quae quidem extant omnia, Cologne: Melchior von Neuß, 1546 (VD 16 L 1201).

\(^{78}\) D. Leonis eius nominis I. Romani pontificis opera, quae quidem haber potuerunt,
perhaps the definitive statement of the Christology of the western church, the Tome was reprinted several times during the sixteenth century – for example, in Basilius Heroldt’s *Orthodoxographa*, Johann Jakob Grynaeus’s *Monumenta* and Peter Crabbe’s edition of *acta* of church councils. The *Scripta veterum* includes another short work by a fifth-century pope, the *Tractatus de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium* of Gelasius I (492–496), whose pontificate fell during the so-called Acacian schism between Rome and Constantinople. The *Tractatus*, an uncompromising defence of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo against monophysitism, was published first in the *Antidotum* of Johannes Sichardus and again in Heroldt’s *Haeresiologia*. Simler was not the first Zurich theologian to make use of the work; it is cited by Bullinger, in *De origine erroris*, and by Peter Martyr Vermigli, who challenges Brenz’s use of Gelasius as an authority for the Lutheran view of the hypostatic union.

Simler’s collection incorporates two texts of north African provenance: the *Libri tres ad Trasimundum Vandalorum regem* by Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspe (468–533); and the *Libri quinque contra Eutychetem* by Vigilius, bishop of Thapsus (late fifth century). Fulgentius’s treatise was written around 515, as an apology for the orthodox faith against the Arian ruler Thrasamund. It was first published in 1520, together with Fulgentius’s other surviving works, by Johannes Cochlaeus and Willibald Pirckheimer, and

omnia, Cologne: Johann Birkmann, 1561 (VD 16 L 1202); Cologne: Johann Birkmann, 1569 (VD 16 L 1203). – Cf. Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 81r.


81 See Bergjan, Bullinger, 134, n. 10.

again in Heroldt’s *Haeresiologia*;\(^8^3\) Simler mentions both editions in his introduction to the text.\(^8^4\) Fulgentius was highly regarded by the Zurichers because of his emphasis on the impassibility of the divine nature and apparent support for their contention, against Brenz, that Christ’s humanity continues to be circumscribed physically after his glorification; he is cited on these points by Bullinger in the *Decades*, the *Tractatio* and the *Fundamentum firmum*, and by Vermigli in his *Dialogus*.\(^8^5\) Vigilius’s *Contra Eutychetem* enjoyed similar popularity with Reformed writers. In May 1539, Gwalther procured a copy of the *editio princeps*, by Caspar Churrerius, for Bullinger, who republished it soon afterwards;\(^8^6\) the work was also included in Heroldt’s *Haeresiologia*.\(^8^7\) The value that Bullinger attached to *Contra Eutychetem*, as a patristic witness against the allegedly monophysite Christologies of Kaspar Schwenckfeld and the ubiquitarians, is evident from the frequency with which he refers to it in his own writings. Particularly noteworthy is his citation in the *Decades* (4,6) of a lengthy passage from the work where Vigilius argues against the omnipresence of Christ’s flesh.\(^8^8\) Besides the editions mentioned above, Simler con-

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\(^8^4\) *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 139r. See also the entry for Fulgentius in *Simler*, Bibliotheca, 211f.

\(^8^5\) HBS 3, 126; *Bullinger*, Tractatio, 28r–v; *Bullinger*, Fundamentum firmum, 129v, 138r–v; *Vermigli*, Dialogus, 37v–38r, 16r–17r. Bullinger’s use of Fulgentius is highlighted by *Opitz*, Heinrich Bullinger als Theologe, 190.

\(^8^6\) *Orthodoxa et erudita D. Ioachimi Vadiani viri clarissimi epistola, qua hanc explicat quaestionem, an corpus Christi propter coniunctionem cum verbo inseparabilem alienas a corpore conditiones sibi sumat nostro saeculo perquam utilis et necessaria. Accesserunt huic D. Vigilii Martyris et Episcopi Tridentini libri v pii et elegantes, Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Elder, 1539 (HBBibl I 113). This is Bullinger’s only patristic edition.

\(^8^7\) *Haeresiologia*, 761–796.

\(^8^8\) HBS 4, 534f. Cf. *Vigilius*, Libri quinque contra Eutychetem (PL 62, 95–154) [Vigil. Thap. c. Eutych.] 4,14. For other examples of Bullinger’s use of Vigilius, see HBS 3, 44, 176f.; De conciliis, 99r–100r; Tractatio, 25v–26r, 28r; Responsio qua ostenditur sententiam de coelo et dextera Dei, 67v, 71r, 72r, 79v; Ad Testamentum, 26r, 29r–v. The work is also cited extensively in Vermigli’s *Dialogus*; see 12v, 33r–v, 42r–43v,
sulted Georg Cassander’s volume of Opera of Vigilius, published in 1555. Like previous editors of Contra Eutychetem, he mistakenly assumed its author to be identical with Bishop Vigilius of Trent (c. 353–405). Ironically, this error may have served to enhance the work’s status, by associating it with a well-known martyr of the church rather than an obscure African cleric.

One of the shorter texts in the Scripta veterum is De duabus naturis et una persona Christi adversus Eutychen et Nestorium, by Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius (c. 475–526), the celebrated Aristotelian commentator and author of De consolatione philosophiae. De duabus naturis, with its influential definition of a person as «an individual substance of rational nature», was included in the first edition of Boethius’s collected works, printed in Venice (1491/92), and in the volume of the same writer’s Opera edited by Heinrich Loriti (Glarean) and published by Petri in Basel. Roughly contemporaneous with Boethius was John Maxentius, the leader of a delegation of monks from Tomi, in present-day Romania, to Constantinople and Rome in 519–520. These »Scythian« monks were advocates of the so-called theopaschite formula, which proclaimed that »one of the Trinity was crucified«. Although the formula was initially rejected by Pope Hormisdas, in the course of the sixth century it became accepted as orthodox. The Scripta veterum...
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rum includes several »opuscula« attributed to Maxentius: the Libellus fidei; the Capitula contra Nestorianos et Pelagianos; the Professio brevissima catholicae fidei; the Brevisсимa adputationis ratio verbi Dei, ad proprietam carmen; the Responsio ad Acephalos; the Dialogi duo contra Nestorianos; and the Responsio ad epistolam, quae dicitur esse Papae Hormisdai.92 The same collection of works had been published several times previously: as an appendix to the 1520 and 1526 editions of Fulgentius, in Heroldt’s Orthodoxographa and in Grynaeus’s Monumenta.93

Maxentius’s views are representative of the theological tendency known as neo-Chalcedonianism, which married acceptance of Chalcedon with intense reverence for the works of Cyril of Alexandria (c. 378–444), from whom the monophysites also drew their inspiration.94 One of the most sophisticated neo-Chalcedonian works, Justinian’s Edictum rectae fidei,95 is given pride of place in the Scripta veterum. The edict, which was promulgated in 551, formed part of Justinian’s campaign to outlaw the Antiochene Christology associated with the so-called Three Chapters: Theodore of Mopsuestia, the works of Theodoret of Cyrrhus against Cyril, and the letter of Ibas of Edessa to Maris the Persian. Prior to appearing in the Scripta veterum, it had been published in Crabbe’s edition of conciliar acta.96 The final work in Simler’s anthology, the Disputatio contra Acephalos by Rusticus the Deacon, a nephew of Pope Vigilius (537–555), dates from the same period but is the product of a quite different Christological tradition.97

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93 Opera B. Fulgentii, ir–xxvr (the works of Fulgentius and Maxentius are paginated separately); Orthodoxographa, 673–720; Monumenta, vol. 1, 47–61; vol. 3, 2028–2063.
96 Concilia omnia, vol. 1, dlxxiv–dlxxviir.
97 PL 67, 1167–1254. On this work, see Uwe Michael Lang, Christological Themes
Like other western churchmen, Rusticus opposed the condemnation of the Three Chapters at the Second Council of Constantinople (553), in which his uncle had acquiesced under pressure from Justinian. His Disputatio had appeared previously in both Sichardus’s Antidotum and the Haeresiologia.98

Although Simler was the first to assemble these works in a single volume, many of them had featured in earlier patristic anthologies, as we have seen. It would appear that, together, they had begun to be regarded by the Reformed as constituting a »canon« of texts in which the Christological teaching of the ancient church was conveniently summarised. In the preface to his Vigilius edition, Bullinger commends the Tome, Gelasius’s Tractatus, Fulgentius’s Ad Trasimundum and the Dialogi duo of Maxentius as works in which the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches are conclusively refuted, while Vigilius, Rusticus and Leo are among the writers cited in Simler’s Responsio ad Stancari librum.99 In reality, of course, the texts published in the Scripta veterum represent a variety of Christological perspectives. Whereas works such as Leo’s epistles and Rusticus’s Disputatio exemplify the strongly dyophysite approach of the western church, derived ultimately from Augustine, Justinian’s edict and the works of Maxentius are in the Alexandrian, anti-Nestorian tradition of Cyril. One of the principal challenges that Simler faced was to fashion from this diverse material a unified consensus patrum supportive of his own theological position.

2.2 Sources

In the Annotationes that accompany his chosen texts and, more particularly, in the Narratio, which supplies the wider historical context within which they are set, Simler has recourse to a variety of sources. The work on which he draws most heavily is the Breuiarium causae Nestorianorum et Eutychianorum by Liberatus of

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98 Antidota, 246r–274v; Haeresiologia, 707–761. See the entry in Simler, Bibliotheca, 615.

99 Heinrich Bullinger Briefwechsel, ed. Ulrich Gäbler et al., Zurich 1973 ff. [HBBW], vol. 9, 167f. (no. 1283); Simler, Responsio ad Stancari librum, 5v, 11r, 20v, 44r.
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Carthage, written shortly after the death of Pope Vigilius in June 555. Liberatus, while rejecting Nestorianism, shared the reluctance of other western writers to condemn the wider Antiochene school from which it was derived; like Rusticus, he was strongly critical of the anathematisation of the Three Chapters. The Breviarium supplies the basic framework for Simler’s history between the outbreak of the Nestorian controversy (428) and Constantinople II. Large sections of the work – for example, Liberatus’s description of the mission of Paul of Emesa to Alexandria, which ended the schism between Cyril and the oriental bishops following the Council of Ephesus, and his account of the affair of Ibas of Edessa in the late 440s – are absorbed into the Narratio more or less verbatim.\(^{100}\)

Simler’s other major source, complementing Liberatus’s western perspective, is the works of the Greek ecclesiastical historians (Eusebius, Socrates, Theodoret, Sozomen and Evagrius), which were available in Wolfgang Musculus’s Latin edition (1549).\(^{101}\) For the period with which Simler is concerned, by far the most important of these writers was Evagrius, although the Ecclesiastical History of Socrates, which terminates in 439, includes material relevant to the Nestorian controversy. Evagrius’s work, written in the late 590s, opens with the election of Nestorius as bishop of Constantinople and concludes in 593/94, following the death of Bishop Gregory of Antioch. As an adviser to Gregory, Evagrius had privileged access to the diocesan archives of Antioch, which included copies of the acta of the ecumenical councils and other synods.\(^{102}\) Important documents such as the Encyclical and Counter-Encyclical of Basiliscus (475–476), Zeno’s Henotikon (482) and the religious edict of Justin II (571) are reproduced in his history in their entirety, while a substantial epitome of the acta of Chalcedon is appended to book 2. A moderate Chalcedonian himself, Evag-

\(^{100}\) Simler, Scripta veterum, 176v, 179v. Cf. Liberatus of Carthage, Breviarium causae Nestorianorum et Eutychianorum (ACO 2.5, 98–141; PL, 68, 969–1050) [Liberat.] 8,10.

\(^{101}\) The volume was reprinted in 1554, 1557 and 1562. For details, see Wallraff, Kirchengeschichtswerke, 231f., 258. The Greek text of the histories had been published previously by Robert Estienne. Musculus’s work incorporated his own translations of Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen and Evagrius, together with Joachim Camerarius’s earlier translation of Theodoret.

\(^{102}\) Pauline Allen, Evagrius Scholasticus the church historian, Louvain 1981, 6.
rius also consulted rival monophysite works, along with various secular histories and chronicles. Evagrius was a key source for the unfinished Ecclesiastical History of Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulus (fourteenth century), a Latin translation of which was published by Johann Lange in 1553. Like other sixteenth-century church historians, including the authors of the Magdeburg Centuries, Simler makes extensive use of this late text in conjunction with Evagrius. Despite the largely derivative character of Nicephorus's history, it provided Simler with some important information omitted by Evagrius – for example, on the career of Peter the Fuller, a fifth-century monophysite bishop of Antioch, which Evagrius was inclined to gloss over for patriotic reasons. The Narratio's categorisation of the various monophysite splinter groups that emerged during the sixth century is based on Nicephorus's account, which was itself taken from the Thesaurus orthodoxae fidei of Nicetas Choniates. Simler also makes use of two earlier Byzantine works, the Compendium historiarum of George Cedrenus (eleventh century) and the Epitome historiarum of John Zonaras (early twelfth century), bilingual editions of which had been published in Basel. They are especially important for his treatment of the monothelite controversy, as Nicephorus’s history terminates in 610, shortly before its outbreak.

104 Nicephori Callisti Xanthopuli, scriptoris vere Catholici, Ecclesiasticae historiae libri decem et octo [...], Basel: Johannes Oporin, 1553 (VD 16 N 1436). See the reference in Simler, Bibliotheca, 513. Excerpts from the history had been published by Beatus Rhenanus in 1535. Lange’s translation was based on a Viennese manuscript formerly held in the library of Matthias Corvinus; see Günter Gentz, Die Kirchengeschichte des Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulus und ihre Quellen: Nachgelassene Untersuchungen, Berlin ‘1966, 3, 207; Wallraff, Kirchengeschichtswerke, 224 f., n. 10. Further editions appeared in Basel in 1555, 1560 and 1561.
105 Simler, Scripta veternum, 197v–198r; Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulus, Historia ecclesiastica (PG 145, 549–1333; 146; 147, 9–448) [Niceph. h.e.] 15,28. See the comments of Allen, Evagrius, 123, and Whitby, Ecclesiastical History, 137, n. 15.
106 Gentz, Nicephorus, 179–181.
Besides these second-hand accounts, Simler had at his disposal some key primary documents, the *acta* of the early church councils. The first collection of *acta*, by Jacques Merlin (Paris 1524), was quickly superseded by Peter Crabbe’s impressive Cologne edition, published by Quentel in 1538. This formed the basis for two subsequent revisions, by Crabbe (1551) and Laurentius Surius (1567) respectively. It is likely that Simler used the original Crabbe edition, as this is the only one mentioned in his *Bibliotheca* of 1574. The collection included Liberatus’s *Breviarium*, together with material from the ecumenical councils of Chalcedon (451), Constantinople II (553) and Constantinople III (680–681), and from two important regional councils, the synods of Constantinople (536) and the Lateran (649). Simler alludes to conciliar material on a number of occasions in the *Narratio* – for example, to support his view of monotheletism as merely a modified form of Eutychianism, rather than a synthesis of orthodox and anti-Chalcedonian Christologies. Generally, however, his accounts of conciliar proceedings are rather terse, conveying little of the drama and immediacy of the stenographic records. The most colourful incident to which he refers – the condemnation of the monothelete monk Polychronius at Constantinople III, after failing to deliver on his claim to be able to revive the dead – has an obvious polemical function, furnishing evidence of the innate deceitfulness of heretics.

Simler also draws heavily on the writings of Cyril. The *Narratio* includes references to the Alexandrian’s correspondence with Nestorius, Pope Celestine and others, and to the synodical letters of the Council of Ephesus, which were appended to the standard Latin edition of Cyril’s works. When discussing the Twelve Ana-
thematisms, a key Cyrilline text whose orthodoxy was much contested during the Nestorian controversy, Simler quotes extensively from Cyril’s apologies Against the Orientals and Against Theodoret.\footnote{Simler, Scripta veterum, 179v–186v. For these works, see Operum divi Cyrilli, vol. 4, 142–219.} For the subsequent dispute with Eutyches, he has recourse to the correspondence of Pope Leo, especially Leo’s letters to Emperors Theodosius II and Leo I and to Theodosius’s sister Pulcheria.

Some of the texts published in the main body of the Scripta veterum are utilised again in the Narratio, as sources for the teachings of Nestorius (Vigilius, Cassian), later Nestorianism (Maxentius) and Eutyches (Leo, Vigilius). Other patristic works cited include Proclus’s Tome to the Armenians, Augustine’s De haeresibus, Basil’s Contra Eunomium, the dialogues of Ps. Athanasius, Theodoret’s Eranistes and John Damascene’s De haeresibus (the last two in relation to Eutychianism). Simler also makes occasional use of the Corpus iuris civilis for imperial anti-heresy legislation. In the short biography that he appendes to Cassian’s De incarnatione, he cites the ecclesiastical histories of Sozomen and Rufinus, Prosper of Aquitaine’s De gratia dei et libero arbitrio, the Institutiones of Cassiodorus, De viris illustribus by Gennadius of Marseille, the Chronicon of Ado of Vienne, the Chronicon sive Chronographia of Sigebert of Gembloux, and Raffaele Maffei’s Commentariorum urbanorum libri XXXVIII; elsewhere there are references to the Liber pontificalis, the Suda, the Libri historiarum of Gregory of Tours, the Historia Romana of Paul the Deacon and John Bale’s Illustrium maioris Britanniae scriptorium catalogus. The Magdeburg Centuries is cited infrequently but, given the tendency of sixteenth-century writers to acknowledge works by their contemporaries only to a limited extent, Simler may well have drawn on it more heavily than is apparent at first glance.
2.3 Interpretation

Despite its polemical motivation, the *Scripta veterum* is a work of serious scholarship, in the traditions of upper Rhine humanism. Two texts, Justinian’s *Edictum* and Vigilius’s *Contra Eutychetem*, are presented in improved redactions, based on manuscripts that Simler had procured from the brothers Pierre and François Pithou.\(^{114}\) Variant readings and emendations to earlier editions are listed in the *Annotationes*, which, in the case of Justinian’s work, also highlight textual parallels with the canons of Constantinople II and Justin II’s religious edict of 571.\(^{115}\) Like Liberatus and the Greek church historians, Simler incorporates into his account the full text of important documents such as the Chalcedonian Definition, the *Henotikon* of Zeno, and the conciliar decree of Constantinople III, as well as a previously unpublished anti-monothelete confession translated into Latin by »a certain friend of ours« (»amicus quidam noster«).\(^{116}\) He also takes care to correct common errors such as the designation of the Constantinople synod of 536 as the Fifth Ecumenical Council and Crabbe’s placing of the Lateran synod of 649 in the reign of Constantine III, rather than his heretical son Constans II.\(^{117}\) Although the *Scripta veterum* contains nothing comparable to the Magdeburg Centuriators’ attack on previous ecclesiastical historiography,\(^{118}\) Simler’s generally re-
spectful attitude to tradition does not preclude him from acknowledging discrepancies in his sources, weighing up the merits of rival accounts and, where necessary, rejecting the judgments of previous writers. For example, he is unconvinced by Evagrius’s claim that the contrasting theological positions of Justinian and his wife Theodora were part of a pragmatic strategy for managing religious tensions within the empire, preferring to regard their differences as genuine.  When Nicephorus suggests Arian or Eunomian influences as the source for the doctrine that Christ is ignorant of some things according to his human nature – an error associated with the monophysite group known as the Agnoetae – Simler is again sceptical, noting with characteristic doctrinal precision that the Arians denied the omniscience not of Christ’s humanity but of the divine Word himself. The report is further discredited for him by Nicephorus’s confusion of the sect’s purported founder, an Alexandrian deacon called Themistius, with the pagan philosopher of the same name.


120 Simler, Scripta veterum, 207v–208r: »Caeterum quod Agnoetas ignorantiam quarundam rerum humanae in Christo naturae tribuisse ait, in eo ipsorum sententiam non videtur recte assecutus, cum Ariani a quibus haec Monophysitae acceperunt ipsi Verbo ignorantiam tribuerint, et ipsi Monophysitae non potuerunt humanae naturae Christi ignorantiam tribuere qui unam tantum in Christo naturam agnoscebant, eamque Dei Verbi incarnatam. Et certe si sic tantum uti scribit docuissent hoc nomine non essent reprehendendi. Porro cur Themistium philosophum huius sectae defensorem faciat, non video, cum ille homo gentilis fuerit, qui proculdubio de eo non quaesivit quid nosset aut ignoraret Christus. Liberatus sectae huius auctorem facit Themistium Alexandrinarum ecclesiae diaconum, cuius mentio fit in Romana et Constantinopolitana VI Synodo contra Monothelitas.« Cf. Niceph. h.e. 18,50; Liberat. 19.
In the *Annotationes*, Simler testifies to his interest in contemporary debates on the dating and authenticity of patristic works by rehearsing and, at times, challenging the accepted wisdom on these questions. Thus he rejects the suggestion by Giulio Marziano Rota of an early date for Boethius’s *De duabus naturis*, arguing on the basis of internal textual evidence that it is more likely to have been written towards the end of the pontificate of Symmachus (498–514) or during that of Hormisdas (514–523). On this occasion, modern scholarship is in agreement with Simler, but often the *Annotationes* betray the extent to which he is influenced by confessional bias. In his comments on the *Edictum*, for instance, he rejects Justinian’s correspondence with Pope John II, with which the work had been linked by Crabbe, as spurious on doctrinal grounds. Simler’s summary dismissal of this material may be contrasted with his defence of the by-now traditional attribution of *Contra Eutychetem* to Vigilius of Trent, despite the difficulty of crediting the latter—who, as he himself acknowledges, is reported to have lived during the reigns of Arcadius and Honorius (395–408/423)—with authorship of a text that clearly postdates Chalcedon. The question is of more than academic importance: Simler’s conservative conclusion allows him to stress the particular relevance to his Rhaetian readers of *Contra Eutychetem*, as the work of a writer from an adjacent region.

The theological imperative that drives Simler’s work is frequently in tension with the humanist scholarly ideals to which he professes to adhere. Like Bullinger, Simler does not regard the Fathers as beyond reproach. Maxentius is described as writing in a defective style, although his opinions are termed excellent. The same criticism is directed at Cassian, whom Simler also chides for setting

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121 *Simler*, *Scripta veterum*, 15v. For Rota’s position, see Boethi in omnibus philosophiae partibus opera, 45r.
122 *Boethius: The Theological Tractates*, ed. Hugh Fraser Stewart and Edward Kennard Rand, London 1918 (The Loeb Classical Library 74) [LCL 74], 72f.
123 *Simler*, *Scripta veterum*, 8v. On this point, Simler is following Bibliander; see *Bibliander*, *De summa trinitate*, 115–130.
124 *Simler*, *Scripta veterum*, 111v. Cf. Cassander’s treatment of the issue in Vigilii opera, [*+7r*]–[*+8r*].
125 *Simler*, *Scripta veterum*, 19v.
126 *Simler*, *Scripta veterum*, 71v.
too much store by »monastic study, human traditions and monkish exercises«, and for relying on a faulty Latin translation of scripture, which leads him to misinterpret Mal 3,8 (Vulgate: »Si affiget homo Deum, quia vos affigitis me?«) as a prophecy of Christ’s crucifixion. But Simler takes care to ensure that the Fathers’ occasional lapses are not allowed to detract from their authority; errors such as Cassian’s, he adds quickly, may be put down to the ancients’ zeal in defence of the true faith and ignorance of Hebrew, and are therefore forgiveable. Similarly, he excuses the paucity of citations from the Bible and earlier Fathers in the Disputatio contra Acephalos on the grounds that Rusticus was dealing with opponents »who buried the simplicity and purity of Christian teaching beneath sharp and complex disputationes, and, when they could not defend their opinions from scripture, took refuge in the authority of human reason«. He even makes a virtue of Rusticus’s »scholastic« approach, by stressing its relevance to current Christological disputes, in which many of the same abstruse arguments are rehearsed.

On specific doctrinal issues, Simler is anxious to iron out any apparent discrepancies between patristic and Reformed teaching.

127 *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 46v: »Interea tamen satis apparat eum nimio monastices studio, humanis traditionibus et monachorum exercitiis plus quam oportet tribuisse, atque adeo cordis puritatem et vitam aeternam horum meritis adscripsisse.«

128 *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 48v. Cf. John Cassian, De incarnatione Domini contra Nestorium libri VII (CSEL 17, 233–391; PL, 50, 9–272) [Cassian. c. Nest.] 2,3. Simler points out that the original Hebrew verb, יִבְגָּל, denotes robbery, not crucifixion, and refers the reader to Zec 12,10, which can be applied with more confidence to Christ’s sufferings.

129 *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 48v: »condonandum autem hoc est veteribus, qui studio defendendae verae religiosae testimonia congerentes saepe ea magis numerarunt quam ponderarunt, et in his nonnunquam ignorantia Hebreae linguæ aberrarunt.«

130 *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 168r–v: »Porro quod ad rerum ipsarum tractationem spectat ea diversa est a superioris seculi scriptoribus, illi enim tantummodo testimonii sacrae scripturæ et veterum patrum adversus haereticos pugnant: at in hoc libro pau-cissima scripturarum testimonia proferuntur, patrum vero non nulla, plurimum autem rationibus acute excogitatis discipitantur. Caeterum hoc non Rustico nostro vitio verti debet, sed potius Acephalis, qui simplicitatem et puritatem Christianæ doctrinarum, acutis et perplexis disputationibus obruerunt, et quum scripturis sua tueri non possent, ad haec humanae rationis praesidia confugerunt. Laudanda autem est diligentia Rustici nostri qui eorum argumenta studiæ observavit, et collegit, et eadem erudite ac solide confutavit. Multa etiam quae nostra aetate discipitatur circa unionem personalem, non inerudite in hoc dialogo explicantur.«
This concern manifests itself with particular force in his remarks on Cassian, whose alleged semi-Pelagianism had made him suspect in the eyes of some Protestants. Simler is aware that Cassian was attacked by Prosper for his stance on the relationship between grace and works, and that other authorities urge caution when reading what he has to say on the subject. However, he insists that such criticisms are restricted to the monastic Collationes and, within that work, to the discussion of free will. No orthodox writer has raised objections to De incarnatione, which expounds pure doctrine, supported by testimonies from scripture and the Fathers, and responds to the novel and unbiblical teachings of Nestorius with »solid and clear« arguments. From the work’s explicit condemnation of Pelagius, it can reasonably be deduced that by the time of its composition Cassian had returned to a sound understanding of grace. Even in the Collationes, where he seems more sympathetic to the Pelagians, he does not sanction »all of their impious and crass opinions concerning the powers of the human will«; the most that Simler will concede is that Cassian appears to attach too much importance to free will in one passage of De incarnatione, which he duly notes. Beza, who otherwise welcomed the publication of the Scripta veterum, felt that Simler had been too lenient in his treatment of Cassian and should have done

131 See, for example, Ecclesiastica historia, vol. 5, 1332: »Doctrinam de libero arbitrio corrupit, et Pelagii sententiam amplexus est, ac propagavit.«
132 Simler, Scripta veterum, 47v: »Repraehenduntur autem non omnia illius scripta, sed Collationum libri, et in his duntaxat disputatio de libero arbitrio: caeterum libri de Sanctissimo et ineffabili mysterio dominicae incarnationis, a nullo unquam orthodoxorum reprehensius sunt, puram enim in his doctrinam de Incarnatione proponit, et eam scripturarum plurimis testimoniis, et Patrum quoque authoritate diligenter et accurate confirmat: ac Nestorii doctrinam novam et scripturis sanctis dissentaneam esse ostendit, eiusque rationes solide et perspicue confutat.«
133 Simler, Scripta veterum, 47v: »Damnat etiam his libris [De incarnatione] nominatim et graviter Pelagianam haeresim, et Leporium sua opera ad fidem catholicam a Pelagianismo conversum esse ostendit, quod tamen alli Augustino, alli Germano Antisiodorensi tribuunt: cum autem hi libri ab ipso in extrema senecta scripti sint, verisimile sit eum forte Augustini et aliorum scriptis edoctum resipuisse, et sese prorsus a Pelagianis seuisisse, ad quos in collationibus inclinare videbatur, quanquam ne in his quidem omnes earum impias et crassas opiniones de humani arbitrii viribus approbet.«
more to highlight the latter’s shortcomings as an exegete, to preserve his readers from similar errors.\textsuperscript{135}

Simler’s interpretation of the texts collated in the \textit{Scripta veterum} is shaped, above all, by the notion of the \textit{consensus patrum}.\textsuperscript{136} Although he acknowledges some variability in the patristic tradition, and the superiority of some writers to others on particular points,\textsuperscript{137} for the most part he depicts the Fathers as speaking with one voice. Simler’s approach, like that of most other sixteenth-century patristic scholars, is fundamentally unhistorical: the works in his anthology are presented as witnesses to timeless doctrinal truths, rather than as products of localised and evolving theological traditions. One of the functions of the \textit{Annotationes} is to sustain this impression of continuity, by reconciling any seemingly aberrant statements by the Fathers with the settled Christological formulas of a later period. For example, when Fulgentius speaks of the Word assuming a man, instead of using the preferred term »a human nature«, by this he means »not a separately subsisting hypostasis of a man but a nature of human flesh and soul taken up by the Word«. Simler notes that the same language is to be found in other ancient writers, »especially those who lived before Nestorius«, the obvious implication being that it has become suspect only because of its subsequent misuse by the heresiarch.\textsuperscript{138} Although he is slightly embarrassed by one passage in Cassian’s \textit{De incarnatione} that appears to anticipate Eutyches (and Schwenckfeld) by preaching the transformation of Christ’s flesh into a »spiritual substance«, he is sure that it can interpreted on orthodox lines, as

\textsuperscript{135} Beza to Simler, 19 September 1571 (CTB 12, 186 [no. 861]).


\textsuperscript{137} See, for example, Simler, \textit{Scripta veterum}, 71v: »Argumentum Nestorianum quod hic [John Maxentius, Dialogi duo contra Nestorianos (CCSL 85A, 49–110; ACO 4.2, 14–44; PG 86(1), 115–158) 1,3] tractatur, Mariam non geniisse Deum, quia quod nascitur eiusdem substantiae sit cum eo ex quo nascitur, tractatur etiam a Cassiano lib. 7 cap. 2 sed paulo aliter: is enim negat propositionem hanc, nativitas debet esse homouiosios parienti: mihi videtur accuratius haec quaeestio tractari a Maxentio.«

\textsuperscript{138} Simler, \textit{Scripta veterum}, 139v: »Fulgentius noster saepe hominem suscceptum dicit libro tertio: nomine hoc non separatim subsistentem hominis hypostasis intelligens, sed naturam humanam carnis atque animae a verbo suscceptam. Usi sunt multi veterum hac phrasi, praesertim qui ante Nestorium vixere.«
referring to the assumption of a human nature by the Word. Similarly, when Cassian attributes one power and substance to Christ, it is necessary to understand substantia as a synonym for persona, rather than natura, »as elsewhere among the ancients«, if Cassian is to be harmonised with other writers of the time and saved from condemnation by Chalcedon, Constantinople II and Constantinople III – for Simler, an unthinkable conclusion. The idea of a doctrinally uniform patristic corpus, set in clear and unequivocal opposition to those designated as heretics in ecclesiastical tradition, is carried over from the Annotationes into the Narratio, where it underpins Simler’s account of the Nestorian and monophysite schisms.

3. The »Narratio« I: the Nestorian controversy

3.1 Overview

The Narratio is prefaced by a brief account of the heresies that afflicted the church during the first four centuries of its existence. Simler assigns these early dissidents to several distinct camps. The first group, represented by Carpocrates, Cerinthus and »Ebion«, was made up of those who denied both Christ’s divinity and the virgin birth. A second faction – the two Theodoti, Paul of Samo-

139 Simler, Scripta veterum, 49r–v: »Porro quod dicit naturam carnis in spiritualem translatam esse substantiam non de natura carnis abolita intelligendum est, aut eis proprioietatibus sublatis, sed de assumptione carnis a Verbo, illam enim abolitionem et Chalcedonia synodus et veteres omnes quibus Cassianus consentit aperte damnant. Sic cum nomen humanitatis negat esse in Christo non auert illi substantiam carnis nostrae, cum aperte dicat veram Incarnationem confitendam contra Martionem: sed ut ita explicat sese, infirmitatem omnem corpoream absumpum docet in persona Christi, itaque cum gloria coelesti exornata sit caro Christi, eam in illo praecipue respienda. Cum autem unam virtutem et unam substantiam Christo tribuit, nisi hoc dicamus non de natura accipiendum, sed substantiae nomen pro personae nomine positum esse, ut alibi apud veteres, non poterimus Cassianum conciliare cum aliis sui temporis scriptorisibus, et a damnatione Chalcedoniae quintae et sextae synodi eximere.« Cf. Cassian. c. Nest.

140 Tertullian (De praescriptione haereticorum [CCSL 1, 187–224; PL, 2, 9–74] 33), supported by Jerome, Epiphanius and others, identifies Ebion as the eponymous founder of the Jewish-Christian sect known as the Ebionites, which probably derived its name from the Hebrew for «poor» (עבון).
sata and Photinus—accepted the doctrine of the virgin birth, while continuing to reject Jesus’s godhead. The third group comprised the Docetists and Gnostics such as Basilides, Valentinus, Cerdon, Marcian and Mani, who denied the true humanity of Christ. Fourth, there were the Patripassians Praxeas, Victorinus, Sabellius and Noetus, who erased the personal distinction between the Father and the Son within the Godhead. They were followed by Arius, who transformed Christ into a »created god«, and finally, by Arianism’s later offshoots, the Homoiousians, Anomoeans and Macedonians. Under the orthodox Emperor Theodosius I (379–395), peace was at last restored to the church, but the protracted Arian controversy had already prepared the ground for further dissension. This manifested itself as the heresies of Pelagius in the west and Nestorius and Eutyches in the east, where numerous monophysite factions arose to plague the empire in the centuries preceding the rise of Islam.\textsuperscript{141}

Having thus set the scene, Simler turns his attention to the first of the major fifth-century Christological heresies, Nestorianism. Chapter 1 describes Nestorius’s appointment as bishop of Constantinople and the opening phase of the Nestorian controversy, the catalyst for which was the refusal of Nestorius and his fellow-Syrian Anastasius to recognise the Virgin as \textit{theotokos} (»God-bearer«). Chapter 2 charts the escalating conflict between Nestorius and Cyril of Alexandria, from their initial exchange of letters through to Nestorius’s condemnation at the Council of Ephesus (22 June 431), prior to the arrival of the Syrian delegation led by John of Antioch. In chapter 3, Simler describes John’s hostile reaction to the council’s decision, his establishment of a rival »council« of eastern bishops, which anathematised Cyril, and the eventual resolution of the schism between Antioch and Alexandria in the so-called Formula of Reunion (433). Chapter 4 gives an account of Nestorius’s miserable death in exile and examines the continuing tensions between supporters and opponents of Cyril, especially in Syria. Simler concludes his discussion of Nestorianism with three doctrinal chapters: an exposition of Cyril’s \textit{Twelve Anathematisms}, which he views as pivotal to the controversy;
an analysis of Nestorius’s teachings, set against the true doctrine of the incarnation preached by Cyril and other Fathers; and a chapter on the alleged revival of Nestorianism in his own day.

3.2 Nestorius

Nestorianism was something of a raw nerve for the Zurichers, who, from Zwingli’s time onwards, had been charged by their Lutheran opponents with breathing new life into this ancient error. In *De conciliis* and his works against Brenz, Bullinger rejected any suggestion of a link between the Zurich church and Nestorius, whom he condemned in the strongest possible terms. The *antistes* contrasted Nestorius’s teaching that the Word is present in the man Christ by »partnership [...] or association« (»assistentiam [...] seu societatem«) with the orthodox doctrine of the hypostatic union. Nestorianism, he argued, amounts to a denial of Christ’s true divinity, as it erases the distinction between Christ and other holy men in whom God’s presence was manifested. Bullinger’s view of Nestorius as an adoptionist, in the tradition of Paul of Samosata and Photinus, was shared by most other Reformed writers. Beza, for example, describes Nestorius as emerging from the same »pit of hell« as Arius to deprive the incarnate Christ of his divinity and replace the man-God with a divinised man.

In the *Narratio*, Simler provides a much more detailed and multifaceted account of Nestorianism, which nonetheless serves to reinforce the traditional characterisation of Nestorius as a »Samosatenian«. Following the Greek church historians, he denounces Nestorius as a »frivolous, arrogant and vainglorious man« (»homo [...] levis et arrogans vanae gloriae appetens«) – a populist preacher who curried favour with the multitude by feigning an ascetic lifestyle. However, he is concerned less about the heresiarch’s

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142 For examples, see *Bergjan*, Bullinger, 144, n. 47.
143 *Bullinger*, *De conciliis*, 96v; *Responsio*, 58r–v.
144 CTB 8, 236.
145 *Simler*, *Scripta veterum*, 170r: »Cum autem illi munus docendi populum commissum fuisset, mox ostendit qualis postea tota vita futurus esset, neque enim seclusus est generosum dicendi genus, quo homines ad salutem utiliter erudire posset, sed omnia sua ad populi delectationem direxit, inanes plausus captando: neque dicendo tantum, sed vita et habitu ad dictam sanctimoniam composito, ingens sui desiderium et admi-
personal shortcomings than about the damaging effects of his doctrine. Simler is aware that the ancients differ in their assessment of Nestorius’s heresy. Despite his anti-monophysite orientation, Liberatus takes a strongly negative view of Nestorius, whom he condemns as a follower of Paul of Samosata; this judgment is supported by Cassian, who traces Nestorius’s error back to the Ebionites. Socrates and Vigilius, by contrast, reject the labelling of Nestorius as an adoptionist, preferring to attribute his errors to ignorance of the Fathers. Simler does not dismiss this alternative view out of hand. As an authority on antitrinitarianism, he knows that the teachings of Nestorius, who confessed the Trinity and recognised the distinct personality of the Logos, cannot simply be conflated with the adoptionist monarchianism of Paul of Samosata, and he is even aware of a statement by Nestorius condemning Paul. Instead, he proposes a more subtle connection between the two heresies: namely, that they both tend towards the same end, abolition of «the true knowledge of our Saviour Jesus Christ». Although Nestorius may not have meant to cast doubt on Christ’s divinity, that was clearly Satan’s intention in allowing his error to take root.


146 Simler, Scripta veterum, 170v–171r. Cf. Liberat. 2–4; Cassian. c. Nest. 1,2; Socr. h.e. 7,32; Vigil. Thap. c. Eutych. 5,18.

147 Simler, Scripta veterum, 171r: »Utrique [Socrates and Vigilius] in eo quod inter Samosateni et Nestorii doctrinam distinguat libenter assentior: Photinus enim et Samosatenus cum Sabellio ut naturam Deitatis ita personam quoque unam professi sunt, et negarunt verbum seu filium Dei ab aeterno suam habuisse subsistentiam et personam, Christum quidem ex virgine natum, filium Deum propter conceptum e sacro spiritu fatebantur, sed in eo non nisi humanam naturam agnoscebat, eumque parem caeteris hominibus, tantum amplitudine donorum et gratiae illis antecellere: ab his ergo Nestorius in eo differt quod Trinitatem cum orthodoxis confitetur, et λόγον agnoscit ύποστάσειν: sed si reliqua eius dogmata spectemus prorsus in eundem finem cum Samosateni tendunt, qui si non ipsi Nestorio, Satanae tamen procudubio in his heresibus spargendis fuit propositus, ut aboleatur vera agnition Servatoris nostri Iesu Christi.«
The initial focus of the dispute between Nestorius and Cyril was the term *theotokos*, long established in popular piety as a honorific for the Virgin but rejected by Nestorius, who proposed *christotokos* in its stead. Yet Simler insists that it would be wrong to dismiss the controversy as merely a »quarrel about words«. The fact that Nestorius was not received back into the church even after dropping his opposition to the *theotokos* title shows that far more important issues were at stake: whether Jesus Christ is truly God, or whether the Word is united to him only by association; how Christ is to be worshipped and invoked in prayer; in what way he acts as our high priest and mediator; and how we were saved by his passion and death.  

Although in his surviving writings Nestorius appears to affirm that Christ is God and man in one person, it is clear that he postulated the existence of two individuals (»alius et alius«, rather than »aliud et aliud«) in Christ: the divine Word, and the man Jesus, in whom the Word dwells »as in a temple« (»quam templo«). In Nestorius’s theology, there is no »special union of the Word with the flesh« (»peculiarem unionem Verbi cum carne«); Jesus is not the true God but »a God-bearing man« (»Deiferum hominem«), resembling the prophets. He is termed God and the Son of God only by association with the Word, just as Moses was designated God to Pharaoh, and his worship is comparable to the honour paid to a statue of the emperor, on account of the one whom it represents.  

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148 *Simler, Scripta veterum, 171r*: »Neque enim tantum λογομαχία fuit de nomine Dei genitrices, an beata virgo dici debeat Deipara, aut potius Christipara, quanvis haec fuerit occasion, et forte initio (ut dixi) non tam rebus quam verbis inter se dissenserint, controversia fuit de maximis rebus et mysteriis ad salutem nostram pertinentibus, an Jesus Christus conceptus ex spiritu sancto et natus ex virgine sit Deus, an vero Deus Verbum tantum per assistentiam et societatem illi adsit, ut Prophetis et Apostolis, an sint duo filii Deus Verbum et Jesus ex virgine natus: an sit adoratione una adorandus, et quomodo sit invocandus: Quomodo sit pontifex et mediator noster: quomodo passione et morte sua nos redemerit.«

149 *Simler, Scripta veterum, 171r, 186v*. To support this claim, Simler quotes extensively from the collection of statements from Nestorius’s sermons submitted to the Council of Ephesus by Cyril (ibid., 172r–173r). On these excerpts, see Friedrich Loofs, *Nestoriana: Die Fragmente des Nestorius*, Halle 1905, 8. They were published in Crabbe’s edition of conciliar »acta« (Concilia omnia, tam generalia, quam particularia, cccxliii-cccxliv; see Loofs, *Nestoriana, 13*) and in the Basel Latin edition of Cyril’s works (Operum divi Cyrilli, 4, 298–303).

150 *Simler, Scripta veterum, 186v–187r.*
»theopaschite« language and the *communicatio idiomatum* confirms his departure from orthodoxy. If he had acknowledged the existence of a single subject in Christ truly, rather than »in words«, he would have had no difficulty accepting that birth, suffering and death can be predicated of the Word, by virtue of his assumption of a human nature.151 Instead, he reduced Christ’s humanity to the status of a »garment « (»vestimentum«) donned by the second person of the Trinity.152

3.3 Theodore of Mopsuestia

Simler’s harsh verdict on Nestorius may be contrasted with his treatment of the wider Antiochene theological tradition, which he was anxious to reclaim for orthodoxy. Whereas Nestorius is judged (and found wanting) against the exacting Christological standards established at Chalcedon and subsequent ecumenical councils, his predecessor Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350–428) is dealt with in a much more lenient fashion. Many ancient writers denounced Theodore as »Nestorius’s teacher«; in this connection, Simler points to the comments of Maxentius and Justinian and, especially, to the *acta* of Constantinople II, which cite Cyril, Proclus and Hesychius of Jerusalem in opposition to the Cilician bish-

151 *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 171v–172r: »Cum tamen scripturae doceant filium Dei Deum Verbum natum passum et mortuum carne, non quod divinitas ex homine nascatur, patiatur aut moriatur, sed quod haec persona quae ex virgine nata, et passa, et mortua est; Iesus inquam Nazarenus, non sit homo merus, sed verus et natura Deus, cui non ita est associata divinitas ut sanctis hominibus qui templum Dei sunt, sed Deus Verbum in carne assumptam, ut sit unum individuum Verbum et caro: sustentante Verbo carmen, ut absque Verbo unita nunquam fuerit, aut futura sit caro haec: itaque et quae Verbi et quae carnis sunt, de hoc individuo dicuntur, Christus enim est unus et idem Deus et homo, Dei filius et hominis filius: aeternus, et definito tempore Bethlehemi natus: attamen scripturae docent nos ea quae ita praedicantur discernere, ut naturae cuique tribuamus quod suum est, quamvis in concreto id personae tribuatur: Christus natus est ex semine David: haec persona cum sit Deus recte dicitur Deum natum esse ex semine David secundum carmen. Nestorius vero iudicamus idem esse dicere Deum et natum et mortuum, et divinitatem natam et mortuam, has locutiones repudiavit, et tribuit carni haec quae secundum carmen de Christo dicuntur, non in una persona naturas et actiones earum distinguens, sed prorsus naturas separans et cuique suam separatim tribuens hypostasim, eas rursus nomine et dignitate coniungebat, et ita quamvis videri nollet duos Christos et filios faciebat.«

152 *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 187r.
op. However, the issue of Theodore’s orthodoxy is rendered more problematic by the many contrasting testimonies (in Theodoret’s *Ecclesiastical History*, in Liberatus and in the correspondence of John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nazianzus) to Theodore’s wisdom and piety, and by the fact that his orthodoxy was upheld at Chalcedon. Simler accepts that, if Theodore wrote the things attributed to him at Constantinople II, his theology is rightly to be condemned, but he is prepared to give credence to Liberatus’s report that statements in Theodore’s works were “exaggerated” either by monophysites seeking to discredit him or by Nestorians who wished to enlist him among their supporters. In the end, Simler delivers a mixed verdict on Theodore, as “a man of great learning and wisdom who was at fault here and there in his writings and sowed the seeds for Nestorianism.” In combating the errors of those who failed to recognise the distinction of natures in Christ, Theodore “separated [the two natures], or at least appeared to separate them and to preach two Christs instead of one”; his status is comparable to that of another orthodox writer, Dionysius of Alexandria (third century), whose pointed formulations against Sabellianism subsequently helped pave the way for Arianism. Simler rejects the labelling of Theodore as a sectarian because, unlike Nestorius, he did not defend his errors obstinately and showed a genuine willingness to accept correction. Although Simler shies away from repudiating the Fifth Ecumenical Council’s con-


156 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 171v: “Quod si mihi licet meas coniecturas in medium proferre, judico Theodorum hunc excellenti doctrina et sapientia virum fuisse, eum tamen alicubi in scriptis suis aberasse et semina Nestorianae doctrinae sparsisse, libenter Patribus quintae synodi credo: de hoc autem eius errore idem judico quod Basilius de Dionysio Alexandrino cuius scripta, seminarium Arianismi quidam fuisse censebant […] Ex his igitur laudibus quas illi tribuunt qui eodem cum ipso tempore vixerunt, judico virum bonum fuisse, ideoque non destinata animi malitia hos errores sparsisse: sed nimo studio contradicendi Apollinari et alii qui veritatem humanae naturae non integrum in Christo servabant, et unam duntaxat in eo naturam agnoscebant, dum naturas in Christo distinguendas esse urget, easdem quoque separavit, vel saltum separare visus est, et duos Christos pro uno praedicare.” In the Polish trinitarian controversy, the example of Dionysius was used by Simler and other Zurich divines to show how overzealous defence of one aspect of true doctrine can itself give rise to heresy. See Taplin, *Italian Reformers*, 196f.
demnition of Theodore, he is clearly ill at ease with it. In the Annotationes on Justinian’s Edictum, which defends the practice of anathematising individuals after their deaths, he observes that this opinion was not universal among Justinian’s contemporaries and commends the Council of Nicaea on condemning not Arius himself, but only his teachings. While acknowledging Theodore’s flaws, Simler goes to considerable lengths to retain him within the ranks of the Fathers, partly out of a genuine irenicism that he is keen to see imitated in his own day, and partly because he wishes to minimise the points of difference between the Antiochene Christology represented by Theodore and the rival Alexandrian school of Cyril. Theodore’s errors come to be seen not as evidence of heresy, but as unfortunate by-products of his eagerness to defend dyophysite orthodoxy. A comparison may be drawn between Simler’s judgment on Theodore, who was condemned posthumously on the basis of statements that did not reflect the full range of his thought, and his subsequent comments regarding Cyril, whose Christology he sees as likewise prone to manipulation by both opponents and supporters.

3.4 Theodoret, Cyril and the »consensus patrum«

To some extent, Simler’s generous assessment of Theodore represents a departure from the Zurich church’s previous line; in De conciliis, Bullinger endorses the received view of the bishop of Mopsuestia as a Nestorian with adoptionist views. However, in the same work he commends other Antiochene churchmen – Acacius of Beroea, Paul of Emesa and even Ibas of Edessa, whose letter to Maris was proscribed at Constantinople II – for their »piety and learning« (»pietate et doctrina«). The most influential Antiochene theologian of the fifth century, Theodoret of Cyrrhus (393-c. 460), was held in particularly high regard by the Zurichers on

158 Bullinger, De conciliis, 105v–106r.
159 Bullinger, De conciliis, 97v.
account of his strong dyophysitism. Bullinger owned a copy of the 1549 Basel edition of Theodoret’s *Eranistes*, which he cites in the *Decades* against ubiquitarianism and on the proper understanding of the *communicatio idiomatum*;160 the Reformed protagonist in Vermigli’s *Dialogus*, Orothetes, also refers repeatedly to the same work.161 Against Brenz and other Lutherans, who tended to be suspicious of Theodoret, the Zurichers emphasised the value of his works.162 Simler praises Theodoret for his »piety, learning and eloquence«, describing him as well versed in scripture and the Fathers, and unsurpassed among the Greeks as a heresiologist.163 In the *Responsio ad Stancari librum*, he vigorously defends Theodoret against his detractors, pointing out that he both refuted Nestorianism in his works and anathematised Nestorius personally at Chalcedon, where he was restored to the see of which he had been unjustly deprived at the Second Council of Ephesus.164

The fact that this defence was necessary is indicative of Theodoret’s precarious status within the patristic canon. As Simler was aware, Theodoret had been prominent within the opposition to Cyril at Ephesus and had penned a refutation of the *Twelve Anathematisms*, which had been condemned as heretical at Constantinople II. In defending Theodoret, he had no wish to cast aspersions on Cyril, traditionally regarded as the champion of the orthodox faith against Nestorianism; on the contrary, the *Narratio* forms part of a wider Reformed campaign to recapture Cyril from Lutheran writers such as Brenz and Martin Chemnitz, who regarded him as the chief patristic authority for their view of Christ. Simler’s task was to account for the schism between Cyril’s Alex-

160 *Leu/Weidmann*, Heinrich Bullingers Privatbibliothek, 154; HBS 4, 527f., 537f.
161 *Vermigli*, Dialogus, 5r–5v, 8r–9r, 32r, 36v–7r, 40r, 41r–v.
162 See *Bullinger*, Fundamentum firmum, 80r–83v. For the contrasting Lutheran view, see *Mahlmann*, Die christologischen Schriften, 392, 434–446, and *Brandy*, Brenz, 140.
163 *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 176r: »scripta illius ostendunt, vir fuit magnus pietate, doctrina, eloquentia, ut merito in Theologia et rebus sacris inter primos locum obtineat: quando vix alius est, e Graecis praesertim Theologis, qui rationibus et scripturarum testimoniiis fortius haereticos impugnet et prosternat: nullus vero illo totius antiquitatis cognitione instructior, et qui sua omnia tot Patrum et veteris ecclesiae testimoniiis confirmet, id quod legenti dialogos ipsius adversus Eutychianos [the »Eranistes«], et Hae-reticorum fabularum compendium, aliaque eius scripta manifestum est.«
164 *Simler*, Responsio ad Stancari librum, 39v.
andrian faction, and Theodoret and his fellow orientals, in a way that allowed him to vindicate the orthodoxy of both sides and, in so doing, to preserve intact the notion of a *consensus patrum* on Christological issues.

In his works dealing with the subject, Bullinger puts the quarrel between Cyril and the Antiochenes down to a misunderstanding – Theodoret’s belief that, in the *Twelve Anathematisms*, Cyril was seeking to blur the boundaries between the two natures of Christ.\(^{165}\) Because the dispute related to words, not substance, it was quickly resolved once Cyril had had the opportunity to explain the difference between his assertion that God suffered »in the flesh« and the views of the fourth-century heretic Apollinaris of Laodicea, who made Christ’s divinity the direct subject of the passion. Bullinger portrays the Ephesian schism as little more than a temporary local difficulty; Theodoret and Cyril are said to have been at odds for only »for a short time«, with Cyril’s clarification of his teaching effecting a full and lasting reconciliation between them.\(^{166}\) Due to his more extensive knowledge of the sources, Simler is unable to dismiss the conflict quite so easily. In the *Narratio*, he acknowledges that the church was split for three years and chronicles in detail the mutual anathemas and political manoeuvrings of the rival parties both at Ephesus and following the council, as they strove to win imperial backing for their position.\(^ {167}\) Ultimately, however, his explanation of the causes of the schism is identical to Bullinger’s. Simler accepts that the controversy centred on doctrinal issues, rather than just the question of Nestorius’s dismissal, but he maintains that personal animosity between those involved clouded their judgment, making it impossible for them to deal fairly with their opponents.\(^ {168}\) This led the Syrian bishops to charge Cyril with Apollinarianism and Arianism, only to be accused in turn of preaching two Christs. Simler sees in the heated

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\(^{165}\) *Bullinger*, De conciliis, 98r; *Bergjan*, Bullinger, 132–154.

\(^{166}\) *Bullinger*, Fundamentum firmum, 81v.

\(^{167}\) *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 175v. Cf. Liberat. 6; Niceph. h.e. 14,35.

\(^{168}\) *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 175v–176r: »Ac tum quantum iudico scriptis illis certatum est, quorum aliqua hodie quoque extant: etenim non tantum inter eos controversia fuit de depositione Nestorii, sed de ipsis quoque dogmatibus disciparunt: quamvis animorum alienatio et offensae aliunde ortae posterioris controversiae causaeuisse videantur, quod minus dextre exacerbatis animis invicem sua dicta interpretarentur.«
exchanges between the two factions an example of the Fathers’ tendency to allow their emotions to get the better of them; his praise for Cyril, in particular, is tempered by a recognition of the Alexandrian’s personal flaws, evidenced by his involvement earlier in his career in unsavoury episodes such as the murder of the Platonist philosopher Hypatia. But while deploiring the polemical tone of the controversy, Simler finds reasons to justify the stances adopted by both sides, on the basis of their respective theological concerns. The robust, even provocative, way in which Cyril asserts the unity of Christ’s person is understandable, given that he was opposing the grave errors of Nestorius. By the same token, Theodoret and the other eastern bishops can be excused for taking offence at some of the more »exaggerated« formulations in the Twelve Anathematisms, as »they were not yet clear about Cyril’s meaning« and feared – rightly – that his phraseology was susceptible to abuse by followers of Apollinaris, who were well represented in Syria.

In chapter 5 of the Narratio, Simler argues that the specific criticisms directed against the Anathematisms stemmed from a misreading of Cyril; essentially, he argues, Theodoret and his colleagues were tilting at windmills, attributing to the Alexandrian views that he did not in fact hold. For example, they understood the statement in Cyril’s first anathematism that the Word was »born or made in the flesh« to be equivalent to saying, with Apollinaris, that the Word was »converted« into flesh, yet Cyril explicitly rules

169 Simler, Scripta veterum, 176r–v: »Ut autem libere quod sentiam in medium proferam, humani aliquid in hac causa boni illi Patres passi sunt, et affectibus aliquatenus superati sunt, ac arbitror mihi assensuros omnes qui paulo attentius totam huius schismatis historiam exponderint: et ea quoque consideraverint quae de Cyrillo memoriae mandata sunt ab ecclesiasticae historiae scriptoribus, de eius ad episcopatum electione, et rebus adversus Iudaeos, Orestem urbis praefectum, et Hypatiam philosopham gestis. Sed cum plurima ipsius Cyrilli et Theodoreti scripta extant, docta et laboriosa, et certe ecclesiae admodum utilia, multum nos illis debere ingenuo confitendum est, de actis tamen eorum et de hoc dissidio, homines eos nobis iudicare liceat«. Cf. Camerarius, Chronologia, 144.

170 Simler, Scripta veterum, 176r: »Quia enim illi certamen erat cum Nestorio discerpente naturas, vehementior forte fuit in quibusdam locutionibus exaggerandis: quare non mirum est Theodoretum, cum alis plurimis qui mentem Cyrilli nondum perspectam habeabant, his offensum fuisse.« Cf. HBBW 11, 266f. (no. 1550); Vermigli, Dialogus, 34r–36r.
out this interpretation.\textsuperscript{171} Theodoret’s opposition to the term hypostatic union (\textit{ἐνωσις κατ’ ὑποστασιν}), which Cyril uses to describe the bond between Christ’s divinity and humanity, is also misconceived: for Theodoret, the term signifies "something mixed or composite", but Cyril’s intention is merely to underline the closeness of the union between the Word and the human nature that he has assumed, "without any conversion and confusion", in the incarnation.\textsuperscript{172} Similarly, when in his third anathematism Cyril speaks of a "natural union" (\textit{ἐνωσις κατὰ φύσιν}) between the Word and flesh in Christ, he means only that they constitute a "true" union, like the union of body and soul in man, in which each nature retains its distinct qualities, as opposed to the affective or associational union proposed by Nestorius.\textsuperscript{173} The orientals are right to stress the importance of distinguishing between scriptural passages that apply to Christ’s divinity and others that relate to his human nature – failure to do so properly could open the door to Arianism – but this "dispensatio" is not questioned by Cyril, as they maintain. Cyril’s aim is merely to make clear that all such "voces" relate to the single person of the incarnate Word; once again, the difference between the two sides vanishes on closer scrutiny.\textsuperscript{174} Cyril is also at one with Theodoret on the question of

\textsuperscript{171} Simler, Scripta veterum, 180r: "Theodoreto respondit eum frustra laborare in eo probando Verbum esse immutabile ideoque non conversum in carnem, quoniam non asserat mutationem verbi, neque hoc pugnare cum suo Anathematismo, debuisse eum si vellet impugnare suum anathematismop aperte negare Emanuelem esse Dei genitricem.« Cf. Cyril of Alexandria, Apologeticus contra Theodoretum pro duodecim capitibus (PG 76, 385–452) [Cyr. apol. Thdt.] c. 394–398.

\textsuperscript{172} Simler, Scripta veterum, 180v: "Porro Theodoreto nomen Unionis secundum subsistentiam improbatur tanquam novum, et extraneum a scripturis divinis, et patribus qui has interpretati sunt. Deinde videtur temperaturam aut misturam quondam significare, quam sequitur confusio quae naturarum proprietates aboleat. Verum Cyrillus respondet se nomine unionis κατ’ ὑποστασιν usum ad destruendam haeresim Nestorii nativitatem Verbi secundum carmen negantis, ac nihil aliud hoc nomine significare voluisse, quam Verbi naturam, hoc est subsistentiam, quae est ipsum Verbum, humanae naturae vere unitum esse citra ullum conversionem et confusionem, ut unus intelligatur et sit Christus, idem Deus et homo." Cf. Cyr. apol. Thdt. c. 399–402.

\textsuperscript{173} Simler, Scripta veterum, 181r–v: "Cum autem naturale idem hic sit quod vere, nulla statutur confusio, sed duarum dissimilium rerum Deitatis et humanitatis vera unio, in unum Christum.« Cf. Cyril of Alexandria, Apologeticus pro duodecim capitibus adversus orientales episcopos (PG 76, 315–386) [Cyr. apol. orient.] c. 327–332; Cyr. apol. Thdt. c. 403–410. See also Simler, Scripta veterum, 187v.

\textsuperscript{174} Simler, Scripta veterum, 182r: "Quod autem adversarii Cyrillo sua verba obiciunt
God’s impassibility. His »theopaschitism«, as expressed in the twelfth anathematism, differs profoundly from that of later monophysites, for Cyril makes clear that the Word suffered »in the flesh«, rather than in his divinity, and that the passion is attributed to him »by dispensational appropriation«.175 In the same way, the superficial similarities between Theodoret’s language – for example, his use of the term theophoros for Jesus – and that of Nestorius mask his underlying agreement with Cyril on the issue of Christ’s unity. Whereas Nestorius proposes a twofold worship of Christ, first as God and secondly as his visible image in the man Jesus, both Cyril and Theodoret teach that Christ is to be adored singly, as the one incarnate Word.176

In modern patristic scholarship, it is usual to assign Cyril and Theodoret to distinct and, in some respects, opposing Christological traditions: the »schools« of Alexandria and Antioch. Both Theodoret and Nestorius were products of the Antiochene school, which originally posited »two subjects« in Christ; although Theodoret modified his terminology after Ephesus to bring it more into line with Cyril’s language, it has recently been argued that he remained a crypto-Nestorian until the end of his life.177 Similarly, Cyril owed more to Apollinaris – including the concept of »natural« union and the formula »one incarnate nature of God the Word« (μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη) – than he cared to admit.178 For Simler, however, there is no Alexandrian or Antiochene tradition, only the time-honoured orthodoxy of the church quasi sibi contradicat, his ipsis confirmant anathematismum, nam illis affirmat summam unionem servandam, quod ipsi quoque dicunt, unio autem summa non admissit dualitatem aut sectionem: quod autem addit secundum unitarum naturarum virtutem uni filio accommodanda quae dicuntur, et quod adversarii dicunt unamquamque vocem de Christo dictam exponendam esse, recte dictum est, et anathematismo non repugnat.« Cf. Cyr. apol. orient. c. 331–342.

175 Simler, Scripta veterum, 186r: »Quando igitur Verbum dicitur carne pati, non ipsum in propria natura intelligitur pati, sed quia proprium eius est sanctum corpus, ideo eius dicuntur carnis passiones secundum dispensativam appropriationem.« Cf. Cyr. apol. orient. c. 379–382.

176 Simler, Scripta veterum, 183v–184r.


and heretical divergences from it. The Fathers may use different terms – *conversio*, *coniunctio*, *commixtio* or *compositio* – to describe the ability of God’s substance to assume an extraneous nature without itself being altered, but all relate to the same process.\(^{179}\) The quarrel between Alexandria and Antioch was a dispute about terminology, not substance, aggravated by personal rivalries. Once the channels of communication between Cyril and John of Antioch had been reopened, their schism was swiftly brought to an end, for it became apparent to both patriarchs that, fundamentally, they professed the same faith.\(^{180}\) As their reconciliation showed, the true dividing line ran not between Antioch and Alexandria, but between the orthodox, both Syrian and Egyptian, and Nestorius, who asserted the unity of Christ’s person »in words« but denied its reality.

In fact, the Formula of Reunion was successful only in papering over the cracks between the Cyrilline and Antiochene factions in the eastern church, which remained at loggerheads throughout the 430s and 440s.\(^{181}\) In the *Narratio*, however, this conflict is subtly reconfigured as a struggle between the orthodox mainstream and certain »quarrelsome and restless men« who, dismayed by the restoration of ecclesiastical concord, strove once again to divide the episcopate.\(^{182}\) Following his agreement with John, Cyril was criticised in some quarters for conceding too much to the Antiochenes, while Nestorius’s allies began to circulate forged letters from pro-

\(^{179}\) Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 187v. Simler attributes most apparent disagreements between the Fathers to differences in their use of technical vocabulary. He illustrates the point with reference to the term »*substantia*«, which in Latin writers may denote either ὑπόστασις (as in Boethius) or οὐσία. See ibid., 16r: »Duo autem ex his nominibus cum non eodem modo ab omnibus accipiantur hypostasis et substantia, factum est ut saepe inter se dissentire videantur qui re ipsa consentiunt.« Boetho enim et multis aliis Individuum tantum substantia nominatur, ideo illae sunt tres in Deo substantiae: aliis substantia est οὐσία et hi unam in Deo substantiam profitentur, et tres substantias, ita enim hypostases interpretantur«. Cf. Anicius Manlius Severinus *Boethius*, De duabus naturis et una persona Christi adversus Eutychen et Nestorium (PL 64, 1337–54; LCL 74, 72–129) [Boeth. c. Eutych.] 2–3.

\(^{180}\) Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 176v–177r.


\(^{182}\) Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 178r: »Omnino autem homines turbulentii et inquieti quibus dolebat pacem in ecclesia factum esse, hoc sategabant ut episcopi denuo inter se committerentur.«
minent churchmen demanding his rehabilitation. But Cyril did not
resile from the doctrinal consensus that had been reached; instead,
in letters to Acacius of Melitene and Eulogius, presbyter of Con-
stantinopole, he endorsed the dyophysite language favoured by the
eastern bishops. Simler is careful to downplay Cyril’s role in the
campaign by Acacius and another Syrian bishop, Rabbula of Edes-
sa, to suppress the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore
of Tarsus, which were being disseminated and translated by fol-
lowers of Nestorius in order to give his innovations a veneer of
respectability; instead, he portrays the triumvirate of Cyril, John of
Antioch and Proclus of Constantinople as forming a united front
against both Nestorians and the extreme wing of Cyril’s own par-
ty. Proclus’s Tome, which denounced propositions drawn anonym-
sously from the works of Theodore, is described as a work against
Nestorianism, rather than against Theodore per se; Simler notes
that the Tome was endorsed by John of Antioch, who continued
vocally to defend Theodore, and that Proclus resisted attempts to
induce him to condemn Theodore openly. Following Liberatus, he
also casts doubt on the authenticity of the three books that Cyril is
said to have written against Theodore and Diodore of Tarsus.
Although Cyril’s letters provide clear evidence of both his con-
tempt for Theodore’s theology and the continuing strains in his
relationship with Theodoret, who remained unwilling to anathema-
tise Nestorius, none of this is reflected in the Narratio. Instead,
Simler emphasises the unity of the orthodox episcopate, using his
history to undergird the notion of the consensus patrum. The col-
apse of the Ephesian settlement at the end of the 440s is attributed
not to its inherent instability or to the still unresolved divisions
between Antioch and Alexandria, but to the appearance of a new
heresy, based on a distorted reading of Cyril’s works.

183 Simler, Scripta veterum, 178r. On this »concession«, see McGuckin, Cyril 227f.
4. The »Narratio« II: monophysitism, monotheletism and the origins of Islam

4.1 Overview

Whereas the first half of the Narratio concentrates on events within a relatively short time span and is dominated by a few outstanding personalities (Cyril, Nestorius, Theodoret, John of Antioch), the remainder of the work is much more diffuse. Chapters 8 and 9 deal with the Eutychian controversy proper: the dispute between Eutyches and Bishop Flavian of Constantinople; Eutyches’ condemnation by the »Home Synod« in 448; the Second Council of Ephesus (August 449), which exonerated Eutyches and deposed Flavian, Theodoret, Domnus of Antioch and Ibas of Edessa; and the ultimate triumph of orthodoxy at the Council of Chalcedon, which anathematised Eutyches and his ally Dioscorus of Alexandria, rehabilitated the Antiochenes and established a cast-iron, explicitly dyophysite Christological standard against which all subsequent doctrine was to be measured. The following three chapters discuss the state of the church, now bitterly divided between supporters and opponents of Chalcedon, under the Emperors Marcian (450–457) and Leo I (457–474), Zeno (474–491) and Basiliscus (475–476), and Anastasius I (491–518). Next Simler considers the reigns of Justin I (518–527) and Justinian I (527–565), which saw the entrenchment of the Chalcedonian settlement in its refined, neo-Chalcedonian form at Constantinople II. Finally, he traces the development of the principal seventh-century heresy, monotheletism, from its emergence under the Emperor Heraclius (610–641) through to its condemnation at Constantinople III. The Narratio concludes with two further thematic chapters – on the monophysite sects of antiquity, and on incidences of Eutychianism in more recent times.

4.2 Eutyches, Dioscorus and the Second Council of Ephesus

Simler’s account of the Eutychian controversy follows a similar pattern to his history of the dispute with Nestorius. Although Eutyches’ Christology was in some senses the polar opposite of Nes-
torianism, Simler regards the similarities between Nestorius and Eutyches as more significant than their differences. Both displayed arrogance and a lack of learning, »which make many men especially bold and audacious«. Each had powerful political backers – Count Candidianus, the imperial commissioner at Ephesus, and the eunuch Chrysaphius respectively – and was opposed in the first instance by Eusebius, bishop of Dorylaeum. Above all, their heresies were born out of the same fundamental error: the failure to distinguish properly between the concepts of »person« and »nature« as they relate to Christ. Nestorius’s two-nature, two-person Christology may seem far removed from the monophysitism of Eutyches, but both positions are predicated on the mistaken assumption that there must be an equal number of natures (physeis) and hypostases in Christ.

Just as Nestorius’s errors were opposed by Cyril, so the innovations of Eutyches were resisted by a subsequent generation of orthodox churchmen, led by Flavian of Constantinople and Pope Leo. However, the situation was complicated by the intervention of Dioscorus, Cyril’s successor as bishop of Alexandria, who saw in Eutyches’ case an opportunity to rid the church of Antiochene influence once and for all. Eutyches and Dioscorus sought to portray themselves as the theological heirs of Cyril, but Simler charges them with imposing a monophysite interpretation on Cyril’s words, »even though Cyril himself never took that view«. In-
deed, when Eutyches appealed to Cyril and Athanasius in support of his opinions, Flavian was able to quote back to him passages from Cyril in which the existence of two natures in Christ was clearly affirmed. Eutyches’ errors have their origin not with Cyril but, as Flavian suggests, with Apollinaris and the Gnostic Valentinus, who denied that Christ was truly human.189

Having failed to match the sound theological argumentation of their orthodox opponents, the Eutychians fell back on violence and fraud in an effort to impose their views on the church. Simler describes how, in the run-up to Ephesus II, Chrysaphius and Dioscorus together conspired to block prominent eastern bishops such as Theodoret and Ibas from attending. At the council itself, Dioscorus muzzled the representatives of Pope Leo (who withdrew in protest), refused to allow the testimony of Eusebius of Dorylaeum to be heard, and prevented proper investigation of Eutyches’ views. Supported by imperial troops and vast numbers of monks, Dioscorus was able to intimidate dissenting bishops into signing a blank piece of paper, on which the »decisions« of the synod were subsequently inscribed. Where necessary, Dioscorus was prepared to use physical force to silence his opponents; on the basis of reports in Evagrius and Nicephorus, Simler attributes Flavian’s death three days after the council to injuries sustained at the hands of Dioscorus and his acolytes.190 It is instructive to compare Simler’s narrative of events at Ephesus II, which presents Dioscorus as acting in flagrant contravention of all canonical standards, with his treatment of the First Council of Ephesus. Although Cyril, like Dioscorus, made strategic use of the mob to secure the compliance of his fellow-bishops, there is no hint of this in the Narratio. The legitimacy of Cyril’s decision to open the council in the absence of the Syrian bishops was questionable, to say the least, but Simler defends it on the grounds that John of Antioch had instructed Cyril to proceed if his arrival was delayed. Whereas modern scholars are

189 Simler, Scripta veterum, 192v.
190 Simler, Scripta veterum, 193v. Cf. Evag. h.e. 2,2; Niceph. h.e. 14,47; Bullinger, De conciliis, 101v; Camerarius, Chronologia, 114.
inclined to point to similarities between the two Councils of Ephesus, which took place in equally chaotic and politicised circumstances, no such comparison is possible within the theological framework of the Narratio. Instead, Simler affirms the traditional view of Ephesus I as an authentic ecumenical council, despite its partiality and the initial refusal of the Antiochenes to recognise its decisions. Ephesus II, by contrast, is characterised as a pseudo-council, presided over by an »anti-Cyril« in the person of Dioscorus.

4.3 The Council of Chalcedon

Dioscorus’s treatment of Flavian and the Antiochenes outraged the bishops of Syria, Pontus and Asia, who retaliated by breaking off relations with Alexandria. However, the foremost spokesman of the dyophysite party was Pope Leo, who denounced Ephesus II as a »robber synod« (»latrocinium«). Simler, like his (western) source Liberatus, emphasises the leadership shown by Leo at this time of crisis and the effectiveness of his attempts to pressurise the emperor into reversing the outcome of Ephesus II. These bore fruit following the death of Theodosius II and the accession of Marcian, who bowed to Leo’s demands for a new council, to be held at Chalcedon. Simler sees the Council of Chalcedon as systematically righting the wrongs of Ephesus II: first by absolving Flavian of any wrongdoing, then by condemning Dioscorus and producing a new Christological Definition, and finally by restoring Theodoret, Ibas and the other disgraced Antiochenes to their sees. Although instances of conflict – the shouts and interventions that punctuated the public reading of the acta of Ephesus II during the first session, the initial reluctance of the Illyrian bishops to subscribe to Leo’s Tome, and the persistent obduracy of the Egyptians – are noted, Simler presents proceedings at the council as generally harmonious and well ordered, and hence very different from the chaos of Ephesus II. He also uses this section of the Narratio to reinforce the notion of the consensus patrum, by emphasising the endorsement

by those present of the works of both Cyril and Leo. Of particular interest in this regard is his reporting of a moment during the second session, when Archdeacon Aetius of Constantinople and, ironically, Cyril’s old adversary Theodoret intervened to argue for the compatibility of the Tome’s dyophysite language with Cyril’s words.\textsuperscript{193} The effect of the incident is to demonstrate the underlying unity of the main Christological traditions in the fifth-century church, which may explain why Simler gives it such prominence.

In his account of events at Chalcedon, Simler accords a significant role to the Emperor Marcian, who is seen as embodying the qualities of the ideal Christian magistrate. Like the Greek church historians, Simler emphasises Marcian’s piety and love of justice. Significantly, he reproduces the comparison drawn by Nicephorus between Marcian and the archetypal Christian monarch, Constantine, whom Marcian sought consciously to emulate by participating in conciliar debates.\textsuperscript{194} In the \textit{Narratio}, Marcian both sets the terms for the bishops’ deliberations at Chalcedon and gives legal force to their decisions; Simler notes the emperor’s personal endorsement of the Definition at the council’s sixth session and his later promulgation of an edict confirming its decisions and condemning Eutyches and Dioscorus.\textsuperscript{195} In highlighting Marcian’s contribution, the \textit{Narratio} follows Bullinger’s \textit{De conciliis}, which gives him much of the credit for Chalcedon’s successful outcome.\textsuperscript{196} What is more, Simler portrays the emperor as an authoritative interpreter of Chalcedon, citing with approval a letter to the monks of Jerusalem in which Marcian defends the phrase »in two natures« as an expression of the church’s unchanging faith in Christ.\textsuperscript{197}

\textsuperscript{193} Simler, Scripta veterum, 194v. Cf. Liberat. 13; Evag. h.e. 2,18; Niceph. h.e. 15,30.

\textsuperscript{194} Simler, Scripta veterum, 194v. Cf. Niceph. h.e. 15,1–2. Simler highlights Marcian’s decision to convene the council on the Bosphorus so that he might contribute directly to its discussions, as Constantine had done at Nicaea. A further symbolic link between the two assemblies is established by the fact that Chalcedon was attended by exactly twice as many bishops – 636 – as its illustrious predecessor (ibid., 194v).

\textsuperscript{195} For the edict, see Codex Justinianus, ed. Paul Krueger, Berlin 1954, p. 6 (1.1.4). It is reproduced in Bibliander, De summa trinitate, 32–34.

\textsuperscript{196} Bullinger, De conciliis, 1027: »Congregatis autem his in templo, medium se inter ipsos colocavit Martianus Imperator, ut disputationes vehementiores et assertiones Episcoporum quorundam ferventiores modareretur atque compesceret.«
4.4. Zeno and Anastasius

However, Marcian bequeathed a divided church and empire to his successors, as the majority of the population of Egypt and Syria remained steadfastly opposed to the Chalcedonian settlement. In the second half of the fifth century, imperial religious policy fluctuated between defence of Chalcedon (Leo), attempts at reconciliation with the monophysites (Zeno, Anastasius), and open Eutychianism (Basiliscus). Simler sees the eastern church as split into three factions: orthodox Chalcedonians, neutrals and monophysites. The approach of the «middle» party was encapsulated in Zeno’s Henotikon, which sought to reunite the eastern patriarchates by sideling Chalcedon, though without explicitly abrogating its conclusions. In De summa trinitate, Bibliander praises the Henotikon for its championing of the Nicene creed as the basis for church unity, but Simler is much less enthusiastic. Like his neo-Chalcedonian source Evagrius, he detects an element of logomachia in the dispute between supporters and opponents of Chalcedon, and regards the preferred Christological formulations of the orthodox and monophysite parties – respectively, »in two natures« and »from two natures« – not as conflicting, but as potentially complementary. However, because the anti-Chalcedonian party included some who rejected the doctrine of two natures »not in words but in substance« (»non verbis sed reipsa«), Zeno’s attempts to devise a doctrinal settlement acceptable to all sides were

197 Simler, Scripta veterum, 196v–197r: »Extant literae Martiani Imperatoris ad Archimandritas monachos et reliquis habitatores Aeliae (ita enim Hierosolyma tum nominabatur) in quibus graviter monachos incusat, qui quem deberent quieti vacare, et esse sub sacerdotibus eorumque doctrinis obedire, doctorum munus sibi sumpserint, et praeterea tot malorum authores urbi et regioni fuerint. Ignoscit tamen illis clementissimus Imperator, et in fide eos instruit, docens Chalcedone nihil in fide innovatum esse, neque duos filios Synodum praedicasse, sed potius damnasse eos qui sic sentiant: nomine autem naturae usos ut ostenderent Christum esse verum Deum et verum hominem, ita ut natura significent veritatem, sicut et apud Apostolum, falsos Deos nuncupantem eos qui natura non sint dii.« For the emperor’s letter, see ACO 2, p. 4–7.


199 Bibliander, De summa trinitate, 7–12.

200 Simler, Scripta veterum, 197r. Cf. Evag. h.e. 2,5; Niceph. h.e. 15,9.
bound to come to grief. Instead of ending the controversy, the ambiguous language of the *Henotikon* played into the hands of the monophysites, who interpreted it as condemning Chalcedon. The restoration of communion between Acacius of Constantinople and the monophysite-dominated see of Alexandria also had the effect of provoking a new split (the Acacian schism) between East and West, for the papacy rejected any concessions to Eutychianism. Even in the East, the achievement of unity was shortlived, with the *Henotikon* failing to satisfy the demands of more extreme monophysites such as Severus of Antioch for an explicit repudiation of Chalcedon and the Tome. Under Anastasius, the drift towards monophysitism accelerated; although in the *Narratio* he is described as adopting a neutral position, his hostility towards outspoken Chalcedonians and the increasing assertiveness of the monophysites during his reign are highlighted. For Simler, these developments are the inevitable result of a religious policy predicated on covering up of differences, rather than clear articulation of the church’s beliefs. The fate of the *Henotikon* offers a general lesson with contemporary resonance: »ambiguous doctrinal formulas« are a recipe not for unity but for »bigger conflicts« in the future. Simler may well have had in mind the situation of the Rhaetian magistrates to whom his work is dedicated, who were themselves under pressure to accommodate religious dissidents by making precisely such concessions.

4.5 Justinian and the Second Council of Constantinople

The replacement of Anastasius by the strongly Chalcedonian Justin I brought the period of monophysite ascendency to an end. This

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201 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 200v.
202 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 200r.
204 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 200v–201f.
205 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 200v: »Quare si controversiae de religione existent, frustra conciliatio extitur ambiguis formulis doctrinae in medium propositis, sed ut verus et constans sit ecclesiariunm consensus, oportet ut sententiae de controversis quaestioni bus dicatur et proponantur perspicue abque ulla ambiguaitate et sophistica, id ni fiat consensiones fucatae tandem in maiora dissidia abeunt: idque non modo Zenonii edicti exemplum, sed nostrae quoque aetatis non obscura exempla satis probant.«
change of policy did not preclude continuing attempts to pursue
dialogue with the »Eutychians«, especially under Justin’s nephew
Justinian, whose own neo-Chalcedonian theology was designed to
facilitate their return to the fold.206 Generally, however, Reformed
writers depict Justinian as a hero of orthodoxy, the Christian em-
peror par excellence. Bibliander describes his accession in provi-
dential terms: at a time of great peril for Rome, with the Jews and
Samaritans in revolt in Palestine, the empire under attack from the
Arabs and Persians, orthodox believers in the West suffering per-
secution by the Arian Goths and Vandals, Eutychianism rampant
in the East, and the papacy everywhere beginning to flex its mus-
cles, God armed the church with a »sword of Gideon« in the form
of Justinian’s anti-heresy legislation.207 Simler’s tone is more me-
asured, but he, too, emphasises the pro-Chalcedonian elements of
Justinian’s religious policy, such as his support for the condem-
nation of the Syrian monophysites Severus, Peter of Apamea and
Zooras at the synod of Constantinople, which reaffirmed the au-
thority of Chalcedon and the Tome.208 On the other hand, he is
unable to overlook entirely aspects of Justinian’s rule that conflic-
ted with this orthodox image, notably the monophysite sympathies
of his wife Theodora and Justinian’s own support for the aph-
thartodocetite heresy (which proclaimed the incorruptibility of
Christ’s human nature) towards the end of his reign. Unlike Bi-
bliander, who glosses over the episode,209 Simler faithfully repro-
duces the Greek church historians’ account of Justinian’s attempts
to impose aphthartodocetism on the empire.210 Even the central
religious event of Justinian’s reign – the Fifth Ecumenical Council –
poses some difficulties for him. As we have seen, Simler was un-
comfortable with Constantinople II’s anathematisation of the
Three Chapters, which was hard to square with his belief in the
compatibility of the Antiochene and Cyrilline traditions. While ac-

206 Meyendorff, Imperial Unity, 207–250.
207 Bibliander, De summa trinitate, 22 f.
208 Simler, Scripta veterum, 203r. See the »Constitutio sacra Iustiniani imperatoris
contra Anthimum, Severum, Petrum et Zoarem« in: Justinian, Novellae, ed. Rudolf
Schoell and Wilhelm Kroll, Berlin 1954, 263–269 (no. 42). This edict is reproduced in
Bibliander, De summa trinitate, 39–47.
209 Bibliander, De summa trinitate, 51.
210 Simler, Scripta veterum, 8v, 205r. Cf. Evag. h.e. 4,38–40; Niceph. h.e. 17,29–31.
cepting the council’s conclusions, as set out in its 14 articles of faith, he devotes remarkably little space to its deliberations on the Three Chapters, focusing instead on its pronouncements against Origenism. The sense that Simler’s endorsement of Constantinople II is lukewarm, at best, is reinforced by his account of the background to its convocation. This is taken almost verbatim from Liberatus, a source hostile to the council, who blames the Origenist bishop Theodore Askidas for initiating the campaign against the Three Chapters as a means of diverting attention from his own errors.\(^{211}\) Like the Nestorian controversy, the sixth century confronts Simler with evidence of competing theological currents within orthodoxy – neo-Chalcedonianism and the more pronounced dyophysitism of western writers such as Liberatus – that sits awkwardly with the notion of a *consensus patrum*. In the case of Constantinople II, he leaves this tension substantially unresolved.

4.6 The monothelete controversy

Simler has little to say about the reigns of the late sixth-century emperors Justin II (565–578), Tiberius (578–582) and Maurice (582–602), all of whom he considers strong supporters of Chalcedon. In fact, both Justin and Tiberius pursued a policy of conciliation with the monophysites – with some success – but these developments were not recorded in Evagrius, Simler’s main source for the period.\(^{212}\) The narrative is resumed in the early seventh century, with the promotion by the Emperor Heraclius (610–641) and the Constantinopolitan patriarch Sergius of monotheletism – the doctrine that Christ possesses a single will – as a means of reconciling Chalcedonians and monophysites. For Simler, monotheletism represents not so much an independent heresy as a disguised form of Eutychianism. Like the earlier disputes outlined in the *Narratio*, the monothelete controversy is presented in binary terms, as a conflict between clearly defined orthodox and heretical camps. To Heraclius and his monothelete grandson Constans II (641–668), Simler opposes a new set of orthodox stalwarts: So-

\(^{211}\) *Simler*, *Scripta veterum*, 204r. Cf. Liberat. 24.

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phronius of Jerusalem, Maximus Confessor and the popes John IV (640–642) and Martin I (649–655). Once again, he emphasises the need for terminological clarity when tackling complicated doctrinal questions. The failure of imperial attempts to resolve the controversy by imposing silence on the issues in dispute is contrasted with the success of Constantinople III – an unambiguously dyo-thelete council, convened by an orthodox emperor in the person of Constantine IV (668–685) – in restoring religious unity to Byzantium.\footnote{Simler, Scripta veterum, 205v. In his »Ekthesis« (658), which enshrined monotheletism as official doctrine in the East, Heraclius forbade further discussion of the number of energies in Christ. The »Typos« of Constans II (648) extended this prohibition to the question of the number of wills in Christ. See John F. Haldon, Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture, Cambridge 1990, 301, 309.}

4.7. Simler’s view of monophysitism

Recent studies of Christology in the period after Chalcedon tend to downplay the differences between mainstream monophysites and their Chalcedonian opponents. It has been pointed out, for instance, that the influential monophysite bishop of Alexandria, Timothy Aelurus, affirmed the doctrine of the double consubstantiality of Christ and wrote against Eutyches;\footnote{Iain R. Torrance, Christology after Chalcedon: Severus of Antioch and Sergius the Monophysite, Norwich 1988, 9.} even Severus, who rejected both Chalcedon and the Henotikon, was prepared to speak of two natures in respect of Christ, if only ἐν ἰεωρίᾳ.\footnote{Torrance, Christology after Chalcedon, 16; Sellers, Chalcedon, 262; Meyendorff, Imperial Unity, 251f.} Both monophysites and non-Antiochene Chalcedonians took their inspiration from Cyril, disagreeing only on the extent to which his language could be reconciled with Chalcedon. But in the Narratio the differences between the two sides are presented in much starker terms. Lacking direct access to the works of monophysite theologians, Simler bases his assessment of their doctrines entirely on Chalcedonian sources, which focus on the more »extreme« aspects of monophysite teaching, associated with Eutyches himself and disavowed by many later anti-Chalcedonians, such as denial of the double consubstantiality of Christ and support for the doctrine of
Christ’s »heavenly flesh«. This emphasis suits Simler’s polemical purpose, as it appears to substantiate his claims of a link between the monophysites and Reformation-era »heretics« who professed similar doctrines.

As we have seen, in his account of Ephesus II Simler highlights the aggressive and underhand means by which Dioscorus sought to gain control of the church. The readiness of the »Eutychian« leadership to deploy violence in pursuit of its ends – even where that involved challenging imperial authority – is a recurrent theme in the Narratio, serving to underline monophysitism’s sedition and anarchic character. Thus Simler records that, following the replacement of Dioscorus as bishop of Alexandria by the orthodox Proterius, local magistrates and imperial troops were burnt alive by a monophysite mob stirred up by Timothy Aelurus. Timothy also conspired in the subsequent murder – for Simler and his Chalcedonian sources, it has the character of a martyrdom – of Proterius in the baptistery of his cathedral at Easter 457. Such disturbances were not confined to Egypt. In Antioch, the orthodox bishop Stephen was killed by supporters of his monophysite rival Peter the Fuller, while in Palestine, monks opposed to Chalcedon replaced Bishop Juvenal of Jerusalem with the Eutychian Theodosius, who launched a savage persecution in which the orthodox deacon Athanasius was tortured to death and bishop Severianus of Scythopolis assassinated. Even the imperial capital was not spared such violence. Under Zeno, monks from the convent of the Akoimetai, a dyophysite stronghold, were attacked and killed by supporters of Patriarch Acacius after publishing Pope Felix III’s sentence of excommunication against him.

To account for the repeated failure of imperial attempts to broker an agreement with the monophysites, Simler falls back on a Reformed commonplace – the perfidiousness of heretics. Peter Mongus, who succeeded Timothy Aelurus as bishop of Alexandria, is called a »slippery and inconstant man, blowing hot and

216 Simler, Scripta veterum, 207r–v.
217 Simler, Scripta veterum, 196v–197r.
218 Simler, Scripta veterum, 198r.
219 Simler, Scripta veterum, 196v.
220 Simler, Scripta veterum, 199v–200r.
cold from the same mouth. In letters to Acacius of Constantinople and Pope Simplicius, he protested his loyalty to Chalcedon, but at home he condemned the council and Leo’s Tome, anathematising all who refused to receive the writings of Dioscorus and Timothy. Severus, the most important monophysite theologian of the early sixth century, is depicted in even more sinister terms. Simler reports that he was rumoured to be an insincere convert to Christianity and that he continued to sacrifice to demons even after his baptism. When lobbying for the position of bishop of Antioch, Severus promised Emperor Anastasius that he would not denounce Chalcedon if appointed, but he went back on his word as soon as he was in post. The untrustworthiness of Eutychians is highlighted again in chapter 15 of the Narratio, on monotheletism. Simler assigns a key role in the genesis of this heresy to the Jacobite (monophysite) bishop of Antioch, who feigned acceptance of Chalcedon in order that he might lead the orthodox church astray. In the same way, monotheletes at Constantinople III used forged, interpolated or abridged texts of the Fathers to garner support for their arguments.

Another key feature of monophysitism, as portrayed in the Narratio, is its labile and polymorphous nature, which places it in direct opposition to the unchanging, univocal teaching of the Fathers. Simler terms Eutychianism a Lernaean hydra, producing new heads whenever one was cut off. The heresy is shown to have evolved over time: whereas Eutyches taught that the Word was literally converted into flesh at the incarnation, his later followers embraced a form of docetism, to counter the perception

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221 Simler, Scripta veterum, 199v: »fuit enim homo lubricus et inconstans qui ex eodem ore calidum et frigidum efflaret.«  
222 Simler, Scripta veterum, 200v.  
223 Simler, Scripta veterum, 201r.  
224 Simler, Scripta veterum, 205r. Cf. George Cedrenus, Compendium historiarum (PG 121, 23–1166; 122, 9–368) [Cedren. c.h.] 121, c. 806; John Zonaras, Epitome historiarum (PG 134, 39–1414; 135, 9–388) 14,17; Camerarius, Chronologia, 119f.  
225 Simler, Scripta veterum, 206v: »Est vero notatu digna Macarii et aliorum Monotheletarum fraus in hoc Synodo detecta, qui plurima patrum testimonia congregaverunt ad suum dogma comprobandum, quorum aliqua falsa suis auctoribus inscripta fuerunt, ut epistola Mennae ad Vigilium PP. alia vero corrupta aut truncata, id quod collatione authenticum codicum deprehensus est.« Cf. ACO 2, 532f.  
226 Simler, Scripta veterum, 169v.
that they preached a passible God. United only by their belief in the single nature of the Word made flesh, the monophysites quickly began to fall out among themselves, splitting into numerous competing sects. Based on information from Nicephorus and, to a lesser extent, John Damascene, Simler identifies eight distinct monophysite factions: the Eutychians proper; the Acephali or Egyptians; the theopaschites, followers of Peter the Fuller; the Agnoetae, also known as Severitae or Themistiani; the Aphthartodocitae; the Tritheitae, who were themselves divided into two groups, designated the Petritae and the Cononitae after their respective founders; the Theodosiani, also known as the Angelitae or Damianitae; and the monotheletes. This heresiological scheme is designed to illustrate a more fundamental point, applicable not just to the history of the early church but to theological disputes generally. Elsewhere Simler ascribes to heresy an in-built propensity to change, degenerate and spawn new errors, a thesis for which he finds ample support in the history of monophysitism after Chalcedon. Peter the Fuller may be best known for his addition of the phrase »who was crucified for us« to the Trisagion, but he also introduced the practice of invoking the Virgin in prayer; in this manner, the Eutychian controversy fostered the emergence of »new forms of worship and prayers to the dead«. In the late sixth century, disputes between the various monophysite groupings spilled over into disagreements concerning the Trinity, with one

227 Simler, Scripta veterum, 207r. Simler acknowledges that his sources differ on the precise nature of Eutyches’ error. For example, Evagrius and Nicephorus attribute to Eutyches the opinion that Christ became incarnate only »apparently«, whereas Cedrenus accuses him of making the divine nature passible. Cf. Evag. h.e. 1,9; Niceph. h.e. 14,47; Cedren. c.h. 121, c. 658.


229 Simler, De aeterno, 8r; Josias Simler, Assertio orthodoxae doctrinae de duabus naturis Christi servatoris nostri, opposita blasphemis et sophismatibus Simonis Budnaei nuper ab ipso in Lituania evulgatis [...], Zurich: Christoph Froschauer the Younger, 1575 (BZD C 897), 4v–5r. See Taplin, Italian Reformers, 202f.

group (the *Theodosiani*) being accused of Sabellianism or teaching a quaternity, while others, led by the grammarian John Philoponus, espoused forms of tritheism.\footnote{Simler, Scripta veterum, 208r. On these schisms, see Meyendorff, Imperial Unity, 254–258; Frend, Monophysite Movement, 289–291, 341f.}

4.8 Islam

By the time of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, a large portion of Byzantine territory had been ceded to Islam, whose rise Simler considers the most important long-term consequence of the Eutychian controversy. Unlike the authors of the Magdeburg Centuries, who classify Islam as a »religio externa«, cobbled together from elements of paganism, Judaism and Christianity,\footnote{Ecclesiastica historia, vol. 7, 595–653.} Simler follows John Damascene and subsequent medieval tradition in viewing »the Mohammedan impiety« as the last and most pernicious of the heresies of Christian antiquity.\footnote{Simler, Scripta veterum, 169v.} In the *Narratio*, the whirlwind Islamic conquest of Syria and Egypt is blamed on the presence within those provinces of significant numbers of Nestorians and monophysites, who accepted Muslim rule more easily because of the resemblance between their own errors and the »madness« of the Qur’an.\footnote{Simler, Scripta veterum, 206v: »haec autem Monothelitica secta postrema est earum quae impia temeritate personam et naturas Christi impugnarunt, dum enim hoc certamen fervet Sarraceni Aegyptum et Syriam occuparunt, in quibus regionibus Eutychiana impietas prorsus regnabat, et idem mox Oriente potiti sunt, in quo Nestoriani non pauci numero erant, et simul quoque Monophysitae seu Eutychiani: atque ut utriusque sectae impietas in Alcoranici delirii sentinam confluxit, ita regiones quoque ipsae quae protulerunt aluerunt et foverunt haec monstra sub Sarracenorum et Turcarum potestatem et tyrannidem redactae sunt.«} To substantiate the link that he posits between earlier heresies and Islam, Simler recounts the well-known legend of Sergius, which identified a fugitive Nestorian monk as the source for Mohammed’s errors.\footnote{According to Muslim tradition, Mohammed’s prophethood was recognised while he was still a child by a Christian monk named Bahira. Middle Eastern Christians developed a negative version of the tale, which attributed authorship of the Qur’an to Bahira, rather than to the illiterate Mohammed; see Barbara Roggema, A Christian Reading of the Qur’an: the Legend of Sergius-Bahira and its Use of Qur’an and Sı¯ra, in: Syrian Christians under Islam: The First Thousand Years, ed. David Thomas, Leiden} He explains Mohammed’s purely
humanitarian Christology by adding a subtle twist to the traditional story: although Nestorius himself affirmed the divinity and personality of the Logos, later Nestorians such as Sergius may have radicalised the sect’s teachings – »as is usually the case« with heretics – so that they conformed more closely to the doctrines of Paul of Samosata. Simler finds support for this claim in the writings of Maxentius, who, long before the time of Mohammed, encountered Nestorians who attributed to Christ a pre-eminence based solely on his virgin birth and his possession of grace in full measure.236

Simler’s discussion of the origins of Islam in the Narratio was motivated, in part, by apologetic concerns. In spring 1570, several leading Reformed churchmen in the Palatinate had been exposed as antitrinitarians; two of them, Johannes Sylvan and Adam Neuser, had even been caught attempting to make contact with the Ottoman sultan, Selim II.237 The episode was acutely embarrassing for the Zurichers, as Sylvan was associated with the antidisciplinarian, »Zwinglian«, party in Heidelberg; unsurprisingly, it was seized on by their theological opponents as evidence of an islam-
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Sing dimension to Reformed teaching. In the *Scripta veterum*, Simler seeks not only to limit the fallout from the affair, but to turn it to the advantage of his orthodox Reformed allies in Graubünden. In his main preface to the work, he condemns «the deceptions of the new Samosatarians, and their secret conspiracies with the Turks» («novorum Samosateniorum fraudes, et clancularias cum Turcis conspirationes»), while elsewhere he cites the activities of the Heidelberg antitrinitarians to illustrate the dangers of allowing Christological heresy to flourish within a state. This point is developed in the *Narratio*, where he attributes Islam’s triumphant progress to the failure of the Byzantine authorities to eradicate monophysitism and its associated heresies, which left the eastern empire divided and, consequently, vulnerable to Saracen incursions. Simler feared a repetition of these events in his own day, given the spread of antitrinitarianism in eastern Europe and the theological affinities that he perceived between its «Samosatelian» variant, in particular, and Islam. In the *Scripta veterum*, the parallel is extended to critics of the Rhaetian anti-heresy edict, who, Simler claims, would leave the church with only «a certain general knowledge of Christ, shared with Mohammedanism». Just as Mohammed extended freedom of worship to all monotheists, so the »Academici« promise salvation to all Christians who acknowledge Christ as the Son of God and judge of the world, «regardless of what they think about the remaining doctrines of the faith.» By

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240 Simler, *De aeterno*, ε3r–v, 283v.

241 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, *3v*: »O Sathanam vafrum artificium, qui cum tot annis laborat in oppugnanda Christi religione, novis subinde erroribus per haereticos in publicum prolatis, nunc persuadere conatur, haec omnia adiaphora esse, de quibus absque iactura salutis liceat opinari quicquid quicquid lubitum fuerit: interim pro Christianorum fide obtrudit generali quandam Christi notitiam, cum Machometanismo..."
associating the dissidents within the Bündner Reformed church with Christendom’s most persistent foe, Simler places them in opposition to legitimate magisterial authority and highlights the subversive consequences of the »liberty« that they advocate. In the process, he is able to distance himself and his colleagues from the recent scandal in the Palatinate and to re-emphasise the compatibility of Reformed Protestantism with established political and social structures.

5. Old wine in new wineskins?
The »Scripta veterum« as polemic

5.1 Approach

Simler’s comparison of the Rhaetian »Academici« to Mohammed is an example of the dual perspective that informs the Scripta veterum. Like other early modern controversialists, Simler sees the disputes generated by the Reformation not as unique products of the age, but as merely the latest episodes in an on-going struggle between truth and error, Christ and Satan, for ascendancy within the church. In this context, the history of ancient Christianity becomes a crucial resource, providing Simler and his contemporaries with a ready-made heresiological vocabulary and interpretative framework that can be applied to the deviant teaching of their own day. Such an approach has the advantage of both delegitimising opponents, by attaching them to sects and individuals condemned by the early church, and vindicating the position of the writer, who is automatically cast in the role of defender of the orthodox faith. However, it is more than a rhetorical strategy, for underpinning it is a view of Christian history as »a static entity with substantially the same events being re-enacted by different characters«.242 Thus

242 Backus, Historical Method, 338.
Melanchthon declares that all sixteenth-century doctrinal disputes were prefigured in the sub-apostolic age,\textsuperscript{243} while the Magdeburg Centuriators note the repeated use of the same »tricks« by heretics to seduce the faithful.\textsuperscript{244} The parallels between ancient and modern heresy are also emphasised by Beza, who in the preface to his Gentile collection describes how, having failed once again to destroy church through persecution, Satan has reverted to his »old tactics« of corrupting it from within. The heretics whom he has raised up in response to the Reformation are linked to some of the Fathers’ most fearsome opponents: in Schwenckfeld, Beza sees a new Eutyches, in Menno Simons, a reborn »Ebion«, and in Servetus, an amalgam of Paul of Samosata, Arius and Eutyches.\textsuperscript{245} He returns to the point in his edition of patristic works in defence of the Trinity, which he commends to the churches »not just on account of their sound doctrine and erudition, but especially because of the antiquity and dignity of their authors, so that all may see that nothing propounded by these damned souls [contemporary antitrinitarians] has not been refuted and condemned a thousand times by the whole pure and ancient church«.\textsuperscript{246}

For Simler, too, the ancient Christological controversies are important primarily for the light that they shed on contemporary disputes. Although he is aware that various Nestorian and monophysite churches survived the Islamic conquest, his knowledge of the doctrines and practices of groups such as the Syrian Jacobites, Armenians and Assyrians is decidedly sketchy.\textsuperscript{247} Unlike his Zurich colleague Bibliander, Simler displays little interest in these faraway sects, preferring to seek the modern-day exponents of Nestorianism and Eutychianism closer to home. Detailed consideration of such parallels is reserved for chapters 7 and 17 of the \textit{Narratio}, but

\textsuperscript{244} Ecclesiastica Historia, vol. 1, αυ; Scheible, Anfänge, 64f.
\textsuperscript{245} CTB 8, 240. In Georg Cassander’s »Commentarius de duabus in Christo naturis«, which was appended to his Vigilius edition, Simons and another Dutch Anabaptist, Adam Pastor, are compared to Eutyches and Paul of Samosata respectively (fo. 2r).
\textsuperscript{246} CTB 11, 781.
\textsuperscript{247} For example, he wrongly associates the Maronites of Lebanon with Nestorianism; see Simler, Scripta veterum, 179r. Most of his information on the non-Chalcedonian churches is taken from Nicephorus.
the interconnectedness of ancient and contemporary doctrinal disputes is highlighted even in the more strictly historical sections of the work. Simler’s use of the *Henotikon* episode as a warning against theological obfuscation, including in his own day, has been mentioned. In the same way, he detects a structural similarity between Nestorianism, Arianism and Eutychianism – all of which originated as responses to earlier heresies – and the more recent errors of »the Anabaptists, Servetians and new Samosatenians, who have changed many things, causing great offence to many and with no little harm to the church, solely on the basis that everything that is taught under the papacy is to be shunned and rejected.«248 Because of his involvement in contemporary Christological debates, Simler tends to view the disputes chronicled in the *Scripta veterum* through the prism of sixteenth-century theological concerns. Although the main point at issue in the Zurich church’s exchange with the Württembergers – the location of Christ’s glorified body – played a peripheral role in the Eutychian controversy, Simler portrays the questions at stake in the two disputes as substantially the same. In particular, he insists that Eutyches was condemned not merely for confusing the two natures of Christ on an »essential« level but for eroding the distinction between the properties associated with those natures – precisely the error that the Zurichers attributed to Brenz.249


249 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 207r: »Postremo si de sententia Eutychetis ex Synodi Chalcedoniae decreto statuendum est, cum illic asseratur unum et eundem esse lesum Christum in duabus naturis συγχυτος, ἀντρέπτος, hoc est inconfuse et inconvertibili-ter, efficitur Eutychianos doctisse mutationem et confusionem naturarum: neque tan-tum essentiarum sed multo maxime proprietatum, unde eodem decreto traditur natu-rarum differentiam non esse propter unitatem sublatam, sed magis utraque naturam suam proprietatem servare. Itaque Vigilius et caeteri qui contra Eutychiam haeresim scripserunt, id maxime elaborarunt ut utrunque naturae proprietatem salvam in Christo ostenderent, credo enim forte illos a plerisque earum obtinere potuisse ut naturam humanam absque suis proprietatibus in Christo faterentur, primam ut ita dicam essen-tiam, nam Eutyches ipse agnoscebat in Christo humanum corpus, et omnes Christum
5.2 Modern-day »Nestorians«: the Samosatenians and Stancaro

In the *Scripta veterum*, Simler confronts opponents from across the confessional spectrum. Some targets were familiar from his earlier polemical writings. Although the arguments of the eastern European antitrinitarian groups are not addressed in detail in the work, having already been rebutted in *De aeterno Dei filio*, Simler identifies a number of points of similarity between Nestorianism and contemporary »Samosatenianism«. The Samosatenians follow Nestorius in asserting that Christ, like Moses, is designated God in scripture solely in respect of his office, while their insistence that they alone possess the true knowledge of God is foreshadowed in Nestorius’s criticism of his flock for their ignorance of apostolic doctrine. Simler contrasts the arrogance and elitism of the radicals, who reject point blank all extra-biblical authorities and lay exclusive claim to the name of the true church, with the Reformed attitude towards tradition, which balances informed criticism with the respect due to antiquity.

He detects even stronger echoes of Nestorianism in the distinctive Christology of Francesco Stancaro. Simler’s emphasis in the *Narratio* on the soteriological implications of Nestorius’s views is testament to the extent to which his understanding of the Nestorian controversy was influenced by his earlier polemical exchange with Stancaro. Thus he argues that the principal bone of contention in the Zurichers’ dispute with Stancaro – the involvement of Christ’s divinity in his mediatorial office – was also central to the quarrel between Cyril and Nestorius. In support of this claim, he cites Cyril’s tenth anathematism, which proclaimed the incarnate Word »high priest and apostle« in the work of salvation. Accor-

Deum hominemque fatebantur, consubstantialem patri et nobis quoque consubstantiali- alem, verum potissima controversia fuit de perfecta natura habente suas proprietates.« Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 72r: »Verba haec Nestorii libentius annoto quod nostra acetate eodem fere modo argumentari soleant Blandrata Franciscus Davidis et alii qui filium Deum suo honore et vera Deitate spoliare conantur. Atque etiam ut Nestorius asserebat, populum propter ignorantiam dogmatis de cognitione Dei in errorem pro- lapsum, ita hi sibi soli ac suis cognitionem Dei vendicant, eamque omnibus fere vete- ribus et recentioribus orthodoxis adimunt.« Simler is probably alluding to the title of the important antitrinitarian anthology »De vera et falsa unius Dei Patris, Filii et Spi- ritus Sancti cognitione« (Alba Iulia 1568).

Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 2v; *Taplin, Italian Reformers*, 212f.
According to Simler, the question put to Cyril by the oriental bishops was identical to that posed by Stancaro: if the Word acts as high priest on behalf of humanity, to which God does he minister? Cyril’s response, like that of the Reformed, was that the Word is designated high priest not because he sacrifices to a greater God but on account of the expiation that he performs to bring believers to faith in himself and the Father. Although Stancaro pays lip service to orthodox Christology and claims to repudiate Nestorian’s errors, by excluding Christ’s humanity from the office of mediator he, too, violates the unity of the saviour’s person. The intellectual kinship between Nestorius and Stancaro is confirmed by the fact that both see Christ’s work of mediation as comparable to that of Moses.

5.3 Modern-day »Eutychians«: the Anabaptists and Schwenckfeld

While denouncing Stancaro as a Nestorian, Simler associates other dissenting groups with the opposing heresy of Eutyches. The »fanatical« German Anabaptist Melchior Hoffman (d. 1543) is identified as the first to revive Eutychianism in modern times, on the basis of his claim that the divine Word did not »assume« a human nature from Mary – the orthodox position – but was instead literally »made flesh«. Simler bases his knowledge of Hoffman’s views on statements made by the latter at the synod of Strasbourg in June 1533, following which Hoffman was condemned to life-long imprisonment; he adds that Melchiorite Christology was subsequently taken up and disseminated by another leading Anabaptist, Menno Simons. Simler finds further proof of the con-
nection between Anabaptism and Eutychianism in Nicephorus. In light of the Byzantine historian’s report that some monophysite sects rejected infant baptism, it is »hardly surprising that their teachings have been renewed and defended in our day by the Anabaptists, in particular«.258

Of more immediate concern for Simler in the Scripta veterum were the teachings of Kaspar Schwenckfeld, which had been promoted by Georg Frell in Chur and against which he warns in the first of his two prefaces to the work. Schwenckfeld was a longstanding opponent of the Zurichers. The threat posed by his doctrines, especially his unconventional Christology, is a recurrent theme in Bullinger’s correspondence with the south German reformers Ambrosius Blarer, Johannes Zwick and Martin Frecht during the 1530s. Both the antistes’ commentary on John’s Gospel (1543) and his Vigilius edition, which was published alongside the anti-Schwenckfeldian Orthodoxa et erudita epistola of Joachim Vadian, were directed in the main against Schwenckfeld.259 Like Bullinger, Simler was convinced of the »Eutychian« character of Schwenckfeld’s Christology. In his Annotationes for Vigilius’s Contra Eutychetem, he accuses the Schwenckfeldians of wilfully misusing anti-Arian statements by the Fathers to support their own, heretical, denial of the creatureliness of Christ’s flesh, just as earlier monophysites had done.260 Schwenckfeld’s labelling of the Reformed as Nestorians, on the basis that they attribute different properties to Christ’s two natures, is another familiar Eutychian refrain; in the early church, the same charge was levelled against

258 Simler, Scripta veterum, 202: »hoc tamen praeterire non possum, Monophysitas illas veteres suos quoque habere anabaptismos, ut minus mirum sit eorum dogmata nostra aetate ab Anabaptistis potissimum renovari et defendi.« See also ibid., 209v: »ut sicut primi fere Anabaptismos Eutychei usurparunt, ita vicissim eorum haeresim Anabaptistae renovarunt.« Cf. Niceph. h.e. 17,9.


260 Simler, Scripta veterum, 113r: »Imitantur Eutychianos nostra aetate Schwencfel-diani qui Patrum dicta contra Arrianos, quibus asserunt Filium Dei non esse creaturam, detorquent ad suam opinionem comprobandam, quasi senserint carnem Christi non esse creaturam.«
the orthodox by the monophysites, who – like Schwenckfeld – appealed to Cyril’s fourth anathematism in support of their position. In his Confession, Schwenckfeld seeks to distance himself from Eutyches, but he does so on the basis that Eutyches’ error was to deny the communicatio idiomatum, a claim unsupported by the ancient sources. Even those theologians who agree with Schwenckfeld on some points (presumably, Simler means the ubiquitarians) are united in condemning him as a Eutychian. Like the ancient monophysites, he denies that Christ’s two natures may be considered »distincte« and makes Christ’s whole person and both natures subject to the passion. In rejecting the creatureliness of Christ’s flesh, he comes close to the teachings of Apollinaris, as set out in the fifth dialogue of Ps. Athanasius. Moreover, to exonerate himself from the charge of monotheletism, he deliberately misinterprets the Sixth Ecumenical Council’s condemnation of this error so as to limit it to the preaching of a single will in Christ before his glorification.

5.4 Catholicism

Previous Zurich Reformed writers had made frequent use of church history to challenge the religious claims of the papacy and Roman Catholicism more generally. However, the dedication of the Scripta veterum to the Rhaetian Leagues, which were made up of both Catholic and Reformed communities, placed severe constraints on Simler’s ability to attack Catholic doctrine in the work. Tobias Egli, who looked on Graubünden’s Catholics as key allies in his campaign to purge the territory of religious radicals, was keen that Simler should moderate his criticisms even of ubiquitarianism, lest Catholic opinion be offended, and Simler himself emphasises the common interest of Reformed and Catholic Rha-

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261 Simler, Scripta veterum, 190r.
262 Maier, Schwenckfeld, 65.
263 Simler, Scripta veterum, 210v: »Postremo negat duas esse voluntates Christi in gloria, tempore quidem exinanitionis duæ in Christo fuisse voluntætes et monotheletas ideo damnatos esse quod ante glorificationem Servatoris unam tantum in eo voluntatem asservant quod tamen falsum esse omnes norunt, qui vel obiter Acta Synodi inspexerunt.« On this point, see Maier, Schwenckfeld, 79.
264 Egli to Simler, 20 August 1571 (ZB Ms. F 59, 413r): »Minus autem moleste
etians in standing up to »heresy«. His stance was influenced by theological as well as political considerations. In their exchanges with antitrinitarians and other radicals, the Zurich divines had sought to exempt the doctrines of the Trinity and the two natures of Christ from the general corruption of apostolic doctrine under the papacy. The inclusion of texts by two popes, Leo and Gelasius, in the *Scripta veterum* was consistent with this position, and had the beneficial side-effect of making the work more palatable to Rhaetian Catholics. Simler’s friendships with Catholic scholars such as Aegidius Tschudi, with whom he collaborated on a new history of the Swiss Confederation, and his favourable citation of Cassander – a reformist Catholic – in the *Scripta veterum* itself, provide further evidence of his relatively irenic attitude towards Catholicism. It is striking that Catholics are the only major non-Reformed group not to be charged directly with either Nestorianism or Eutychianism in the work.

Nonetheless, the *Scripta veterum* contains a significant amount of covert polemic against Catholicism. In the preface addressed to the Rhaetian Leagues, for example, Simler describes Leo and Gelasius as representing »the ancient discipline of the church, which had not yet been corrupted to such a great extent« (»illa veteri et nondum adeo corrupta Ecclesiae disciplina«), thereby establishing a clear distinction between these theologically trustworthy popes and their contemporary successors in Rome.

Specific Catholic doctrinal positions are also targeted in the volume. In the *Annotationes* for *Ad Trasimundum*, Simler casts doubt on the authority of the Vulgate, contrasting Fulgentius’s use of alternative Latin versions of scripture with the »superstitious« attachment of »some today« to Jerome’s translation. In the *Narratio*, he uses the al-

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265 ZB Ms. F 46, 349 f.: »Und wiewol ettlich gemeinden und gerichten der Roemischen oder wie sy sich nemmend der Catholischen religion sind hoff ich doch sy söllind disc min arbeit nitt für übel ufnnenmen, dann dice secten glich wol inen alß auch unß widerig sind / so mag auch zü gmeiner frid und einigkeit nitt erhalten werden«. Cited in Taplin, Italian Reformers, 249, n. 146.

266 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 2r.

267 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 140r: »Apparet autem hinc Fulgentium non ita se superstitione astrinxisse translationi vulgatae, ut hodie quidam faciunt.« Cf. Fulgentius of
leged heretical leanings of two early popes, Vigilius and Honorius I (625–638) to challenge the notion of papal infallibility. Simler reproduces evidence from Liberatus of Vigilius’s close and corrupt relationship with the monophysite empress Theodora,\(^{268}\) while from Honorius’s condemnation as a monothelete by the Sixth Ecumenical Council he concludes that »at that time popes were not yet exempt from all judgment and scrutiny by synods«.\(^{269}\) Elsewhere he highlights the failure of the papal legates at Chalcedon to overturn the council’s twenty-eighth canon, which accorded the see of Constantinople second place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy after Rome and was to become an important bone of contention between the western and eastern churches.\(^{270}\)

Other passages are suggestive of a link between Catholicism and Christological heresy. As we have seen, Simler identifies the monophysite bishop Peter the Fuller as the originator of the (Catholic) practice of addressing prayers to the Virgin. Catholics and Eutychians are also said to resemble one another in their understanding of the Eucharist, with the latter comparing the divinisation of Christ’s humanity in the incarnation to the transubstantiation of the sacramental bread and wine into Christ’s body and blood. The Reformed position on the sacrament, by contrast, is aligned with the uncorrupted doctrine of the primitive Roman church, as expounded by Pope Gelasius, who opposed any suggestion of a hypostatic union between the Eucharistic elements and Christ’s divinity.\(^{271}\) In addition, Simler hints at an important indirect connec-

\(^{268}\) *Ruspe*, Libri tres ad Trasimundum Vandalorum regem (CCSL 91, 95–195; PL 65, 223–304) 2,15. The same point is made in the »Annotationes« for Maxentius; see *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 72r.

\(^{269}\) *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 203r–204v. Cf. Liberat. 22. Simler defends the reliability of Liberatus’s report, which others had dismissed as an interpolation.

\(^{269}\) *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 206v: »Maxime tamen omnium memorabile est quod Honorius P.P. haeresos damnatus est, et ab ipsa Synodo et ab Imperatore et a Leone II. PP. adeo tum nondum erant Papae ab omni iudicio et cognitione Synodorum exempti.« Cf. Ecclesiastica Historia, vol. 7, 533f., where Honorius is classified as a monothelete. See also Georg Kreuzer, Die Honoriusfrage im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit, Stuttgart 1975 (Päpste und Papsttum 8), 185–190.

\(^{270}\) *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 196r.

\(^{271}\) *Simler*, Scripta veterum, 88r: »Porro in nostri Gelasii verbis quaeritur, quomodo sacramenta seu symbola transeant in divinam substantiam: ac primum ex ipsius verbis constat, illa non transsubstantiari, ut substantia panis esse desinit: inquit enim ea manere in suae proprietate naturae: neque forma aut figura illorum mutatur, quod nemo
tion between Catholicism and Nestorianism. Cyril had won Rome’s support for his campaign against Nestorius in part because the latter was perceived as sympathetic to Pelagianism. This association was reinforced by Cassian, whose *De incarnatione* includes the recantation of the former Pelagian Leporius. In his *Annotationes* on the text, Simler endorses Cassian’s position, despite the absence of corroborating testimony from Augustine. He returns to the issue in the *Narratio*, noting the condemnation at Ephesus of Pelagius and his follower Caelestius, who is said by Cyril to have spoken out in support of Nestorius. Although the Pelagian and Nestorian heresies were superficially very different, one relating to Christ’s office, the other to his being, Simler perceives a natural affinity between the two: Nestorius’s doctrine of two Christs, God the Word and the divinised man Jesus, linked only “by partnership and dignity” («societate et dignitate»), fits seamlessly with the Pelagian doctrine of the perfectibility of human nature. Given that “Pelagianism” was the heresy most frequently associated with the papacy by Reformed writers, the anti-Catholic significance of Simler’s comments is unmistakeable. He goes on to make the point that, whereas in the East Nestorianism was largely rooted out, in the western church its Pelagian sister heresy gained the upper hand to the extent that “for several centuries the memory of the benefits of Christ was completely extinguished», despite the best efforts of Jerome, Augustine and Prosper of Aquitaine.
5.5 The »ubiquitarians«

In his prefaces to the *Scripta veterum*, Simler emphasises the threat posed by the Samosatenians and other radicals, but in the *Narratio* and *Annotationes* he expands the focus of his attacks to take in the »ubiquitarian« Christology of the Württemberg Lutherans. Simler drew a clear distinction between the Lutherans and those »heretics« against whom his previous polemical works had been directed. He acknowledged that the German churches included many pious and orthodox Christians within their ranks, and was optimistic that, with good will on both sides, the differences between Lutherans and Reformed could be overcome or at least mitigated. In his preface to Bullinger’s *Adhortatio ad omnes verbi ministros, ut contentiones mutuas deponant*, he holds up the Polish Consensus of Sandomierz (1570), which united Lutherans, Reformed and Bohemian Brethren against antitrinitarianism, as an example of what could be achieved; elsewhere, he commends the Gnesio-Lutheran theologian Johannes Wigand on his efforts in defence of Nicene orthodoxy. However, this irenic attitude did not extend to the Württembergers, whom Simler blamed for aggravating the schism between the German and Swiss churches. When, in the *Narratio*, he warns against the danger of allowing theological disputes to become poisoned by personal animus and invective, it is likely that he has Brenz and his disciples in mind. In his later work *De vera praesentia*, he attempts to drive a wedge between the »Brentiani« and »lovers of peace« in Germany by demonstrating the conformity of Reformed teaching with the doctrines of the ancient church and the Augsburg Confession (aside from the article on the Eucharist). This strategy is foreshadowed in the *Scripta veterum*, where Simler emphasises the »Nestorian« and »Eutychian« character of the ubiquitarian position, distinguishing it from the supposedly more orthodox Christology of Luther himself. Although keen to take the heat out of the Eucharistic controversy,

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277 Cited in *Wotschke, Briefwechsel*, 348, n. 1.
278 *Simler, De aeterno*, 250r. The second book of Wigand’s »De Deo, contra arianos novos in Polonia exortos« (1566) was included in Beza’s Gentile anthology.
279 *Simler, Scripta veterum*, 175v–176r.
280 *Simler, De vera praesentia*, 3r, 5v, 7r.
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which had done such profound damage to the cause of Protestant unity, Simler seems to have viewed ubiquitarianism in a quite different light. At stake in this debate was not just the understanding of the sacrament, an issue on which it might be possible to agree to differ, but the fundamental «catholic» doctrines of God and Christ, which Simler saw as fatally undermined by Brenz’s insistence on a real communication of attributes between the human and divine natures of Christ. For that reason, he tends to bracket the Württembergers not with the Protestant mainstream but with more clearly »heretical« thinkers such as Schwenckfeld.

Simler’s first task was to rebut the charge of Nestorianism traditionally levelled against the Zurichers by their opponents. Once again, he finds a clear precedent for this scenario in the history of the early church, which furnishes numerous examples of orthodox churchmen (Ibas of Edessa, Macedonius of Constantinople, Flavian of Antioch) who were denounced as Nestorians and persecuted for upholding the faith of Chalcedon; from the works of Leo and Vigilius, it would seem that this was a common calumny of the Eutychians, who repeatedly accused the orthodox church of subscribing to Nestorius’s heresy. 281 Simler denies that Reformed Christology serves to undermine the hypostatic union. Although Christ’s glorified flesh is »locally« present only in heaven, his divinity fills creation »not as the Word apart from the flesh but as the Word united to the flesh«. When the Reformed deny that Christ’s body is present substantially in the elements of the Lord’s Supper, they »do not separate Christ’s divinity from his humanity, but the substance of his human nature from the bread«. Wherever the divine Word is at work, it is as Emmanuel, the Word made flesh, in union with his »conjoined humanity«. It is impossible for Christ’s humanity to be omnipresent or infinitely extensible, as the ubiquitarians contend, since »a body that retains its nature cannot be present except locally and in a corporeal manner.« 282

281 Simler, Scripta vetem, 179v.
282 Simler, Scripta vetem, 190: »cum igitur dicimus Christi corpus non esse ita realiter et substantialiter praeens in Coena, ut cum pane a ministro porrigatur, et oraliiter a piis et impiis sumatur, hoc enim multi asservunt, non Christi divinitatem ab humanitate separamus, sed humanae naturae substantiam a pane separamus: et a terris et pane ac vino Coenae, nequaquam vero a divinitate corpus Christi tantum distare dicimus, quantum supremum coelum a terra distat. Dicimus igitur ubicunque est divi-
Colloquy of Maulbronn (1564), Andreae himself accepted that Christ’s humanity was restricted to one place during his earthly mission, so how can he now argue that the Reformed position entails a sundering of the two natures? \(^{283}\) Although the location of Christ’s glorified flesh was a marginal issue for the Fathers, Simler is able nonetheless to assemble evidence of patristic support for the Zurich position from Theodoret, Vigilius, Fulgentius and, crucially, Cyril, who teaches that Christ is present on earth following the ascension not carnally, but spiritually and through his divinity. \(^{284}\)

Like previous Zurich writers against Lutheranism, Simler is at pains to demonstrate Zwingli’s orthodoxy, a cause that had become inextricably bound up with the honour of the Zurich church. In particular, he defends Zwingli’s much-criticised application of the term *alloiosis* to the hypostatic union. Employing the characteristic Bullingerian distinction between the *verbum* and *res* of theological discourse, Simler argues that *alloiosis* in Zwingli is equivalent to what Cassian calls *synecdoche* and John Damascene *antidosis*: all of these terms connote an exchange of properties, on a verbal level, between two intimately connected realities. The Lutherans do Zwingli a great injustice when they accuse him of reducing Christ to a mere man, divine in name only. His teachings can in no way be compared to the position of Nestorius, who showed his rejection of the *communicatio idiomatum* by advoca-
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Simler goes further, seeking to turn the accusation of Nestorianism back on to the ubiquitarians themselves. The posturing of Brenz and his followers, »who cast themselves as the sole defenders of the majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ«, is compared to the arrogance of Nestorius, who boasted of having recovered the true doctrine of Christ.\(^\text{286}\) The writings of the Fathers against monophysitism provide Simler with further ammunition. Justinian, Vigilius, Gelasius and Maxentius accuse those who speak of two natures before, though not after, the union of imitating Nestorius, as their position implies the existence of a separate human hypostasis of Christ prior to the incarnation. Taking his cue from these writers, Simler highlights Nestorian-sounding passages in Brenz’s works in which the latter speaks of the son of Mary as filled with the Son of God or of the Son of God as assuming the son of Mary.\(^\text{287}\) In the same way, Andreae is criticised for teaching that the man Jesus is called God »not because he is God in himself, but because in taking on his flesh [God] gave this man all power in heaven and on earth, and endowed him with all knowledge, and communicated to him every gift of the holy spirit«.\(^\text{288}\) In Simler’s view, this is to posit two persons in Christ, subject, as in Nestorius, to a twofold worship.\(^\text{289}\) Worse still, by asserting the deification of Christ’s humanity through its assumption of divine properties, the ubiquitarians give succour to the Samosatenians of Transylvania,

\(^{285}\) Simler, Scripta veterum, 188r.

\(^{286}\) Simler, Scripta veterum, 173v: »Ac [Nestorius] se magnifice iactat, quemadmodum nostra quidem aetate quidam se solos Maiestatis Domini nostri Iesu Christi vindices esse assurunt«.

\(^{287}\) Simler, Scripta veterum, 190r. Cf. Johannes Brenz, Recognitio propheticae et apostolicae de vera maiestate Domini nostri Iesu Christi [...], Tübingen: Ulrich Morhart the Elder, 1564 (VD 16 B 7785), 40f. Beza cites the same passages, to make a similar point, in his preface to Christoph Hardesheim’s »Refutatio dogmatis de fictitia carnis Christi omnipraesentia« (CTB 12, 66f. [no. 828]).

\(^{288}\) Simler, Scripta veterum, 190v: »Iacobus Andreae non tantum eadem cum suo Brentio asserit, sed docet etiam Christum hominem dici Deum non quia sit Deus in ipso, sed quia in assumptione carnis dedit huic homini omnem potestatem in coelo et in terra, et ornavit eum omni scientia, et communicavit ei omnia dona spiritus sancti«.

\(^{289}\) Simler, Scripta veterum, 190v. The point is reiterated in Simler, De vera praesentia, 88r, 96r–97r, 98r.
who ascribe to Christ a derivative divinity on account of his miraculous conception and the power and spiritual gifts bestowed on him by God.290 Andreae’s attempts to make the hypostatic union dependent on the transfusion of divine attributes to the man Jesus threaten either to undermine the distinction of persons within the Trinity or to turn Christ into »a deified man, adorned with divine gifts, which comes close to the impiety of the Samosatenians«.291

There is an element of polemical point-scoring in Simler’s claim to have detected a Nestorianising strand in the Christology of the ubiquitarians, but he is on surer ground when seeking evidence of monophysitism in their works. In the final chapter of the Narratio, the doctrine of ubiquity is assimilated to the teachings of the »fanatic« Schwenckfeld and his followers, already identified as the prime representatives of contemporary Eutychianism. Simler is not blind to the differences between the two groups. He accepts that, unlike Schwenckfeld, Brenz and Andreae acknowledge the creatureliness of Christ’s flesh, and credits them with greater subtlety than the Silesian reformer. For example, they accept that the communio idiomatum is to be understood »personaliter«, rather

290 Simler, Scripta veterum, 191r: »Velim autem hunc alterum ubiquitatis episcopum [Andreae], quem a Samosatencis furoribus quos Blandrata et Franciscus Davidis in Hungaria spargunt, alienum esse arbitror, bene secum expendere, quantam eorum causae roboris et firmamenti suppeditet: si enim creata natura in sese donari potest ea gloria et maiestate divina, ut exaequetur creatori et sit in sese adoranda, habent illi magnam ianuam apertam ad sua dogmata stabilienda. Docent autem Christum unius tantum esse naturae, hominem conceptum ex spiritu sancto et natum ex Maria virgine, esse autem hunc hominem Deum, tum propter conceptum e spiritu sancto, tum propter dona spiritus sancti sine mensura, et potestatem a Deo concessam.«

291 Simler, Scripta veterum, 191r–v: »Urgeant autem quantum velint communicatio non aliam unionem statuere hinc poterunt quam quae hominem Christum personam aliam a Verbo faciat, et Deum non natura sed ex gratia, proprietates enim illae essentiales tribus personis Trinitatis ex aequo communes sunt, et earum communicatio est opus totius Trinitatis, opera enim Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa: etsi igitur filius haec habet aeterna generatione, et ita sapiens est genita sapientia, tamen cum communicantur hae proprietates creaturae non communicantur eo modo quo filius habet, quo differt non re sed modo habendi (ut in rebus divinis habendi verbo improprue utamur) sed realiter ut adversarii dicuntur transfunduntur, cum autem reipsa eadem sit patris et filii et spiritus sancti sapientia et potentia, et communicatio quoque opus ad extra commune sit tribus personis, non potest unio personalis in hac communione aut transfusione constitutui, nisi dicamus Trinitati unitum esse hominem Christum, vel statuamus eum esse hominem divinis donis ornatum et Deificatum quod accedit ad Samosatenianorum impietatem.«
than »essentialiter et naturaliter«, a position compatible with Chalcedon. Yet their central argument – that the divine attributes, especially ubiquity, are assumed by the man Jesus – can only lead to a »Eutychian« confusion of Christ’s two natures. The Württembergers may pay lip service to orthodoxy but, like Schwenckfeld and Eutyches, who made similar claims, they must be judged on their writings. Simler highlights statements in which the »Brentiani« appear to teach both the possibility of Christ’s divine nature and the incorporation of his humanity into the Godhead. On Christ’s ascension, the location of his glorified body in heaven and his second coming, ubiquitous teaching is clearly refuted by the Fathers, whose writings offer the correct perspective on contemporary Christological debates. Moreover, in attempting to reconcile their peculiar dogmas with formal adherence to Chalcedonian orthodoxy, the ubiquitousarians have arrived at a position that is hopelessly incoherent and self-contradictory. Thus they concede that Christ’s humanity must be circumscribed »in itself«, but seek to rescue the doctrine of ubiquity by claiming that the Saviour’s glorified body is made omnipresent in a hitherto unheard-of manner, the *modum maiestatis*. Simler’s trump card is the former Lutheran hero Philip Melanchthon, now posthumously appropriated for the Reformed cause, »who states clearly that this physical communication of idioms is nothing other than a confusion of natures«.

6. Conclusion

In the *Scripta veterum*, the full range of Simler’s intellectual interests is on display, from theology and textual commentary through to history, biography and bibliography. The volume recapitulates

292 Simler, *Scripta veterum*, 211v–212r.
themes from his earlier controversial writings, targeted primarily against antitrinitarianism, and anticipates his subsequent detailed refutation of the Lutheran doctrine of Christ, *De vera praesentia*, in which he made considerable use of the texts anthologised in the *Scripta veterum*. The tension between scholarly and polemical concerns that manifests itself in the work is reflective of the hybrid nature of Simler’s role, as both a humanist-trained academic and a public representative of the Zurich church, tasked with defending Zwinglian doctrine against its enemies. Throughout his career, Simler’s scholarship was interwoven with polemic against the Catholic, Lutheran, antitrinitarian, Schwenckfeldian and Anabaptist alternatives to Reformed Protestantism. In the *Scripta veterum*, his aim is at once to demonstrate the unanimity of the Fathers, as witnesses to the Christological teaching of the early church, and to establish the Reformed as their legitimate successors. Evidence of apparent disagreement – between Cyril and the Antiochenes, or between the eastern and western theological traditions – is smoothed over or explained away, in order to preserve intact the illusion of a *consensus patrum* consistent with Reformed orthodoxy. The volume testifies to the deep attachment of the Zurich reformers to what they regarded as authentic Christian tradition (as distinct from the subsequent »innovations« of the papacy) and their rejection of the apostolic primitivism favoured by some radicals. Whereas the positions of the Zurich church’s opponents are discredited by association with the Nestorian and monophysite heresies, the Reformed are placed in a clear line of descent from the Fathers, whose efforts in defence of the orthodox faith provide the inspiration for Simler’s own anti-heretical campaign.
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Appendix

Johannes Pontisella to Josias Simler
Chur, 3 September 1571
Zurich ZB Ms. F 61, 7

[Address:] Clarissimo viro Domino Iosiae Simlero, Tiguri Sacrarum literarum professori celeberrimo, Domino suo honorando, perpetuaque fide colendo.

S.P.D. Ego quidem facile ad credendum inducor (vir Clarissime) Ebionis, Cerinthi, et aliorum haereticorum rabiem, furiarumque in impiis dogmatibus ululatum, furiarumque in impiis dogmatibus ululatum, primitivae illi Ecclesiae, triste admodum, et luctuosumuisse spectaculum, cum videlicet illi, qui Apostolos ipsos doctores habuissent, coacti fuerint videre, et auribus percipere, simplicem de Dei filio doctrinam, foede corrumpi, misereque dilacerari. At procul dubio, divina providentia ita ordinante, satanica illa organa, eo potissimum tempore, rabiem et virus suum evomuere, quo adhuc superstes esset is, qui impuris istis hominibus os execratum et blasphemum obdurare, et Domini nostri Iesu Christi divinitatem assere [sic] posset, videlicet S. Iohannes Evangelista et Apostolus: qui aliquando in filii Dei pectore recubuerat, et Spiritum eius largiter hauserat: ita ut miseros homines in errorem inductos, facile in viam rectam reducere, et in pura fide confirmare, retinereque posset. Opus insuper praestantissimum, Evangelium videlicet Sacrosanctum ab ipso Iohanne posteris reliquit, quo ipso tanquam validissimo scuto, ad venenata spicula, à Satana, in Iesu Christi divinitatem emissa, excipere valerent. Certe Ignatius et Polycarpus, S. Iohannis discipuli, et horum auditor Irenaeus, hunc clypeum arripuit, adversus haereticos ex Satanae casinis, Christi Domini naturam appetentes, pugnaturi. Insequentibus deinde temporibus cum Satan, pro suo ingenio, alias atque alias machinas, ad Iesu Christi naturas oppugnandas pararet, Optimi, Maximique Dei beneficio, extiterunt et complures alii, qui modo dictorum vestigiis insistentes acriter puram et sinceram de Dei filio doctrinam sunt tutati, quos tu in hoc tuo opere (vir Clarissime) producis ac commemoras. At quam dulce, quamque iucundum est, eiusmodi praecellentium virorum, in purioris
fidei defensione, consensum videre? Equidem ego hunc tuum co-
natum et laborem, quo maxime strenuos haeresium oppugnatores,
unico opere coniunxisti, omnibus quibus modo animus nulla ma-
leviolentia fuerit suffusus, facile probatum iri speraverim. Ex hoc
enim opere cuivis facile erit, solida et perspicua desumere argu-
menta, quibus blasphemorum ora ita obstruat, ut ne mutire qui-
dem amplius valeant. Haud igitur imme
ti opus hoc tuum
haereticorum malleus dici poterit. Mihi quidem hoc donum gratis-
simurn exitit, tibique (Vir Clarissime) pro hoc munere gratias ma-
xicmas et ago, et habeo, habiturusque sum perpetuo. Et Amplissi-
mus vir D. Stephanus Willius, Cons. dignissimus, gratias ingentes
su no mine tibi agere iussit, se relaturum quoque, sicubi occasio
se obtulerit, pollicetur. Christum Dominum aeterni Dei filium
rogamus, ut is te Ecclesiae suae quam diutissimum salvum et in-
columum servare dignetur. Amplissimus D. Cons. salutem pluri-
mam suo nomine adscribere iussit. Me quoque nomine Clarissi-
mos viros D.D. Bullingerum, Gualtherum, Lavatherum et alios no-
tos salutare digneris. Bene valeas, vir Clarissime, meque in tuorum
numero habere digneris.

Iohannes Pontisella Senior tui observantissimus.