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A B S T R A C T

After a more extended bibliography and historical survey of Simonian studies than have hitherto appeared, this study attempts to reduce some of the many uncertainties about Simon and Simonianism by a systematic examination of primary sources.

The Simon of Acts 8 was an historical Samaritan who repented of his pretensions and was not, pace Irenaeus, responsible for the rise of the Simonian movement. The extant text of Justin (attempts to recover the contents of his lost Syntagma are rejected) supports the double Simon hypothesis and fits in well with the proffered reading of Acts 8. Justin shows too that primitive Simonianism was non-Gnostic, being a pagan religion dating from the mid-first century in which Simon of Gitta was equated with Zeus and Helena his companion with Athene. Simonianism fell, a century later, under the spell of Gnosticism, and the author seeks to explain various of the inconsistencies of Simonian doctrine as caused by an imperfectly successful attempt to reconcile primitive Simonian with Gnostic ideas. The extant text of Hippolytus (the Syntagma account is adjudged to be almost entirely unrecoverable) adds little to our knowledge of Simonianism proper but it gives us a valuable account of a probably unrelated movement, composed largely of heretical Samaritans, whose Bible was the Megale Apophasis. By the time of Epiphanius the Simonians were addicted to gross orgiastic rites and were probably in decline, though some may have survived till the early fifth century.

In the final chapter the author gathers together the information gleaned from the analysis of sources. He contends that Simonianism was not an original religion; it was not the first Christian heresy; it was not the earliest form of Gnosticism. It was essentially derivative and parasitic, an intellectually undistinguished farrago of ideas borrowed from pagan classical religion, from Christianity and from Gnosticism.

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## SIMONIANISM

a thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of

M. Litt.

by

Bernard Peter Robinson

Theology Department,  
University of Durham

October, 1977

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## ABBREVIATIONS

### (i) General

Aufl. Auflage	Repr. Reprinted
Ausg. Ausgabe	RV Revised Version
ET English translation	Suppl. Supplement
Ed. Edited (by). Edition. Editor	Tl(e) Teil(e)
Edd. Editors	Tom(s) Tome(s)
Hrg Herausgegeben	Tr. Translated (by). Translator
NEB New English Bible	Vol(1, s) Volume(s) / Volumen,
NF Neue Folge	volumina.
NHC Nag Hammadi Codex	

### (ii) Titles of Periodicals, Series, &c.

AAWGPH Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, philologische  
historische Klasse

AB Anchor Bible

ADAIK Abhandlungen des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Kairo

ALUOS Annual of the Leeds University Oriental Society

AMJ American Journal of Theology

ANCL Ante Nicene Christian Library

ATR Anglican Theological Review

AUU Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis

AnB Analecta Biblica

BASOR Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research

BEAR Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d' Athènes et de Rome

- BET Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
- BGE Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese
- BHT Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
- BJRL Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
- BTH Bibliothèque de théologie historique
- 
- CBSC Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges
- CCER Cahiers du Cercle Ernest-Renan
- CH Church History
- CP Classical Philology
- CRB Cahiers de la Revue biblique
- CSEL Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
- 
- DZCWCL Deutsche Zeitschrift für christliche Wissenschaft und  
christliches Leben
- 
- EB Études bibliques
- ECPR Études de critique et de philosophie religieuse
- EDT Études et textes pour l'histoire du dogme de la Trinité
- EHPR Études d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses, publiées  
par la faculté de théologie protestante de l'université de  
Strasbourg
- EQ Evangelical Quarterly
- ET Evangelische Theologie
- ETR Études théologiques et religieuses
- Exp Expositor
- 
- FRLANT Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des alten und neuen  
Testaments

GA Gazette archéologique

GGs Die griechisch-christliche Schriftsteller der ersten drei  
Jahrhunderte

GTA Göttinger theologische Arbeiten

HNT Handbuch zum neuen Testament

HTR Harvard Theological Review

HUCA Hebrew Union College Annual

Int Interpretation

JAOS Journal of the American Oriental Society

JHS Journal of Hellenic Studies

JQR Jewish Quarterly Review

JRS Journal of Roman Studies

JSJ Journal for the Study of Judaism

JSS Journal of Semitic Studies

JTS Journal of Theological Studies

KD Kerygma und Dogma

KEK Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das neue Testament,  
begründet von H.A.W. Meyer

KGS Kirchengeschichtliche Studien

MLUOS Monograph series, Leeds University Oriental Society

MScR Mélanges de science religieuse

Mus Le Muséon

NBAC Nuovo bulletino di archeologia cristiana

NCB New Century Bible

NHS Nag Hammadi Studies

NT Novum Testamentum

NTD Das neue Testament Deutsche

NTS New Testament Studies

NTT Nederlands Theologische Tijdschrift

NTTS New Testament Tools and Studies

OCA Orientalia Christiana Analecta

OS Oudtestamentische Studiën

PG J.P. Migne ed. Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca

PL " , series Latina

PTS Patristische Texte und Studien

Ps Psyche, Zeitschrift für die Kenntniss des menschlichen Seelen-  
und Geisteslebens

RAC Rivista di archeologia cristiana

RB Revue biblique

REH Revue des études historiques

REJ Revue des études juives

RHR Revue de l'histoire des religions

RMM Revue de métaphysique et de morale

RMP Rheinisches Museum für Philologie

RSLR Rivista di storia e letterature religiosa

RScR Recherches de science religieuse

RTR Reformed Theological Review

RVV Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten

- SBT Studies in Biblical Theology
- SC Sources chrétiennes
- SHR Studies in the History of Religion
- SJLA Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
- SNTSB Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, Bulletin
- SNTSM Society for New Testament Studies Monograph
- SUNT Studien zum Umwelt des neuen Testaments
- TGUOS Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society
- THNT Theologischer Handkommentar zum neuen Testament
- TJ Theologische Jahrbücher (Tübingen)
- TP Theologie und Philosophie
- TR Theologische Rundschau
- TS Theological Studies
- TT Theologisch Tijdschrift
- TU Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen  
Literatur
- TWNT Theologisches Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament
- TZT Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie
- ThJ Theologische Jahrbücher, Veröffentlichungen des theologischen  
Seminars der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg,  
Abteilung Kirchengeschichte
- ThLZ Theologische Literaturzeitung
- UUA Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift

VC Vigiliae Christianae

VT Vetus Testamentum

VetC Vetera Christianorum

WC Westminster Commentaries

WG Das Welt als Geschichte

WS Wiener Studien

WUNT Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum neuen Testament

ZAW Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

ZDPV Zeitschrift für Deutschen Palästinavereins

ZHT Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie

ZKG Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte

ZNW Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft

ZPKT Zeitschrift für Philosophie und katholische Theologie

ZRGG Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte

ZThK Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

ZWT Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie

#### A Note on Some Linguistic Usages

Throughout this study, except where we are quoting, we have adopted the following usages:

Simon Magus, Simon the Samaritan, or The Simon of Acts =  
the Simon of Acts 8

Simon of Gitta = the founder of Simonianism

Helena = the consort of Simon of Gitta

Helen = Helen of Troy

Samaritan = an adherent of the Samaritan religion

Samaritan = a non-Samaritan inhabitant of Samaria

References to Irenaeus are in every case to the *Adversus Haereses* in the edition of W.W. Harvey.

## INTRODUCTION

The figure of Simon, aptly characterised by a writer of the last century as 'one of the most protean of personages celebrated in prose and verse' (A.2: Anon, 1884, p.58), has, as our first chapter will show, exercised a strong fascination over scholars of recent times. Within the last decade interest has redoubled and there have appeared no fewer than four full-length studies on Simonian topics (by Josef Frickel, J.M.A. Salles-Dabadie, Karlmann Beyschlag and Gerd Lüdemann) but it is a measure of the protean nature of Simon that they present four different evaluations of the date, provenance and inter-relationships of the sources for Simonianism, so it is hardly surprising that their conclusions differ radically from one another. The question of sources is crucial and it is for this reason that we have devoted the bulk of our study to a re-examination of it.

In the absence of any scholarly consensus over such fundamental questions as whether the Simon of Acts was the progenitor of Simonianism, whether Simonianism was Gnostic from the beginning, whether Gnosticism takes its origin as the Fathers supposed from Simonianism, and whether Helena was an historical person, we see no need to offer to justify a further attempt to, if not eliminate, at least reduce some of the uncertainties that attend what we have called the Simonian debate, especially in view of the importance of Simonian studies for the history of Gnosticism and of primitive Christianity.



In the section of our bibliography devoted to ex professo studies of Simonianism (viz. part A.2), we provide a considerably more comprehensive catalogue of Simonian researches than has yet, to our knowledge, been compiled, and in the first chapter of the thesis we have put flesh upon the bones of this bibliography by giving a detailed account of nearly four hundred years of Simonian studies. In subsequent chapters we have provided a fresh examination of the primary sources for Simonianism, their relationship to each other, and their historical value. That we have succeeded in pinning down Proteus once and for all is more than we dare suppose, but we hope that our exposition of the course of Simonian investigations so far, and our presentation of what is in some respects a new reading of the evidence, will at least enable others to carry the Simonian debate a little further forward.

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Note. Works are referred to in the text by the section (and subdivision) in which they occur in the bibliography and by the year of publication. Where more than one item by an particular author in any particular section have the same year of publication, they are distinguished by the use of numerals within square brackets.

The layout of the bibliography is as follows:

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##### A.1. (i) Acts

##### A.1. (ii) Justin

##### A.1. (iii) Irenaeus

##### A.1. (iv) Hippolytus

##### A.1. (v) Pseudo-Clement

##### A.1. (vi) Others

#### A.2. Simonianism: studies of

#### A.3. Simonianism in relation to other systems of belief

##### A.3. (i) Simonianism and Samaritanism

##### A.3. (ii) Simonianism and Qumran

##### A.3. (iii) Simonianism and Judaism generally

##### A.3. (iv) Simonianism and classical mythology

##### A.3. (v) Simonianism and yet other systems

### B. GNOSTICISM

### C. JUDAISM (without specific reference to Simonianism)

#### C.1. Philo

#### C.2. Jewish mysticism

D. SAMARIA and SAMARITANISM (without specific reference to  
Simonianism)

D.1. Dositheanism

E. CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY (without specific  
reference to Simonianism)

F. MISCELLANEOUS

- - - - - + - - - - -

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NOTE

Omitted from the above bibliography are:

- (i) Works of which the author has not been able to locate a copy to consult: e.g.

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- (ii) Works of creative literature based on the Simon legend:

e.g. HUGHES, B. Simon Magus, a poem. London, 1774;  
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## Chapter 1

### THE SIMONIAN DEBATE, 1700 - 1975:

#### A CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY, WITH EACH OF THE CHIEF PARTICIPANTS IN THE DEBATE LISTED ACCORDING TO THE DATE OF HIS FIRST CONTRIBUTION

One might gain the impression from most if not all who have written about Simonianism in recent decades that Simon first became an object of scholarly interest towards the end of the first third of the nineteenth century, with the rise of the Tübingen School. How mistaken such an impression would be may be seen from the fact that already by 1723 J.H. Horbius' account of 'scriptores Simonis Magi historiam exponentes' could list nearly fifty scholars (B: Horbius, 1723) (1). It is true that most of the accounts given by seventeenth and eighteenth century scholars are uncritical, but this is not true of all; a few scholars produced critical assessments of evidence the echoes of which were to be heard long afterwards. Their names have as much right to stand at the head of this survey as do those of the Tübingers who were to eclipse them.

We may mention first Anthony van DALE, the celebrated Dutch doctor and antiquary, who subjoined to the second edition of his study of ancient oracles a 'dissertatiuncula' entitled 'De statua Simoni Mago, ut praetenditur, erecta' (A.1.(ii): Dale, 1700, pp. 579 -608), presenting what deserves to be called the classic statement of the case for the inaccuracy of Justin's assertion that the Roman Senate in the principate of Claudius raised a statue

to Simon (whom 'almost all the Samaritans worshipped') in Rome between the two bridges of the Tiber (Apol. I 26). Justin's narrative was, van Dale argued, suspect in several respects. The Samaritans, not being idolaters, were unlikely to have worshipped a statue (p.584). The Romans, for their part, despised the Samaritans, so would not have honoured a Samaritan in this way; nor indeed would it be easy to reconcile their doing so with Justin's further statement that very few gentiles worshipped Simon. Again, Justin's assertion was contradicted by the fact that Claudius imposed an embargo on the divinisation of human beings during his reign (p.587). Nor would it help to suppose Justin merely mistaken about the date and to date it later than Justin does, for if it had occurred after the death of Claudius Simon would already himself have met his ignominious end and would scarcely have been a candidate for divinisation (p. 595). Doubtless, van Dale thought, Justin had seen an inscription to the Sabine god Semo, either that discovered on San Bartolomeo island in 1574 (2), or one similar, and 'ex zelo nimis, improvido' had misread it, confusing the name Semo with Simon (pp. 449 -50). The argument adduced by many scholars of his day (and since) that Justin knew Rome too well to have committed such a blunder, van Dale rejected: that Justin knew Rome well, or had long resided there, was asserted by no ancient authority (p. 594).

The second very early work to which we may allude is the *Observationes sacrae* of CAMPEGIUS VITRINGA the elder (B: Vitrings, 1708). Vitringa appears to have been the first to solve the problem of reconciling Acts 8 with the patristic testimonies by

postulating the existence of two Simons:

Mihi igitur haec cogitationibus meis versanti  
subinde inter alia occurrit, an non forte alius  
quidam Simon, Gente Judaeus, qui sub Domitiano  
floruerit Imperio, Pythagoricae Philosophiae  
deditus, & ob hanc rationem à simplicioris  
ingenii hominibus Magus dictus, illius sectae  
Gnosticorum celebris Doctor olim fuerit, idemque  
per errorem cum Simone Mago, cujus in Apostolica  
historia mentio, confusus et permutatus sit  
(V. 12, 9).

Why Simon the Gnostic should have been well-disposed to the  
Pythagorean system is plain enough, e.g. from the Pythagorean  
elements in the Hippolytan account, but the reasons for crediting  
him with Jewish nationality, and for dating him in the principate  
of Domitian (81 -96) are less readily apparent.

The double-Simon hypothesis as here presented is based on  
little more than guesswork, as Mosheim pointed out ('ratiocinium  
sive potius divinatio Camp. Vitringae': A.2: Mosheim, 1743, p. 59):  
it 'supposes a fact', he said in another place, 'without any other  
proof than a seeming difference in the narration of the ancient  
historians' (A.2: Mosheim, 1790. I, p. 140). As formulated by Isaac  
de BEAUSOBRE in 1731, however (A.2: Beausobre, 1731), the hypothesis  
became formidable: 'sententiam suam', wrote his chief opponent  
generously (A.2: Mosheim, 1743, p. 67), 'argumentis & rationibus  
non contemnendis fulcire studuit' (3). Beausobre argued not only

from the disagreements between Acts and the patristic accounts: he also sought to show that Hegesippus (in Eusebius HE 4.22.5) and Clement of Alexandria (Strom. VII) when writing of Simon the heresiarch provided chronological indications which excluded the possibility that they believed that he was the same person as the Simon of Acts. Though Mosheim was vigorously to resist Beausobre's arguments, contending that his opponent had misconstrued Hegesippus and Clement, Beausobre's arguments remain worthy of attention.

Though the seventeenth and eighteenth century scholars must be credited with having initiated the Simonian debate, it was broadened considerably in the nineteenth century. From the eighteen-thirties other questions were added to those voiced by Vitringa, Beausobre and Van Dale. Whereas Vitringa and Beausobre had argued for two Simons, the Tübingen School asked whether there had even been one. Others, accepting the historicity of at least one Simon, asked whether he was a pagan or a member of the Samaritan sect, whether he was connected with the equally shadowy figure of Dositheus, whether he was the author of the Megale Apophasis which tradition attributed to him, and whether this document represented an earlier or a later form of Simonianism than the patristic accounts. Gone were the days when Simon's name occurred in print mainly in warnings against either the sin of simony (e.g. Dante: Inferno, XIX) or the contumacity of resistance to properly constituted ecclesiastical authority (whether 'Petrine' or otherwise). The Magus was no longer to be principally invoked to point a moral or adorn a tale; he became rather the focus of

heated historical controversy, as he still is today.

We come now to speak of the Tübingen School. In 1831 Ferdinand Christian BAUR published an article in which he argued that in the Pseudo-Clementines the figure of Simon Magus was a literary device for mounting a covert attack on the work and teaching of the apostle Paul (F: Baur, 1831); when, for instance, Peter in Hom. 2.17 says that Simon, whose knowledge of the Gospel is based upon a vision of Jesus (!), is wrong to set himself up as an adversary, we are in the presence of a Jewish Christian author who wishes to challenge the credentials of Gentile Christianity, and especially the position of its protagonist, the so-called Apostle of the Gentiles, a position which was founded on the claim to have received revelations. Four years later (B: Baur, 1835) Baur turned his attention to the Simon of Acts, and suggested that he was a purely mythical figure whose name reflected the fact that behind him stood the pagan sun-god of Samaria, Sem; Helena too was a mythical being, a moon-goddess. There was no historical Helena, and there may have been no historical Simon either.

The historicity of Helena remains, as we shall see, a moot point, and there are scholars today who regard her as a mythical being et praeterea nihil, but the reduction of Simon to the god Sem, whose existence Baur did not attempt to prove, has had few supporters (though it remained part of Baur's thinking until the mid - 1850s; it was also espoused by Schwegler (F: Schwegler, 1846, I, p. 306 seq.) ), and was soon abandoned even by members of the Tübingen School. Hilgenfeld, for instance, questioned whether there were sufficient pagans in Samaria at this period for this reconstruction to be plausible (A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1868,

p. 358). It is now clear that the pagan population of Samaria was considerable, but Baur's Sem hypothesis is not likely to be revived, for no scrap of evidence has been adduced to show that they had a god Sem.

Baur's whole line of reasoning about Simon is highly suspect. Having claimed that Justin mistakenly took the inscription 'Semoni Sanco' on a Roman statue to refer to Simon, he argued that the mistake was not altogether unreasonable, since the names were cognate. Semo Sancus was an ancient Roman god, equivalent to Fidius Hercules. But, 'the god Semo is also an ancient Oriental god worshipped as the sun-god Herakles in Near Eastern countries, especially in Phoenicia, and also in Egypt...The name Simon is derived from the oriental Sem, in the same way as the related name Samson derives from  $\omega \dot{\alpha} \omega$  (op. cit., p. 308n.)'. He found a reason for the title Hestos being given to Simon in the fact that Herakles, and Samson too, were associated with pillars. That 'Simon' is etymologically related to 'Semo' is just as much pure conjecture as is the supposition that there was an oriental god Sem. The Pillars of Hercules myth, according to which Hercules divided a mountain with two pillars, lays no emphasis on the god's posture at the time, so the assertion that standing was especially characteristic of Hercules is ill-founded. Being Hercules he could doubtless have accomplished the feat equally well in any other posture!

HILGENFELD himself went beyond Baur, explicitly stating that Simon never existed, but without invoking Baur's precarious Sem-hypothesis (A.1.(v): Hilgenfeld, 1848; A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1868.

From 1878, however, he was converted to a belief in the historicity of Simon). Taking his cue from Baur's conclusions about the figure of Simon in the Pseudo-Clementines, Hilgenfeld offered the same diagnosis of the Simon of Acts, seeing him as a mere mask or caricature of Paul. He doubted even the existence of a Simonian sect (F: Hilgenfeld, 1853, pp. 242 -43, n.19).

Hilgenfeld's contention about Simon commended itself to Baur, who in 1853 adopted it as his own, without however as yet dropping the Sem-hypothesis (B: Baur, 1853, pp.81 -85). The theory was taken a step further in 1856 when Volkmar affected to trace a connection between the gold that Simon offered Peter and Paul's collection of money for the poor churches (A.1.(i): Volkmar, 1856; F: Volkmar, 1857, p. 287 seq.) Volkmar's suggestion was greeted with enthusiasm by both Hilgenfeld (A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1868) and Baur (F: Baur, 1860, p. 84 seq.); the latter now jettisoned his Sem-hypothesis.

The Tübingen view that Simon everywhere was but a mask for Paul, in favour of which, apart from the scholars above named, Lipsius (A.2: Lipsius, 1875), Zeller (A.1.(i): Zeller, 1854, pp.158 -74; 1875, pp. 250 -69), Schmiedel (A.2: Schmiedel, 1903) and Kreyenbühl (F: Kreyenbühl, 1900, I, pp. 195, 199, 206, 218, 344) also wrote (though Lipsius and Hilgenfeld later withdrew their support (A.2: Lipsius, 1883 -90, II, 1, pp. 28 -69; A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1878, p. 327 n.1; A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1881, p.16; A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1884, p.155 seq.)), was clearly much influenced by the School's partiality towards Hegelianism. The history of Christianity in the first century was seen as a dialectical conflict between Petrine, or Jewish, and Pauline, or Gentile, factions, of which the outcome, or synthesis, was the 'Early Catholicism' of the

second century, which produced much of the New Testament (Schwegler, for instance, dated Mark later than Justin). The Tübingen position was, in fact, far more widely reported and debated than it was adopted. Hilgenfeld owned in 1868 that the consensus of scholarly opinion (to which he was to add his own voice a decade later) held out for the historicity of Simon (A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1868, p.359): he mentions Ritschl (F: Ritschl, 1850, p.162 n.2; 1857, p. 228n.), Lutterbeck (F: Lutterbeck, 1852, Bd.2, pp. 7 -27), Grimm (D: Grimm, 1854, pp.125 -75), Uhlhorn (A.1.(v): Uhlhorn, 1854, pp. 281 -97), Möller (F: Möller, 1860, pp.284 -317). Jost (C: Jost, 1857, I, pp.427,28.) and Noack (A.2: Noack, 1860). Of this list we should perhaps draw special attention to the name of Uhlhorn, for he was, so far as we are able to ascertain, the first to assert what has since become a very popular view, namely that Simonianism derives from a pre-Christian Samaritan Gnosis.

To Hilgenfeld's list of defenders of Simon's historicity we may add the name of Charles STREISGUTH, who in a brief bachelor's thesis on Simon (A.2: Streisguth, 1839) argued that he had been a Gnostic even before he encountered Christianity. Simon probably claimed to be, he thought, an aeon, not the supreme deity (p.5), for had he seen himself as God he would have had no motive for seeking baptism, and in any case the supreme deity of the Gnostics was thought never to come into contact with the material world (p.7). Simon was, as the Fathers recognised, an adversary of Christianity, not a Christian heretic (Jesus had no place in his system) (p.9).



The first English-language contribution to the debate was not particularly impressive (D: Nutt, 1874). In his sketch of Samaritan history and literature which he placed before the text of the fragments of a Samaritan Targum on Leviticus and Numbers, J.W. NUTT took occasion to speak of Simon. After summarising the accounts in Acts, Justin, Irenaeus and the Pseudo-Clementines, he acknowledged that many details therein must be suspect, but made no effort to sift the true from the false. He then asserted that Hippolytus Ref.VI.9 seq. contained long extracts from the Megale Apophasis, which he took to be a genuine work of Simon providing 'a very complete description of his doctrinal system' (p.58). Whether the doctrines about Helena were part of Simon's system, or were 'due to the imagination and enthusiasm of his scholars' (p.60), he owned himself uncertain. Nutt did not relate Simonianism to the teachings of the Samaritan religion, but found it to be a 'strange mixture of Judaism, Christianity, Oriental legend, and Greek mythology' (p.62). He mentioned Baur's Sem-hypothesis in a footnote (p. 56, n.1), but did not debate it.

August KLOSTERMANN merits a brief mention in this survey for his suggestion (A.1. (i): Klostermann, 1883) that in the phrase ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη μεγάλη, Acts 8.10, μεγάλη is a corruption of a Samaritan כִּשְׂרָא or 'סרָא, meaning Revealer. Revived by Salles-Dabadie in 1969 (A.1.(iv): Salles-Dabadie, 1969, pp.128 -29), this suggestion deserves to be taken seriously. It is not accurate to say, as Beyschlag does (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 105, n.15) that it was refuted by Nestle in 1896, for Nestle's

curt dismissal of it as 'naturally false' (A.1.(i): Nestle, 1896, p. 52) is not refutation. We shall consider Klostermann's suggestion in due course.

HEIDENHEIM, in his Bibliotheca Samaritana (A.3.(ii): Heidenheim, 1884-96, esp.II, pp. xxxv-xl.), which is reckoned to have made an important contribution to Samaritan studies, marred though it is by inaccuracy, found parallels between Simonian terminology and Samaritan liturgy, especially in respect of the terms Standing One and Root, which he explained by the supposition that Samaritanism contained a considerable number of Gnostic elements from which Simon constructed a Gnostic system of thought. Since the title of Standing One is particularly attributed to Simon by the Pseudo-Clementines, Heidenheim argued that this went some way towards confirming the Pseudo-Clementine account of Simon, and justified him in, for instance, finding a supposedly Pseudo-Clementine form of the name of Simon's birthplace (viz. 'Gethorum': but see Chapter 7 infra) more nearly accurate than that contained in Justin Martyr (II, xxxv, n.1: it is 'very likely the name of the supposed birthplace was Gathera').

Wilhelm FROMMBERGER'S dissertation on Simon (A.2: Frommberger, 1886) does not, alas, take us very far. Noting that the Tübingers had taken Simon to be unhistorical, a mere mask for Paul, because of their estimate of the Pseudo-Clementines, he addressed himself first to the latter, and sought to prove them not to be, as supposed, Jewish Christian. Time running out (!in studio theologico', he lamented in words that many will echo, 'non sufficit triennium': p.53) he did not get round to an evaluation of the Simon stories themselves.

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In his study of Gnosticism, Emile AMÉLINEAU (B: Amélineau, 1887) devoted a whole chapter to Simon. Simon was for him an historical person whose teaching could be reliably reconstructed from Acts and the patristic testimonies (the latter went back, in substance, to a very early refutation which antedated Irenaeus). Simon was already when he encountered Philip a well-educated man, well versed in philosophical and medical literature, who had fully developed his own system. This system could with confidence be recovered from the Megale Apophasis, which the Philosophumena allude to and quote, a work definitely from the pen of Simon (p.32). Inasmuch as Simon taught that man could be saved from a world ill-administered by angels through a knowledge of himself, and that he, Simon, had as saviour seemingly suffered, he had laid the foundations for all later gnostic and docetic thinking, and Simonianism was thus 'an immense arsenal where all the heretics to come could arm and fortify themselves' (p. 50). In this sense, the patristic claim that Simon was the father of all heresy was well-grounded.

The merit of G.R.S. MEAD'S essay on Simon (A.2: Mead, 1892) is that from a position within the modern theosophical movement Mead was able to view Simonianism with a degree of empathy (indeed he commends it as deserving of 'admiration' (p.5) ). He had no difficulty in showing the affinity of the thought-world of Simonianism not only with theosophy but also with Kabbalism (in this he had been anticipated by Heidenheim in 1885), with the theurgy of the Chaldean Oracles, as also with Vedic, Babylonian, Zoroastrian and Phoenician ideas. The limitation of the book

from our point of view is that Mead was not much interested in the history of Simonianism, in the relative dates of its various elements, or in the immediate provenance of its doctrines (4). He loosely attributed the system as a whole to Simon, but the fact that in one place (p. 40) he ascribed the Magale Apophasis to 'the Simonians' rather than to Simon suggests that he did not intend 'Simon' to be interpreted always of the historical Simon. Of Helena he wrote, 'Whether or not there was a Helen we shall probably never know' (p. 39); the thought did not worry him, for his interest was, as we have said, in the system. Mead's belief being, as is attested by his other writings (e.g. B: Mead, 1900; also the various volumes in the Echoes from the Gnosis series), that theosophical systems are not rivals one to another but each complements the others inasmuch as none presents more than a symbolic picture of the truth, it is natural that differences say between the Simonianism recorded by Irenaeus and the Simonianism of the Apophasis (supposing it to be Simonian) should not have concerned him very much.

R. PRAEFCKE'S study of the life and teaching of Simon in the Pseudo-Clementines (A.2: Präfcke, 1895) argued that the Homilies, unlike the Recognitions, which he took to be later than the Homilies, contained (together with unhistorical accretions) recollections of Simon which were reliable and reconcilable with the two other trustworthy sources, viz. Acts and Justin, provided that one did not wrongly take Acts to represent Simon as repenting (p. 10). The Homilies confirmed the historicity of Simon and Helena,

provided us with the additional information of the name of his birthplace (his Alexandrian education, however, was fabulous), and offered a sound account of the basic doctrine of Simon, which was that the Supreme God was unknown but from him proceeded two Powers, the ἀνωτάτη δύναμις = ὁ Ἐστώς = Simon, and the μεγάλη δύναμις = κυρία παρμήτωρ, σοφία = Helena. From God, or from the μεγάλη δύναμις, issued two angels, one the creator the other the lawgiver. This doctrine of the two angels could not plausibly be derived from other Gnostic systems; rather it characterised Simonianism as an early Gnostic system which itself influenced others. Acts already represented Simon as a Gnostic, and one could safely designate him as an 'antichristian Samaritan Gnostic' (p. 23).

With Hans WAITZ' 1904 article on Simon (A.2: Waitz, 1904) we come to what is pretty generally recognised to be one of the six or so most important contributions to the debate. Having established (what Hilgenfeld, till his recantation, had doubted and Baur had denied (5)) that there was a Simonian sect, Waitz argued that 'its existence presupposes a person (called Simon) after whom they named themselves' (p. 125). Simon could not have been the author of the Megale Apophasis, however, for if it had been written before the beginning of the second century Justin or Irenaeus would surely have alluded to it (p. 126). The magician called Simon mentioned by Josephus AJ 20. 7. 2 (no allusion is made to the alternative reading 'Atomos' instead of 'Simon') was to be identified with the Simon of Acts 8, Josephus' statement that he was a Jew being an error, as also was the mention of Cyprus as his

place of origin (Kittim in place of the lesser known place name Gittai). The incident mentioned by Josephus (the arrangement of a match between Felix and Drusilla) is dated, Waitz noted, during the time of Felix' procuratorship, 52 -60 A.D., and is located in Caesarea. This need not conflict with Justin's assertion, Apol. I 26, that Simon came to Rome during the principate of Claudius, 41 -54. The Pseudo-Clementine statement that Simon was educated at Alexandria belonged to the realm of saga, and its basis could no longer be established. Likewise the connection of Simon with the Hemerobaptist John and with Dositheus, Simon's supposed master (Hom. 2. 23; Recogn. 2. 8): these were a saga-like precipitate of the historical perception (found in Justin, Hegesippus and Pseudo-Clement) that the disciples of John the Baptist and the Dositheans belonged to a pre-Christian (Jewish) or early Christian heresy and were thus to be regarded as forerunners of the Simonians.

Of the Acts 8 narrative, Waitz believed that an earlier version had only Peter, not Philip and John too, acting as Simon's opponent (6). This encounter on Samaritan soil was the origin of the legend of the encounter of Peter and Simon in Rome.

As the Simonian sect grew, it bifurcated, developing in a mythological fashion on Samaritan/Syrian soil, while in Alexandria it underwent a philosophical development. The mythological form was reflected in the accounts of Justin and Irenaeus, which, for instance, introduced the figure of Helena, a moon-goddess, and assimilated the historical figure of Simon to the sun-god (Sem (!), Shemesh, Herakles, Melkart, Baal). Waitz saw in this development the influence of Phoenician religion, with its sun and

moon deities (it was of course in a Tyrian brothel that Irenaeus says that Simon found Helena), though he was uncertain whether Simonianism crossed into Phoenicia and then became mythologised in this way or whether Phoenician religion penetrated Samaria and influenced Simonianism on its native soil. At all events, this development cannot, he thought, have occurred much after the end of the first century else Justin would not have been taken in by it into supposing Helena a historical person. The idea that Simon appeared to the Jews as Son, to the Samaritans as Father and to other nations as Holy Spirit (Iren. I.16. 1) was a christianisation of the Palestinian form of Simonianism.

There were already incipient Gnostic tendencies in this Palestinian Simonianism (witness the titles First Power, Ennoia, &c.), and on Syrian soil Simonianism proceeded to become a Gnostic sect.

In Alexandria was to be found a form of Simonianism which had no place for Helena, - Clement of Alexandria and Origen had never heard of her. It was here that the term Standing One, Hestos, which the Alexandrian Philo had used of God, was applied to Simon, (cf. Clem. Alex. Strom. II. xi. 52). The term alluded not to the concept of immortality, as Pseudo-Clement alleged, but to divinity. The Alexandrian Simonians looked on Simon as divine not, as in Palestine, in a mythological but in a philosophical sense. The Megale Apophasis represented a late, Gnosticised form of Alexandrian Simonianism. Its teaching could only be understood on the basis of the Alexandrian system: it was significant that it made no reference to Helena and that it used the term Hestos in the correct sense.

W. BOUSSET'S Hauptprobleme der Gnosis (B: Bousset, 1907) offers no ex professo examination of Simonianism as a system, but it does contain an extended discussion of the figure of Helena as part of its treatment of the great influence on the growth of the Gnostic movement of the worship of the Asiatic mother-goddess. The figure of Simon was stated, without any discussion of evidence, to be probably historical in essence, while his consort was for Bousset purely mythical. Bousset connected Helena not only with Phoenician moon-goddesses, as Waitz had done, but also with the Greek Helen, with whom Irenaeus says the Simonians identified her. He argued that the Greek Helen was originally a moon-goddess, a variant of the Phoenician moon-goddess (Helen came to Sidon, Bousset reminds us, with Paris in Iliad 6. 290). The various accounts in antiquity of Helen's journey to Egypt Bousset plausibly explained as deriving from an assimilation of Helen with Isis. Since Isis was herself associated with Astarte, we may, he suggested, construct the equation: Helena = Helen = Isis = Astarte. The lunar nature of the Simonian Helena was betrayed by the statement of Recog. 2. 8; Hom. 2. 23 that the band of disciples under Dositheus to which Simon originally belonged comprised thirty men, 'according', adds Hom., 'to the monthly reckoning of the moon', and by the explicit attribution to Helena by Recog. of the name 'Luna'. Bousset connected the statement of Epiphanius, Anc. 104, that Isis spent ten years as a prostitute in Tyre with Helena's supposed discovery by Simon in a Tyrian bordello. The Gnostic conception of Wisdom, Sophia, being imprisoned for a time in matter until her liberation may, Bousset thought, go back, through the Simonian system, to the idea of the moon-goddess disappearing for



a while in the darkness of night, an idea which may ultimately have shaped the story of the Homeric Helen's seduction. It was possible too that the snake-speculation among the Naassenes and Ophites might go back to an early connection of the snake cult with the worship of a lunar goddess, for Aelian represented Helen as killing a snake during her sojourn in Egypt and a scholium on Iliad 4. 355 had Helen burying on the island which was subsequently named after him a Carian captain called Pharos who had died of snake bite.

Bousset has here taken Baur's conception of Helena as a moon-goddess and given it such detailed documentation that henceforward none will dispute the adherence of lunar mythical motifs to the figure of Helena. Inasmuch, however, as his use of sources is promiscuous, he cannot be said to have proved the non-historicity of Helena. Some of his most telling texts are from the most recent of our sources, the Pseudo-Clementines, and we must therefore state that pending a more critical evaluation of sources it is as likely that an historical Helena was later invested with mythological traits as it is that a mythical goddess was historicised.

In his book on the Samaritans (D: Montgomery, 1907) J.A. MONTGOMERY took issue with the attempt of Heidenheim and others to find affinities between Simonianism and Samaritanism. The Chronicles of the Samaritans possessed 'no information concerning Simon's doctrines'. They dated him in the fourth century A.D., but the tale of his approaching Philo for help in exterminating the Christians (to receive the reply, very similar to Gamaliel's advice in Acts 5. 39, 'If this thing be from God, none

will be able to exterminate it') 'evinces a truer chronological tradition'. In Samaritanism Montgomery 'can find no syncretistic features..., no native tendency to Gnosticism. Simon Magus appears not as a type of Samaritanism, but only as an incident... he probably found his following rather among the Hellenistic population of Samaria, than in the Samaritan sect' (p. 268). There are, Montgomery allowed 'considerable traces of an incipient Gnostic speculation in Samaritanism, but...all these speculations have their parallel in orthodox Judaism', viz. in 'that process of Judaism which is a form of Gnosticism, and to which the technical name of Kabbalism had best be given' (*ibid.*). Heidenheim 'adduces no proofs for anything but what is found in incipient Jewish Kabbalism' (*ibid.*).

In 1909/10 A. REDLICH of Vienna published a lengthy article on the Megale Apophasis (A.1.(iv): Redlich, 1909/10). He stated at the beginning that he considered that any attempt to rebut Baur's Simon-Paul hypothesis would be futile (!), but that even should the historicity of Simon be established it was not relevant to a study of the Apophasis. He saw the latter as having close affinities with other Gnostic systems, and sought to show that Simonianism and Valentinianism had both originally spoken of a tetrad:

Πατήρ (= Νους, = Δύναμις)	Ἐπίνοια (= Ἀλήθεια)
Φωστήρ	Ὄνομα

The Apophasis had close links too with Greek philosophy, especially with Stoicism. Ultimately, however, Simonianism, indeed Gnosticism generally, rested on a foundation of mythology. Redlich tried to illustrate this by arguing for a common mythological provenance for

the Simonian triad (which replaced the original tetrad) and various Egyptian, Orphic, Nordic and Japanese ideas. Perhaps the most valuable contribution of Redlich is not his suggestion of connections with these other religions (such positions are notoriously hard to prove), but his documentation of contacts with the other Gnostic systems.

Writing in 1911 on Samaritan Gnosis, MERX built upon the views of Heidenheim, despite the criticisms of Montgomery; neither Heidenheim nor Montgomery is mentioned, however (A.3.(i): Merx, 1911). While allowing for a substantial Hellenistic contribution to Simonianism, Merx saw Simon essentially as a successor to Dositheus in one of the many philosophising groups which Abul Fath testified to the existence of among the Samaritans at the beginning of our era, groups which differed much among themselves but agreed at least upon the following: Gerizim was no longer to be used; God was to be thought of as accessible to all; synagogues were houses of idols; things commonly forbidden by Jews and Samaritans were permissible; the early advent of the Messiah was to be expected; magic was practised (the Dositheans, for instance, had a practice of gazing upon a phial containing the blood of Levi, nephew of 'Aqbun, the chief priest, of washing prayerbooks, and the like). Simon himself was a Samaritan religious philosopher. He could not have written the Apophasis, because the system thereof is predominantly Christian (!) ('the earliest attempt', Merx called it, 'to tie together Greek philosophy, Philonic allegory and Christian soteriology, even in a Trinitarian fashion, into a complete world-view', p. 233, 34).

Important for the study of the Acts 8 narrative is Karl PIEPER'S source-critical essay (A.1.(i): Pieper, 1911), in which the contention of Waitz that the original form of the pericope involved only Simon and Peter, and came from a Peter-source, was subjected to a critical examination and found wanting. Pieper did not permit himself to stray from the matter in hand to make judgements about Simon and Simonianism except to express a belief in the historical existence of the Simon of Acts and in his identity with the Simon of the Simonian movement.

Eugène DE FAYE, most agnostic of Gnostic scholars, whose study of Gnostics and Gnosticism first appeared in 1913 (B: Faye, 1913; 1925), held that behind the legendary figure of Simon (as behind those of Menander, Satornilus, Cerdo or Cerinthus) there was doubtless an historical person, but the facts about him could not with any assurance be retrieved (ed. 2, p.429). Having said this (he would say later, still more explicitly, 'We know no more of Simon than his existence and name', op.cit., p. 432), he nevertheless allowed himself, perhaps rather inconsistently, to assert that the historical Simon was a goes: 'the legend has transformed the character, and from a common charlatan has made of him the first of the heresiarchs'. He also saw his way through the 'perhaps impenetrable darkness' in which the ancestors of Gnosticism were wrapped to the reconstruction of the process of transformation in the following four stages: (i) Simon the magician became wrongly identified with the Simon of Acts; (ii) Justin Martyr, misunderstanding the Semo Sancus inscription, transported him to Rome; (iii) He was brought into conflict with Peter in Rome; (iv) He became an arch-heretic, and the father

of all heresy. The Irenaeus account of Simonian doctrine could not, de Faye thought, be treated with confidence: the similarities with accounts of worshippers of the mother-goddess and of the Carpocratians were too close. As for the Apophasis, it was not by Simon, nor even perhaps by a Simonian; maybe it had circulated among Simonians and thus had become attributed to Simon, despite the fact that it was rigorously ascetical in tone, whereas the Simon of legend was libertine. The author was a Gnostic, probably Christian by upbringing to judge from his (allegorical) use of both Testaments, but Christ had no place in his system. He was a metaphysician imbued with the spirit of Stoicism.

Johannes WEISS was content, in a brief treatment of Simon in the first volume of his study of primitive Christianity (A.2: Weiss, 1914, 17; ET, 1937), to make unsupported assertions. He saw Simonianism as a form of Samaritan Gnosticism and called Simon a pseudo-Messiah. A member of the Samaritan sect, Simon had seen himself as the prophet-like-Moses promised in Deut. 18, and Weiss invoked Acts 8 as evidence 'that Simon and the movement which included him had first of all sought a merger with Christianity' (ET, I, p.760). Subsequently Simon had become identified, whether at his own instigation or at the will of his followers, with Jesus.

LEGGE (A.2: Legge, 1915) argued that Simon was essentially a pre-Christian Gnostic, the leader of a sect which probably sought to reconcile Judaism with Hellenism, as befitted a denizen of Samaria with its mixed population and culture. The Simonianism which Simon

proclaimed, even before he came into contact with Christians, was a 'mixed religion in which Greek elements played the chief part, although the sanction attached to it might be Jewish' (p.177).

The Megale Apophasis, whether or not written by Simon himself, was our best source for Simonianism, reflecting much better than the patristic accounts, which were tendentious, the gospel that Simon had taught before his encounter with Christian preachers and his conversion, 'whether this was real or feigned' (p.176). Legge seems to have believed Helena to be historical, but to have suspected the Helena/Ennoia myth to be patristic invention. The patristic accusation of libertinism was, he thought, probably unjustified; on the other hand, the Fathers' view of Simon as the progenitor of Gnosticism was amply borne out by a study of the Apophasis.

Alfred LOISY offered a telling critique of the Acts 8 pericope in his extensive commentary of 1920, as too in his popular commentary of 1925 (A.1.(i): Loisy, 1920; 1925). In Acts 8 Luke had taken up an unhistorical legend (originally set perhaps not in Samaria but in, for instance, Caesarea: 1920, p.62), telling how Simon the magician and false Messiah had sought in vain to buy from Philip his miraculous powers of healing, a legend the purpose of which had been to show 'how inferior this man and his sectaries, despite their apparent affinity with Christians, were to Christianity and its authentic representatives' (1920, p. 362). Luke had transferred the scene to Samaria because of his interest in the Samaritans (*ibid.*), and had introduced Peter and John into the narrative both to underline the apostolic privilege (1920, p.62) and to further discredit the Simonian sect by showing them as reft of the Spirit. Loisy returned to the topic in 1933 (F: Loisy, 1933),

contending that, as he had written in 1920 (p. 366; cf also p. 364: the Tübingen view is 'an infinitely ingenious, but totally gratuitous hypothesis'), although the Simon legend was unhistorical, the existence of Simon (who was a 'theosophical magician': 1920, p.366) was not in doubt; nor was there any reason to postulate two Simons. Since Celsus, towards the end of the second century, knew of the existence of Helenians (Origen CC 5. 72), Justin's account of the worship of Simon and Helena by a Simonian sect (in Rome: 1920, p.363) was plausible (1933, p. 371). Simon himself had not aspired to divinity: it was after his death that he had been accorded an apotheosis (as had, to a lesser extent, Dositheus) and a cult (1933, p. 372). Whereas Paul, 1 Cor. 1. 24, had called Jesus the Power and Wisdom of God, the Simonians separated the two titles, hailing Simon as the Power, Helena as the Wisdom (*ibid.*). The Megale Apophasis Loisy thought to be very closely allied to Valentinianism, and its Simonian provenance open to doubt (1933, 373). The Simonians, like Paul, had rejected the Law, but whereas Paul had been informed by a strong moral sense, the Simonian antinomianism had issued in libertinism (1933, p. 374).

Prosper ALFARIC (A.2: Alfarc, 1921) argued for the importance for a knowledge of Simonianism of a brief description of seventeen heresies coming from the pen of Marutha (aliter Marutas, Marouta) bishop of Maipherqat (aliter Martyropolis; today called Mefarkin or Silvan and located in Turkey), who died c. 419, in which reference was made to the Simonian 'Book of the Four Corners, or Four Regions, of the World'. This lost book Alfarc believed to be the work of Simon, and to have been one of the sources used by the

Pseudo-Clementines, the Conflict Narratives and the apocryphal Acts. Simon was a 'Samaritan Christ' who founded what he intended to be a world religion. In a note appended to his article when it was reprinted in 1955, (A.2: Alfarić, 1955), Alfarić identified Simon with the deity Esmoun and suggested that the apostle Peter was not really called Simon (he was given the name as part of an anti-Simonian apologia!) and that the canonical Acts was written c. 150 by Clement of Rome, who for 8. 4-25 drew on the text of Justin. Alfarić returned to the subject of Simonianism in a book which appeared in the following year (A.2: Alfarić, 1956). Simon had now become a purely mythical figure, an avatar of Esmoun. Alfarić now posited a considerable influence of Simonianism, a pre-Christian religion with its headquarters at Antioch, on Christianity, in particular on Paul. ( 7)

Eduard MEYER'S study of Christian origins contains some not inconsiderable contributions to the Simonian debate (A.2: Meyer, 1923). He offered, for instance, some telling criticisms of Waitz: thus he pointed out that Waitz' identification of Simon Magus with the magician of Josephus AJ did not take account of the fact that the real name of Josephus' magus was almost certainly Atomos, not Simon, and that Waitz' reduction of Helena to a moon-goddess ignored the fact that among the Semites moon deities were male. Meyer himself believed that both Simon and Helena were historical persons. The disparaging opinions about prophets attributed to the Simonians in Iren. I. 16 (cf. Hipp. Ref. VI.19 .7) lent some colour to the supposition that Simon belonged to the Samaritan sect, which held to the Torah alone. 'That Simon', Meyer wrote, 'claimed himself and his companion Helena as incarnations of the divine Ur-power, who were



now bringing the world salvation, cannot be in doubt, nor that they were worshipped as divine by their followers' (p.285).

Simon had taken the Old Testament idea of divine power and made it into an independent entity, with which he had identified himself; likewise with the Biblical idea of the Word, which became Ennoia/Helena. Later on, under Greek influence, Simon and Helena had become associated with the Greek gods of sun and moon. Whether Helena had really been a whore, or whether the idea derived from the antinomian praxis of the sect (understandable enough, he thought, in a group which believed the universe to be the creation of angels hostile to God), was uncertain. That Simon, like Jewish and Christian missionaries, went to Rome, was possible but unlikely: Justin, who was inconsistent when he said on the one hand that a statue to Simon was erected by the Senate and People (Apol. I 56) and on the other that few outside Samaria worshipped Simon (Apol. I 26) (8), wrongly took a statue of the Sabine Semo to represent Simon, and dated its erection to the principate of Claudius because that is when the events of Acts 8 were supposed to have occurred. One must treat Acts 8 carefully as an historical source, Meyer thought, but it was possible that Simon did embrace Christianity for a time, perhaps in the interests of personal advancement. As Simonianism had developed, it had made an attempt to despoil the Christians of their possessions, as was attested by the attribution of the title of 'the lost sheep' to Helena (Irenaeus I. 16.2).

H. LEISEGANG in his book on Gnosis (B: Leisegang, 1924) adopted a concordist attitude to the sources, attempting to

reconcile within a single framework things that most scholars have thought to be irreconcilable. Simon and Helena were both historical characters. Simon belonged to the same movement as Dositheus and replaced him as Hestos (that term being interpreted on the basis of Philo's usage of it). He taught that the world had been created by the evil, Jewish God, whereas he himself was to be identified with something higher, the power of the supreme and unknowable God. Helena was identified with the mother-goddess and with the Wisdom of God. Through the knowledge that he, Simon, offered, men could be saved. The religion that Simon preached was Gnostic, was indeed the earliest form of Gnosticism. It called itself Christian, and used some Christian terms and ideas, but the Church rejected it, as Peter twice reproved Simon, once in Palestine and once in Rome. The Megale Apophasis in its basic features went back to Simon, though it was added to and worked over later (p.67). There are many objections to the kind of harmonization that Leisegang practised (e.g. why are Helena and the title Hestos absent from our earliest sources?) but he did not advert to them.

The section on Simon in E.T. MERRILL'S Essays in early Christian History, viz. pp. 293 -303, (A.2: Merrill, 1924), is remarkable for the plausibility with which it invests the case for the existence of two Simons. Since the days of Vitranga, Heumann and Beausobre, this theory had been supported by Salmon (A.2: Salmon, 1911), Schmiedel (A.2: Schmiedel, 1903) and Stock (A.2: Stock, 1911), (latterly it has been espoused by the second edition of the Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (F: Cross, 1974)), but

none has argued it as persuasively as Merrill. The testimony of Justin is crucial here. Legge had sought to give the coup de grâce to this attractive theory by appealing to Justin: 'Justin Martyr, himself a Samaritan, has no doubt that Simon the heresiarch is the Simon of Acts' (A.2: Legge, 1915, p. 179). Merrill, however, made Justin chief witness for the defence of the theory: 'From beginning to end', he wrote (p.295), 'Justin says not one word (except for calling this Simon a Samaritan and a wonder-worker) that could even intimate that he thought the Simon of whom he speaks, and whose statue stood on the Island, was one with the Simon Magus of the episode in Acts, which he nowhere mentions. The only reason for supposing that Justin held this belief is that some later Christians did so'. If Justin had believed the Simon he was attacking, and whose supposed statue he was urging the Senate to raze, were the one whom Peter had rebuked, he would not, Merrill argued, have lost the opportunity to say so. Merrill thought that Irenaeus was uncertain whether there was one Simon or two, and had therefore deliberately left it ambiguous whether his 'Simon Samarites, magus ille de quo discipulus et sectator Apostolorum Lucas ait...' (I.16. 1) is to be identified with, or distinguished from, his 'Simon Samaritanus, ex quo universae haereses substiterunt' in the next verse. We may note before moving on that Merrill's line of argumentation presupposes what is in fact, as we shall see later, a very moot point, Justin's acquaintance with Acts. (9)

It is the achievement of Lucien CERFAUX, whose important contributions to the Simonian debate go back to 1925 (A.2: Cerfaux, [1925], [1926], [1937]), to have emphasised the need to establish the relative age, provenance and reliability of our various sources before attempting to solve the Simon Magus question. He believed

that a careful study of the source-critical issues would lead to a moderate opinion halfway between the later Hilgenfeld, who 'accords exaggerated credit to the heresiologists' (p.192) and de Faye, whose radical scepticism about the patristic sources led him to suppose that one could know no more of Simon than his name. Cerfaux set great store by what has come to be called the Syntagma Tradition. Justin wrote a Syntagma of heresies which was used by Irenaeus, but has long been lost. Hippolytus also wrote such a Syntagma, which again has not survived but can, as Lipsius argued and most would agree, be largely reconstructed from Pseudo-Tertullian *Adv. omnes haereses* (3rd century), Epiphanius *Panarion* (c. 377) and Philaster of Brescia *Diversarum haereseon liber* (c.385). Cerfaux believed, and here he went beyond what commands general acceptance, that the Hippolytus Syntagma account goes back substantially to the Justin Syntagma, and thus, together with the Justin *Apologia* and *Cum Tryphone* represents the earliest and most reliable witness to Simonianism. The Justin Syntagma as reconstructed by Cerfaux has similarities with the other Justin accounts, but also contains facts and doctrines absent therefrom. It speaks of Helena as an ex-prostitute whom Simon called Ennoia and through whom he claimed to have created the angels; it speaks of Ennoia's imprisonment by these angels, of her passing from the body of one woman to that of another until she became incarnated in Helen of Troy ('that woman who stood upright on a tower to let the Greeks know, by means of a torch, the plot against the Trojans. The torch signified the manifestation of the light from on high'(p.209); Simon came to

Helena to save her by his knowledge; she was the lost sheep he had come to find. Cerfaux also believed that whereas the Megale Apophasis can tell us nothing about Simonianism, some ancient testimonies may be recovered from the Pseudo-Clementines, among them the use of the title Hestos, the relationship between Simon and Dositheus, and the facts that the sect had thirty members and that Helena was also called Selene/Luna.

For Cerfaux, Simonianism had its roots not in the Samaritan sect (the Samaritans were 'an infinitesimal minority' in the province of Samaria, and later Samaritans preserved no historical recollection of Simon or of his teaching) but in pagan mythology. The pagans of Samaria worshipped the Sun and Moon, and the Simonians saw them incarnated in Simon and Helena. The Greek Helen had originally been a moon-goddess, and the lunar associations of the Simonian Helena are clear from the fact that the Dosithean group had thirty members and that, according to *Recog.*, Helena was given the name Luna. Simon as a magician, was doubtless believed to have brought Helena/Selene down from the sky, just as Alexander the goetes of Abonotichos was thought to have brought down the moon. Probably the Simonians had a ceremony, as did the disciples of Alexander, whereby the moon was ritually brought down to earth and celebrated a hieros gamos with the sun (i.e., for the Simonians, Simon). Simonianism was thus a neo-pagan religion and not at bottom a form of Gnosticism, though Gnostic ideas found their way into it later, as also did Christian concepts. In its heyday, which Cerfaux would date 100 -150 A.D., it was neither Gnostic nor Christian.

In the extended Note on Simon which he wrote for Beginnings (A.2: Casey, 1933), R.P. CASEY argued for the historical existence of Simon and Helena, for a probable visit by Simon to Rome in the principate of Claudius, and for Simonianism's being 'an exotic form of Christian thought' (p. 151). Simon was a pagan, not a member of the Samaritan sect; after his encounter with Christians he 'set up a religion of his own, in which he borrowed some elements from Christianity' (p. 152). Simon and Helena were assimilated to the sun and moon deities and worshipped as such by their followers. Early Simonianism largely revolved around mythological conceptions of Helena, but a very different, more philosophical version was also attested, in the Apophasis, which dropped Helena altogether, was impregnated with Stoic thought, and had close affinities with Valentinianism.

An article by L.H. VINCENT in 1936 (A.3.(iv): Vincent, 1936) offered support for Cerfaux' thesis, though Cerfaux was not in fact persuaded of the validity of Vincent's case, which was that Helen was worshipped at Sebaste in the form of Kore/Persephone. No explicit reference to Helen at Sebaste has been found, but in the temple of Kore there were statues of Helen's brothers, the Dioscuroi, and a statue of Kore herself holding a torch as did Helen of Troy (*Flammamm media ipsa tenebat / ingentem et summa Danaos ex arce vocabat*: Vergil Aen. 6. 518,19) and, according to Recog. 2. 12, the Simonian Helena. Cerfaux commented (A.2: Cerfaux, [1937]) to the effect that Vincent's case would have been stronger if our sources for Simonianism had included any reference to

Kore/Persephone (we shall see later that it is possible to see such a reference in Justin Apol. I 64). Vincent did not, pace Cerfaux, maintain that Helena was not an historical person; only that Simon, who claimed divinity for himself, saw in Helena an incarnation of Kore/Persephone. J.W. Crowfoot was later to take Vincent's argument a step further (D: Crowfoot, vol.3, 1957, p.8), claiming that the goddess Helen was assimilated not only with Kore but also with Isis, and that Simon was a sort of pontiff for this deity at her sanctuary in Sebaste, or 'at least, like Martialis [a man mentioned in inscr. 48 from Sebaste] the master (kathegetes) of a group of disciples'.

Giuseppe WILPERT argued in 1938 (A.1.(ii): Wilpert, 1938) that the inscription discovered in 1574 was not that alluded to by Justin. The reliability of Irenaeus' statement (I. 16) 'imaginem Simonis habent [sc. Simoniani] factam ad figuram Iovis, et Helenae ad figuram Minervae' is confirmed, Wilpert held, by a well preserved Roman sarcophagus found in the district of Portonacio and acquired by the Museo delle Terme. It represented, according to his interpretation, Simon instructing Helena. 'One could not hope for a sarcophagus more specifically Simonian' (p. 335). The way Simon is represented is as a Jove-figure, elderly, clothed and seated. Now we know, from a statue of him in the Vatican, that Semo was represented quite differently, in fact as a young Apollo-figure, unclothed, standing, a hunter. It is thus unthinkable that Justin should have committed the blunder of supposing a statue of Semo represented Simon. Wilpert's argument will be examined later.

S.J. ENGLAND'S thesis on Simonianism (A.2: England, 1940) offered a more comprehensive study of the rise of the movement than

had hitherto been attempted. He argued that Simon joined the Samaritan movement led by Dositheus, a would-be Messiah, usurped the leadership, and proceeded to import Hellenic ideas by putting it about that he was an incarnation of one of the emanations of an impersonal divine Power. Impressed by the preaching of Philip, Simon briefly became a Christian (though his commitment was but superficial). A bid by Simon to gain leadership of the Samaritan Christian community was foiled by Peter, and Simon proceeded to found a Gnostic sect with himself cast in the role of All-Father. Thinking the system required also an All-Mother, Simon, who by now had become an itinerant preacher, picked on one Helena of Tyre to fill this part. After Simon's death, Simonian Gnosis developed further, in the forms attested in Justin and Irenaeus, its main doctrine being the redemption of the passive, powerless Ennoia (Helena) by the disguised All-Father (Simon). A variant form of Simonianism, not Gnostic but speculative, and more pro-Judaic than was Gnostic Simonianism, developed under the impulse of Alexandrian thought: this was represented by the Megale Apophasis. In its final form, as attested in Epiphanius' account, Simonianism was purely Gnostic, but Ennoia had become an active, victorious entity, and had absorbed the redemptive functions of the All-Father.

One of England's most distinctive contributions to the debate was his analysis of the evidence for Simonian praxis. Both the Simonians of Irenaeus and those of Epiphanius were antinomian, but in different senses: the former were puritan, the latter libertine. Three variations of cultic practice were evidenced among the



Simonian Gnostics: an initiation ceremony in which secret names were revealed; a mystic marriage, practised by the puritan Gnostics; orgiastic rites designed to weaken the powers of the world-creating forces, practised by the libertine Simonians. The speculative Simonians for their part practised a mystery/religion containing two elements, the awakening of man to the fact of what he potentially was (which process was thought of as an impregnation by the Logos, and was probably effected by sexual acts) and the revelation of the upward path (which meant being catechized in an allegorical understanding of the Pentateuch).

E. AMMAN in his dictionary article on Simon (A.2: Amman, 1941) took both Simon and Helena to be historical persons, but argued that they had nothing to do with Simonianism. Simon believed himself divine, and saw in his female companion an incarnation of the goddess Helen whose cult was established in Samaria. Simon did not found a religion (he is represented, thought Amman, as a founder neither in Acts nor in Simonianism, for the latter regarded him not as a founder, such as say Basilides, but rather as an object of speculation), but both during his lifetime and later statues of Simon and Helena were, as attested by Justin, worshipped. Justin, Amman argued, does not necessarily imply the existence of a Simonian sect in his time; such a sect certainly existed by the time of Irenaeus, but in no sense did it derive directly from Simon, who had long been dead when it arose.

In his hundred-page monograph devoted to Simon Magus (A.2: Varcl, 1949) Ladislav VARCL first considered the relationship one to another of the chief primary sources exclusive of the Megale

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Apophasis. He found that whereas Acts represented Simon Magus as guilty of simony no second century author, apart from Tertullian, took this theme up. This seemed to suggest, he thought, that Acts was not the source of all subsequent reports, so the second century accounts could be taken to be independent witnesses. The traditions were unanimous in asserting that Simon laid claim to divinity, and this testimony was likely to be reliable. That he was a Gnostic was not stated in all sources but was not inconsistent with any of them, and could be taken to be true. The tradition that Simon identified himself with Christ 'can hardly originate from outside the sect, and it can hardly be later than Simon himself' (p.110). Helena was doubtless an historical person, an ex-prostitute. The Simonian ceremonies probably included an hieros gamos, which will have been responsible for the accusation of libertinism. The Simonians probably taught both a soteriology and an eschatology (the latter in terms of an ekpyrosis). It was possible that Simonianism and Johannine Christianity were in some ways parallel Hellenistic movements rising out of a Baptist milieu.

Turning to the Megale Apophasis Varcl argued that it was probably not written by Simon Magus, though it 'took over from him a great deal'. It originated in Alexandria (as, inter alia, the use of Hestos in a Philonic sense indicated) in the first half of the second century A.D. (p. 113). It represented an Eastern strain of Simonianism the Gnosticism of which was indifferent to Christianity and inclined rather to Greek philosophy and prepared the soil for Neo-Platonism.

G. WIDENGREN in 1950 revived the argument of Heidenheim and Merx that Simonianism was deeply rooted in the Samaritan religion (D: Widengren, 1950). 'The Samaritan background of Simon', he wrote,

ought to be accentuated in quite another way than has seemingly been the case. And especially the comparison between the doctrines of Simon and those of the Samaritan liturgies - preferably the hymns composed by Marqah - that invites itself, has altogether been neglected (p.44).

Widengren believed that the Simonian description of Simon as the Standing One and the Great Power, as also the use of the term Treasure, were to be derived from Samaritan Gnosis.

Gilles QUISPTEL, one of the staunchest advocates of the theory of the Judaic origin of Gnosticism, turned his attention to Simon for the first time in 1951 (B: Quispel, 1951). Quispel saw Simonianism as a Gnostic sect, in fact the oldest Gnostic sect, with its roots in the Samaritan religion. The absence of a demiurge figure from Simonianism (Simon being identified with God himself, not with a demiurge) pointed to its antiquity as a Gnostic system. Simon was likely to have been led into Gnosticism through magic (his title the Great Power being attested in a Greek magic papyrus). The title Hestos Quispel thought was originally applied to Simon, by himself or by disciples, as an equivalent to Messiah. The Trinitarian scheme ascribed to Simonianism by the Fathers probably belonged to the post-Simon era: it was derived, though, not from Christian but from pagan sources, for Hermes, who is mentioned in

the Nag Hammadi Hermetic 'sine titulo' text (NHC VI.6), had the title Trigenethlios in virtue of supposedly having experienced three incarnations.

Quispel believed (it is only implied in the 1951 book but is spelt out elsewhere, e.g. A.2: Quispel, 1952 [1]) that Helena was not an historical person. She corresponded to a basic psychological datum, the female partner in the Magus-Whore archetype (Quispel is a committed Jungian). Accepting the position that the Greek Helen was worshipped in Samaria, and that she had already at that time become assimilated with Selene and Athene, he supposed that Helena in Simonian thinking represented a syncretistic combination of the motifs of Whore, Moon, Goddess and Lady Idea.

According to the detailed account he provided in his 1953 article (B: Quispel, 1953) Quispel thought that the idea of the fall of Ennoia-Helena derived ultimately from a Jewish-Samaritan Urgnosis. This will have taught that God through his Wisdom (10) created the archons, Wisdom cast her reflection on the waters of Chaos, and from this image the archons then created man, and Wisdom proceeded to breathe the spirit into him. At a later stage this original form of Gnosis which lacked the concepts of Redeemer, Demiurge and Primal Man, incorporated the doctrine of a cosmic fall by taking over Jewish speculations about the fall of Adam to earth, an idea suggested by the primitive custom of giving birth in a standing position so that the child at its birth literally fell to earth.

Quispel was later to argue (A.2: Quispel, 1970 (1973)) that 'the Samaritans' hope for the Taheb, an eschatological saviour, also

contributed to the myth of "the Magus and the prostitute" on the basis of a 'recently published text' (no reference given) saying that at the end of time the Taheb will reveal knowledge. Simon, Quispel appeared to wish to say, claimed to be the Taheb,

Quispel has also written ('The origins of the Gnostic demiurge', B: Granfield, 1970, I, pp. 271 -76) that 'Simon the Magician of Samaria seems to have conceived Sophia (Helen) as a symbol of the split within the deity. This view... is not a parody of the Jewish faith, but another interpretation, and a profound one, of a traditional symbol in Jewish religion' (p.272). Originally Simonianism will probably not have distinguished between the Supreme God and the Creator, but if Irenaeus is correct in attributing to the Simonians belief in creation by the angels, then 'at a certain moment the Simonian school may have admitted the teaching of a lower, angelic, demiurge' (op. cit., p.274), which indeed is ascribed to them by *Recog.* 2. 39 & 57. This doctrine of dichotomy already had a precedent, Quispel urged, in the pre-Christian/Jewish sect of the Magharians, to whom the tenth century Al-Qirqisānī attributed views so remarkable that it is implausible to suspect a medieval hoax: 'They do not strip such anthropomorphic descriptions of God (as are found in Scripture) of their literal sense, but they rather think that these descriptions apply to one of the angels, namely the one who created the world'.

Like Widengren, Quispel reveals an indifference about the relative dating of sources. He also perhaps does not allow for sufficient differences between Samaritanism and Judaism at the beginning of the era.

Ernst HAENCHEN'S 'Gab es eine vorchristliche Gnosis?'

(A.2: Haenchen, 1952) has perhaps the distinction of being referred to by other scholars more than any other contribution to the Simonian debate. His article presented the most substantial case up to this time for the view that Simon was a Gnostic before ever he came into contact with Christians, and therefore that Gnosticism ante-dated Christianity.

Haenchen, who castigated others for failing in this particular, was careful himself to 'distinguish the different strata of the tradition, which Formcriticism has taught us to attend to' (p. 327, n.1). There are four sources worthy of attention, he held: the Megale Apophasis, Irenaeus, Justin and Acts, each bearing witness to a different stage in the evolution of the movement. He proceeded to examine them in what he conceived to be the reverse order to that of composition, like an archaeologist working down from the most recent to the most ancient stratum.

The Apophasis Haenchen found to represent a completely non-Christian system based on the idea of a revealed word which speaks to man not of his sin and guilt but of a divine reality already within him which he needs only to heed in order to be redeemed. Though it used ideas from various sources, Platonic, Aristotelian, Pythagorean, Empedoclean and Stoic, the Apophasis's system was no hotch-potch. 'All those subjects are here only alternative forms of expression. In substance it is one and the same play, proceeding in ever new forms of costume through different scenes' (p.336). The person of Simon played no part in the system, for it was a book-religion, a world-religion tied

to no person, land or time, a Gnostic religion holding out hope of escape from all that is contingent or transitory. Any mythological ideas that may have existed in an earlier stage of Simonianism have here given way to a philosophical Gnosis.

The Irenaeus system, which preceded that of the Apophysis, was also at bottom non-Christian, though in the form in which it had come down it had appropriated some Christian features, e.g. the Trinitarian formulas and the Lost Sheep motif. It was a thoroughly mythological system, centred on the fall and redemption of Ennoia-Helena, and Simon's proclamation of salvation to man. That this was not the oldest form of Simonianism was suggested by the fact that the redemption of Ennoia and that of all men do not coincide as one might expect if Ennoia corresponded to the divine power imprisoned in the individual soul that Gnosis in all its forms speaks of; rather the concepts 'stand side by side, and proceed along parallel lines' (p. 341). One may seek to resolve this puzzle by supposing that Simon changed the orthodox Gnostic myth (which would thus be pre-Simonian, not just pre-Christian) to accommodate an historical person called Helena within the system. The alternative and preferable solution, which would not require one to believe that the cult of Helen in Samaria and the legend of Isis serving as a prostitute in Tyre were pure coincidences, was to follow Quispel in supposing Helena not to have been an historical person. She was rather a composite mythical figure compounded of Helen, Athene-Ennoia, Selene and Isis: 'the goddess Helen easily became assimilated with Simon's heavenly partner, Ennoia. But she could not remain in this

heavenly condition. Simon had become man to free Ennoia from the dominion of the angel-powers. So Helena too must have sojourned on earth' (p. 342).

The Helena-Ennoia myth went back in essence to the Justin account, and thus was current by about 150 A.D.

Coming to Acts 8, Haenchen commented that on the face of it Simon's desire to buy the gift of the Spirit was unintelligible: all he could have seen that could have been an object of covetousness was glossolalia, but the evidence available suggested that to non-Christians this seemed like drunkenness (Acts 2) or madness (1 Cor. 14 .23). Presumably, therefore, in an earlier version Simon had sought not the gift of imparting the Spirit but Philip's control of dunamis. The Apostles will not have appeared in this earlier version.

But was the Simon who approached Peter a mere magician? In that case his subsequent divinisation would be hard to account for: if one discounts Mani, to none of the founders of sects have divine aspirations been ascribed. Simon was not a magician who rose to being a redeemer: rather his self-estimate as the Great Power should alert one to the fact that he was a divine redeemer whom Christian tradition downgraded for apologetic reasons to a magician (11). There was no reason to doubt that he taught what Justin and Irenaeus say that he taught, that the world-creating angelic powers held Ennoia captive in men's souls until the highest Godhead, the Father of Ennoia, the Great Power had descended in Simon to redeem men and free Ennoia.



We shall confine ourselves at present to the following comments on Haenchen's views. Firstly, it is strange that he quite ignores the question of one possible source, the Hippolytus Syntagma (if he believed that it could not be recovered, he ought surely to have said so, and argued the point); secondly, though Acts may be evidence that the historical Simon aspired to be considered divine, one cannot surely then proceed to presume, as Haenchen does, that he must have been a Gnostic and have taught the doctrines ascribed to him by Christian writers more than a century after the events narrated in Acts 8 will have occurred. We would therefore echo R.McL. Wilson's verdict: 'Despite Haenchen's careful sifting of the evidence his case still seems to fall short of conclusive proof' (B: Wilson, 1957, p.107).

R.M. GRANT, who believes that Gnosticism arose out of the ashes of Jewish apocalypticism and has made a number of contributions to the Simonian debate from 1953 onwards, has written that 'in Simonian thought we find a parasitical growth on Christian ideas, a growth whose origin is not really Christian at all but lies in the syncretistic atmosphere of Samaria, Tyre and Rome' (B: Grant, 1953, p. 90). 'We know', he added, 'almost nothing about Simon, although we know something of Simonianism' (op. cit., p. 96). For Grant Simonianism meant a form of Gnosis revolving round the Ennoia-Helena myth. He believed that the Fourth Evangelist was acquainted with the thought of a member of the movement, Menander, and that his famed 'realised eschatology' owed something to Menander.

Grant later offered a more detailed analysis of the sources (B: Grant, 1959). The Simonian movement, he now said, began later than the time of Simon Magus, in fact c. 70 -100 A.D., so that whether the name of the movement was originally intended to refer to Simon Magus or to another Simon, Simon Magus at any rate was no Simonian.

Nor was he a Gnostic. Grant thought that Simon may have been seen by his admirers as the Taheb; also that Acts 8 was intended to show Simon at the end as repentant. There may, Grant suggested, have been several stages in the evolution of Simonianism:

First would come the period when he was still close to Dositheus and the notion of the 'standing one', the prophet like Moses. Then would come the period [after 70 A.D.] when apocalyptic turned into gnosis, when Simon would come to regard himself, or to be regarded by his disciples, as the power not of but above the Creator, and when his fellow-schismatic Helen would be regarded as 'Wisdom, the mother of all'. At this point would come the co-ordination of Simonianism with the story of Helen of Troy, and of Simonological doctrine with Christology (op. cit., p.92)

(Since 1953 Grant had dropped the idea of Menander's influence on the Fourth Gospel, and had come to regard Menander's Simonianism as very uncertain).

H. SCHLIER (B: Schlier, [1954]) was concerned to try to expound 'the new experience of God, man and the world' which issued in the Simonianism described by Irenaeus, and found it in a sort of existentialism akin to that of 'Sartre, Camus and many lesser men'. Unfortunately he can scarcely be acquitted of the charge of re-creating the Simonians with scant regard for source criticism in a preconceived existentialist mould. Thus, when discussing the libertinism motif, he did not look for evidence to decide whether the ascription was true or false but instantly tried to fit it within what he conceived to be the Simonians' 'new experience':

It is precisely this libidinose vivere of the Gnostic that deceives the envy of existence by entering it and fulfilling it. Rather, though, he does not so much fulfil it as raise himself up above it as a Knowing One. This libidinose vivere is but the price one must pay to existence in order to cheat it with deceptive knowledge and true existence. And it is a small price, for it impinges only on unreal flesh and the unreal world. Reality is absolute power which realises itself exclusively in knowledge. (1957 ed., pp. 75, 76).

The first of the writings of R.McL. WILSON to touch on Simonianism appears to be an article of 1955 (B: Wilson, 1955). Unfortunately we still lack an extended treatment of Simonianism from his pen, but his views may be pieced together from his numerous contributions to Gnostic studies. He is inclined to believe that Quispel and Schoeps (12) are right to revive M. Friedländer's (B: Friedländer, 1898) theory of a pre-Christian Gnosis, or pre-Gnosis, and that the point of transition to Gnosticism proper 'must be placed somewhere about the middle of the first century' (A.3.(ii): Wilson, 1957, p. 23). There is, he suggested, no more likely place for this to have occurred than Palestine ('a strategic centre for the development and propagation of such a movement', B: Wilson, 1955, p. 209), and given the fact of the existence of a strong ecclesiastical tradition naming Simon as its founder, 'it would appear to be Simon who gave the movement the decisive impulse

in the direction of its final development, and in this sense he is rightly described as "the father of all heresies" (A.3.(ii): Wilson, 1957, p.29). On the other hand, inasmuch as 'Simon's system is nothing more or less than an assimilation of imperfectly understood Christian doctrines to a fundamentally pagan scheme', Simon was strictly speaking less a heretic than 'a rival to Christianity' (B: Wilson, 1958, pp. 100, 01). The content of early Simonianism was probably more accurately reflected in Justin and Irenaeus than in the Megale Apophasis, which 'probably has nothing to do with the historical Simon' (A.3.(ii): Wilson, 1957, p.23; in B: Wilson, 1958, p.100 this has become 'certain'), but the doctrine of Simon must remain problematic, for the heresiologists may have retrojected beliefs of Cerinthus, Basilides and Valentinus into the thinking of Simon.

Werner FOERSTER in an article in 1955 (A.1.(iv): Foerster, 1955) examined Gnostic theses such as dualism, knowledge, revelation and allegory in the Megale Apophasis and in the systems of Basilides and the Peratae, but without attempting to determine the Apophasis' relationship to Simonianism. The fact that in his edition of Gnostic texts (B: Foerster, 1969, 71) Simonianism and the Apophasis are treated in separate places seems to imply that he doubted whether the Apophasis had much if anything to do with Simonianism. His section on Simonianism in that book, together with his paper to the Messina colloquium (A.2: Foerster, 1967), makes clear his attitude towards Simonianism. The fact that Simon and Menander, alone of Gnostic leaders, were said to have been worshipped as divine must make one hesitate to reject the reports about them

out of hand. Similarly, the attribution to the Simonians of ideas as uncharacteristic of later Gnosticism as the doctrine that one is saved by ἐπίγνωσις of Simon rather than by γνῶσις of self, and that of the willing descent, rather than fall, of Ennoia, her imprisonment by angels because of envy, and her incarnation in a human being, argued their authenticity. Foerster inclined to the belief that Simon taught an early, immature, form of Gnosis (as was suggested, he thought, by the fact that the Fathers treated Simon as the Father of Gnosis rather than, say, Barjesus, Acts 13. 6 -11, or Nicolaus of Antioch, Acts 6. 5, the supposed founder of the Nicolaitans), diluted with Greek ideas about man, and unassociated with Christianity. Simon probably claimed divinity for himself, and may have assumed the title Hestos to indicate that he would not fall victim to death; the legend of his being buried alive, therefore, 'may contain a core of fact' (B: Foerster, 1969, 71. ET, I, p. 29). Helena was an historical person. The Gnostic content of Simon's system will have been threefold: (i) An anti-cosmic attitude (the world had been created by angels, who were responsible for the Old Testament legislation, which therefore had no binding force), (ii) the Ennoia myth (if, as was likely, this was an original element), (iii) the doctrine of deliverance through belief in Simon.

Walter SCHMITHALS first entered the lists in 1956 and has since expounded his distinctive thesis in a number of publications, claiming to find in Simonianism not just a form of pre-Christian Jewish Gnosticism, but a form of pre-Christian Christ Gnosticism.

By this he meant a system which used the idea of collective humanity as redeemed ('the conception of Christ as the sum of all Pneumatics', A.2: Schmithals, 1971 [1], p.54), but not that of an individual redeemer. He thus supposed that the idea and indeed the very expression 'the Christ' in the collective sense anteceded the advent of Christianity, a novel view which has had few if any supporters. Schmithals argued that the earliest form of Simonianism was that of the Megale Apophasis, rather than that attested by Justin and Irenaeus. He adduced two main arguments for this (at the time) daring assertion. Firstly, he urged that the fact that in the Apophasis Simon is only a proclaimer, whereas in the Irenaeus system he is the object of proclamation, shows the priority of the Apophasis system:

for the proclaimed one to be demoted to a mere proclaimer,  
for the heavenly emissary to become an ordinary Gnostic,  
is without example (op. cit., p. 43)

The second argument used is that the redeemer figure tends to be absent from early Gnostic systems, according to Schmithals' investigations, but is common in later ones, and the absence of such a figure from the Apophasis testifies therefore to its antiquity. The Apophasis, though not written by Simon himself, clearly revealed the basic structure of early Simonianism, which might be characterised thus:

A heavenly being (ἐστῶς) -whether God or a divine emanation - enters into matter (στῶς) - which was always there or (in good Jewish tradition) is first created by him - and there concerns himself with the return upwards (στῶσόμενος) -which means the liberation from captivity in matter or the transfer of

the 'Dynamis', which had been actualised out of potentiality into substance, into the heavenly treasury (op.cit. p. 46).

Elsewhere Schmithals wrote of the 'truly classical simplicity of this system' (B: Schmithals, 1971 [2], p. 159). The reputation of Gnostics such as Simon to be magicians is likely to have been acquired, he thought, through their use of ecstatic techniques and pre-eminently the ecstasy and the possibility of the 'heavenly journey' (the ability to do this is explicitly ascribed to Simon in Martyr. Petr. 2, Lipsius-Bonnet, I, 80. 35; Martyr. Petr. et Pauli 30, LB 144. 8...) which is bound up with it, to which all these Gnostic preachers around Simon, and he himself, owed not only the Gnosis of all Being, but also the possibility of demonstrating such Gnosis ad oculos of their hearers ('Simon dixit: Audi, Caesar Nero...crastina die ad caelos vadam': Martyr. Petr. et Pauli 49) (op.cit., p.161)

We shall examine Schmithals' views in some detail in Chapter 5. 3 infra.

F.M. BRAUN'S article on Marcion and Simonianism (A.3.(v): Braun, 1955-57) suggested that originally Simonianism had been uninfluenced by Christianity, being a form of Judeo-pagan syncretism (the lost sheep motif, for instance, could be adequately explained by the 'arcadism' of the Romano-Hellenistic world). Christian elements entered the system from Marcion via Saturnilus. This latter hypothesis rests on little more than conjecture.

A brief study of Simonianism from the pen of Georges ORY (A.2: Ory, 1956) argued that Simon was a god who later evolved into a human person (p.6). What is meant by that is not altogether clear, for although Ory found mythological ideas in the accounts of Simon's parentage, he clearly believed that there was an historical Simon. He thought that Simon was a would-be Messiah contemporary with, or earlier than, Jesus, being like him originally a disciple of John the Baptist (p. 16). Philip, Ory opined, was probably a Gnostic, and if he converted Simon to anything it will have been not to Christianity but to Gnosticism; but the Simon pericope was a late addition (dated c. 170) to Acts, as the repetition of οἱ μὲν οὖν ὁμιλοῦντες showed, and the reliance on the Montanist idea of imparting the Spirit by the imposition of hands.

In a study of the figure of Helena that appeared in the same year (D: Ory, 1956) Ory repeated his conviction that Simon was a god who was later designated as a man, adding (p. 1) that 'the man who is concealed under the mask of Simon is doubtless St. Paul' (the Tübingen doctrine); there seems to be no room here for an historical Simon. The Simonian Helena, as also Helen of Troy, Ory saw as derived from a goddess Helen who had originally been a goddess of fertility and a variant of Ishtar (pp. 3-5). The Simonian myth of Helena had, Ory thought, to be read in the light of the tradition that Ishtar when she came to deliver the dead imprisoned on earth opened seven gates, laying aside at each one item of her clothing and appearing naked and powerless, a prisoner of the queen of the



underworld, until a messenger arrived from Ea to be sacrificed in her stead and to allow her to ascend, taking up all the attributes of her power (p. 5); in the light too of the tradition that (some of) the lovers of Ishtar were turned into animals, a motif which derived, Ory thought (speculatively, it seems; he quoted no authority for it, and we can find none), from the idea that Ishtar was a creator goddess who, together with her male lover, took on animal forms in order to beget animal issue (pp. 5, 6). Ory concluded his article with very bold claims (pp. 21 -30) for Simonian influence on Christianity, arguing that the NT accounts of, for instance, Simon the Leper, Simon of Cyrene, the Temptation of Jesus, the Woman with the issue of blood, Jairus' daughter and the Syro-Phoenician woman went back to Simonian ideas.

Ory's work, like so much else that emanated from the Cercle Ernest-Renan, well illustrates the dangers of religionsgeschichtlich investigations that pay scant regard to the date and provenance of the sources used. Ory, by recourse now to Irenaeus, now to Hippolytus, now to Epiphanius, produced a Simonianism that corresponded to no version of that religion that any individual or group probably ever subscribed to; he then pillaged pagan sources (Greek, Babylonian, even Japanese) to provide, with the help of a generous measure of speculation and surmise, an interpretation of the (synthetic) system, and, exhilarated by the heterodoxy of his thesis, arbitrarily dated it before the rise of Christianity and asserted that the Christian religion was largely a modification of Simonianism. We may note, as an example of Ory's procedure, the way in which he treated the Ishtar myth: the reason he gave for Ishtar's descent is purely

speculative, since neither the Sumerian nor the Babylonian version of the myth gives any reason; the sacrifice of the 'messenger', the eunuch Asushunamir, is a figment of Ory's imagination.

E. TROCME'S book on Acts (A.1.(i): Trocme, 1957) argued that behind Acts 8 stood not a single tradition (whether concerned with Peter and Simon, as Waitz had supposed, or with Philip and Simon, as Dibelius (A.1.(i): Dibelius, 1956) and others believed), but two, the first recounting the evangelisation of Samaria, culminating in the conversion of Simon, here seen as a magician, the other (of which 8, 9b & 10 are vestiges) narrating a vain attempt by Simon, in this instance portrayed as a religious founder, to gain the gift of the Spirit from the Apostles. Verses 22 -24 would be an 'edifying addition by the author ad Theophilum who, considering Simon as a Christian, will have specified that the way of repentance remained open to him' (p. 183).

DANIÉLOU'S view of Simonianism was highly speculative (F: Daniélou, 1958). He suggested that Simon may have been a Christian convert from Essenism (a Hellenist, according to Daniélou's understanding of that term) before founding his own sect, which marked the transition between 'pre-Christian Jewish-Samaritan gnosis' (ET, p. 73) and Christian Gnosticism.

In his study of semitisms in Acts (A.1.(i): Wilcox, 1965) Max WILCOX suggested that the rare phrase *μετανοεῖν ἀπὸ* in Acts 8. 22 was a semitism which could be traced back to the 'ipsissima verba Petri' and 'constitutes a token of the authenticity and antiquity of the traditions embodied by Luke in Acts viii.21 ff.' (p. 105). He tentatively proposed too that *μεγάλη δύναμις*

may spring from a confusion between Χ7122 and Χ7221  
 and that what was claimed for Simon was that he was a 'great man':  
 cf. Acts 8.9 λέγουσιν εἰς αὐτὸν μέγαν (p.156).

Morton SMITH in a study of the Acts 8 pericope (A.l.(i): Smith 1965) argued that 'the belief that a particular individual might be a supernatural Power come down on earth and appearing as a man, was reasonably common in first century Palestine' (p. 749) and that his disciples, if not Simon himself, made this claim for Simon Magus. The Acts account was intended to combat Simonianism: 'Simon had a great reputation as a miracle worker, which Luke could not deny, but explained by calling him a magician. To provide his fellow Christians with further ammunition against the Simonians he reported or elaborated or invented two stories, one, that Simon had been baptized by Philip, the other, that he had tried to buy from Peter and John the power to confer the spirit and had been refused and humiliated' (pp. 738, 39). In fact, he suggested (the suggestion is based on nothing but conjecture), Simon had been baptized but not with Christian baptism but into the sect of John the Baptist.

Simon and Simonianism play an important part in van GRONINGEN'S study of first century Gnosticism (B: Groningen, 1967). The contention of the work is that Gnosticism is the child of 'the spirit of scientism' (of which magic is a crude, primitive form: p. 130) and that it began within Samaritanism through the 'key figure' of Simon (p. 164), whose form of Gnosis provided 'the greatest thrust' for the rise of Valentinianism (ibid.). Unfortunately this book must be said to have settled nothing. The central thesis, about

'scientism', is based on little more than intuition, and his reading has been so selective (13) that his conclusions are based on no more than part of the evidence.

The year 1967 saw the publication, in the Messina colloquium volume, of Josef FRICKEL'S first contribution to the study of the Hippolytan account (A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1967), which was followed in 1968 by the first volume of a projected two-volume study on the same theme (A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2]). It was his contention that Hipp. Ref.VI. 9 - 18 should not, as had commonly though not universally (14) been the case, be regarded as reproducing, with an occasional interjection by Hippolytus himself, the text of the Megale Apophasis. Rather, the text used by Hippolytus was a Simonian paraphrase of, or commentary on, the Apophasis. Frickel's conclusion was based on an analysis of structural and formal characteristics rather than of content. He argued, for instance, that whereas on the face of it VI.9 -18 represented a *précis* of the Apophasis with the occasional *ἐπεὶ* quotation, a study of Hippolytus' method elsewhere showed that it was not his way to *précis* his sources; rather, his idea of summarising was the unlaborious one of stringing together verbal quotations, leaving many parts of the original on one side. Therefore if the Hippolytan text before us had some of the obvious signs of the *précis* about it, the explanation was likely to be that Hippolytus' source was already a *précis*. In general Frickel's work has been well received (15), and it is widely conceded that we must distinguish in Ref.VI between Apophasis proper and Paraphrase, though there is no consensus about

the points of demarcation (Barbara Aland, for instance, has argued that even more belongs to the Paraphrase than Frickel himself suggested; she assigned VI.18, 4b -7, for example to the Paraphrase: A.2: Aland, 1973). The long-awaited second volume of his book is to discuss the theology of Apophasis and Paraphrase respectively. Frickel has already in his first volume given, en passant, some indications of the differences he sees between them, which Rudolph has summarised (B: Rudolph, 1972, pp. 322 -47): the Apophasis speaks of megale dunamis, the Paraphrase of aperantos dunamis; the Apophasis has the graphic style and liturgical form befitting the revelation of an almighty prophet, whereas the Paraphrase speaks more the language of the philosopher; the doctrine of the Apophasis is straightforward and dynamic, that of the Paraphrase more philosophical; the Apophasis has a strong cosmological orientation, while the Paraphrase is interested only in the unfolding of the divine in man, and has ignored any parts of the Apophasis that were not germane thereto; the Apophasis speaks of a κρυπτόν - φανερόν dichotomy, the Paraphrase of a νοητόν - αἰσθητόν. The Apophasis, Frickel thought, is neo-Pythagorean: the hidden realm is connected with numbers, sounds, powers, aeons. The purpose of the Apophasis was to enable the believer, through a knowledge of mystic numbers and occult doctrines of harmony, to free himself from the disturbed order of the cosmos (the disturbance was brought about by angels) and so to re-align himself with the Great Power, the Root of All, the Primal Number (the Monas). The Paraphrase was less mystical, and owed more to Plato and Aristotle than to Pythagoras.

Frickel agreed with Schmithals that the Megale Apophasis was an early Simonian work, a witness to an earlier Simonianism than that represented by the Irenaeus account. Indeed, he appeared to attribute it to Simon himself, and expressed a belief (which in his second volume he will doubtless attempt to substantiate) that it provided a Grundschrift for the Gnostic view of the divine.

J.M.A. SALLES-DABADIE'S book on the Apophasis (A.1.(iv): Salles-Dabadie, 1969) resembled Frickel's not only in being the first volume of a two-volume study (his second volume is to be devoted to the Simon legend), but also in its claim that 'the Apophasis represents an archaic, not a late, gnosis' (p. 9, n.2 [on p. 10]). He took the author of the Refutatio (whom he called Pseudo-Hippolytus, for he followed Salmon, Harnack, Zahn and Stähelin in disallowing the attribution to Hippolytus of Rome; his only companion in this scepticism in this century is P. Nautin (vid. A.1.(iv) Frickel, 1968 [2], pp. 2-19)) to have reproduced the Apophasis in its entirety. He printed the 'Apophasis' text from the sole exemplar of the Refutatio (Supplément grec 464, Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris) with a number of conjectural emendations (since criticised by Frickel: A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1972 [2]) and an even greater number of misprints (the whole book is badly marred by misprints; some pages, e.g. 13, have as many as four); he also provided a French translation.

The author of the Apophasis, Salles-Dabadie argued, ought to be placed in the vestibule rather than in the interior of the

Gnostic temple. Ideas characteristic of later Gnosticism were absent here (e.g. matter was not evil in the Apophasis, nor were aeons to be found here). Unlike the later Gnostics, this author took an optimistic view of the universe. Had other Gnostic systems existed at the time he was writing, he would doubtless have drawn upon their rich vocabulary; the fact that his language was uninfluenced by them supported the thesis of the antiquity of the Apophasis. The Apophasis, Salles-Dabadie urged, was just such a book as the Simon Magus of Acts 8 might have written had he gone to Alexandria to learn philosophy, as according to tradition he had. Further, 'the author of the Apophasis concerned himself with medicine; Simon Magus also concerned himself with medicine. The coincidence is at least disturbing!' (p. 127. Of this argument Beyschlag remarked, 'one can only be astounded at naiveté of this sort': A.2: Beyschlag, 1971, p. 412). The absence of the idea of the imprisonment of Ennoia (or Epinoia, to use the Apophasis term) our author explained by the supposition that Simon Magus wrote the book in his youth, and later in his life changed his view of Epinoia under the influence of Platonism and Iranian thought, seeing her now as imprisoned in matter.

Sasagu ARAI (A.2: Arai, 1971) offered a distinctive analysis of 'Simon Magus and his traditions' (16). Two separate traditions, independent of each other, and proceeding along parallel lines, may, he thought, be discerned. According to the first (Justin; Irenaeus) Ennoia-Sophia, during its association with Helena, became separated from the Father and became a companion of Simon: 'in this way, a mythological-dualistic teaching is developed in this tradition' (p.389).

The second tradition (Hippolytus) has Barbelo remaining with the Father but at the same time, as Epinoia or Power, being a partner of Simon: 'thence there develops the mythological-philosophical and monistic teaching of tradition B' (ibid.). Arai was uncertain whether Ennoia was thought up by Simon or by his disciples: 'It is obscure even now if Simon himself taught the Gnostic teaching that the salvation of mankind consists in the fact that man recognises the feminine attribute (Ennoia-Helen or Epinoia-Might) of the divinity (Simon, the Father) as one's own "self" through the self-revelation of Simon. It is certain, however, that this teaching had its origin in the earliest stratum of the Simonian traditions which had not yet any connection with Christianity' (pp. 289-90). (17).

H.G. KIPPENBERG'S 1971 book on the Samaritans (A.3(i): Kippenberg, 1971) marked a revival of the attempt of Heidenheim, Merx, Widengren and others to prove Simonianism rooted in the soil of the Samaritan religion. The tradition connecting Dositheus and Simon was plausible, Kippenberg thought, because Dositheus' home-town of Soko (modern eš Šuwēke) was only ten kilometres distant from Gitta. On the other hand, Dositheanism was a non-Gnostic movement within Samaritanism, whose leader saw himself as the Prophet-like-Moses of Deut. 18, whereas Simon was an early Gnostic who derived much of his terminology (e.g. Great Power, Root, Hestos) from his Samaritan heritage. Helena was an historical person, and was quite unconnected with the cult of the Greek Helen in the city of Samaria, a purely Hellenistic city without a Samaritan community.

Kippenberg has been taken to task by R. Bergmeier (D: Bergmeier, 1974) and K. Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 93 -95) for



uncritically following the lead given by earlier advocates of Samaritan Gnosis in taking fourth century Samaritan texts as evidence for the currency of concepts in the Samaritanism of the first century.

Karlmann BEYSCHLAG'S article in 1971 (A.2: Beyschlag, 1971) and his substantial book on Simonianism in 1974 (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974) have sharply challenged many of the assumptions on which the work of the last few decades has been based. He accused other writers in particular of sinning against the canons of historical enquiry. His harshest words are reserved for those who have treated the Apophasis as a product of early Simonianism. Of Schmithals, for instance, he wrote:

In Schmithals historical arguments cease altogether to play a critical part. The investigation of Gnosis here transforms itself into a form of Gnosis about Gnosis, - before which one can only lay down one's arms (1971, p. 412).

Frickel and Salles-Dabadie draw forth this comment:

Both books represent, in their own way, the new attempt to stand on its head the chronological order of the Simon Magus sources and to ascribe to the historical Simon the most recent of them (which is scarcely Simonian at all) (ibid.).

Beyschlag called for a return to the methods of Cerfaux (whose conclusions anticipate his own in a number of points) and Waitz, methods based on the careful evaluation of the dating and interrelationship of sources. In his own book, the section on source criticism occupies 72 out of 249 pages. The longest and

most detailed account of Simonianism to be published so far, Beyschlag's book calls for a fairly extended analysis here.

The main source-critical conclusions of Beyschlag may be summarised as follows. Acts 8 was purely Lucan in style and thus the division into two sources, or the detection of one source which had been radically emended, with the conclusions usually drawn therefrom (as that Peter and John are intrusions into the narrative, or even that no encounter of Simon with Christian representatives ever took place), was arbitrary. Justin's extant allusions derived from his lost Syntagma, which itself had drawn on two accounts, one Christian the other Simonian. Justin's own knowledge of the facts was much less than is commonly assumed. Irenaeus, who drew upon the lost Justin Syntagma, should be used with caution because of his anti-Simonian animus and the closeness of his account of the Simonians (it was unlikely that he had ever met any) with his accounts of Basilides (I.19) and the Carpocratians (I.20), - also because he was writing a century and a half after Simon's day. In Hippolytus one found three separate accounts: (i) VI. 19 -20, which was largely but not completely dependent on Irenaeus and on the Acts of Peter. This account was dominated by the tendency to portray Simon, quite unhistorically, as a heretic, an anti-Church rather than an anti-Christian figure. The only details of unequivocal value here (in that being free from anti-Simonian bias they doubtless derived from Simonian circles) were those concerning the Trojan War motif. (ii) The lost Syntagma of Hippolytus, which may have drawn on Irenaeus or the Justin Syntagma or both, could in part be reconstructed from Epiphanius, Pseudo-Tertullian and Philaster.

The kernel consisted of five assertions placed on the lips of Simon and concerned with the Ennoia-myth. As they showed no bias against the system, they presumably derived from Simonian sources, and were thus of great importance. (Beyschlag argued that the Syntagma tradition in fact represented an earlier version of Simonianism than the Irenaeus tradition.)

(iii) VI . 9 -18: the 'Megale Apophasis' section. How much of the Apophasis is quoted here, Beyschlag was uncertain. It was clearly a Gnostic work, and a late one, and to give it temporal priority over the accounts previously considered would be 'completely fantastic' (1974, p. 39): it had as much to do with the historical Simon as the Gnostic Gospels had to do with the historical Jesus. The Pseudo-Clementines' Grundschrift was to be dated 200 -250, and drew upon the Acts of Peter, 180 -200. The Pseudo-Clementines had nothing to contribute to our knowledge of Simon (in them Simon is a mere stereotype for heresy and magic), though they might have something to say about Simonianism, in that the Simon-Dositheus legend might reflect a struggle between Simonianism and Dositheanism.

Drawing on the results of these source-critical investigations, Beyschlag proceeded to begin making historical judgments. Luke in Acts 8 did not, he thought, represent Simon as a Gnostic, nor did one of the two sources used by Justin. The historical Simon was a Magus, and may have assumed the title Great Power, which was far from being exclusively Gnostic, in a sort of magic identification with the High God. (So far as we can see, Beyschlag offers no opinion as to whether Simon came from the Samaritan religious community or from the pagan population of Samaria). Helena, who is absent from the Acts, as also from the Acts of Peter, account,

was probably unhistorical, an incarnation of a mythical Ennoia thought up after Simonianism had become Gnostic. That in the second century there was a Simonian version of Gnosticism (best attested in the Syntagma Tradition) was clear; but attempts to see it as an incipient, immature, non-Christian Gnosticism, upon which Valentinians and others subsequently drew, must be judged misguided. The Christian elements in Simonianism were not, Beyschlag argued, accretions, but were basic to the system. Simonianism, so far from being an instance of pre-Christian Gnosis, was a late version of Gnosticism which presupposed and drew upon the Christian Gnosticism of the second century, concretising and combining many of the teachings of its exponents (a notable instance of the latter being the way that Sophia and Ennoia, which in the other Gnostic systems had been separate entities (Sophia was an oriental conception, but had become assimilated to the Platonic World-Soul; Ennoia was Greek, and went back through Plutarch to Posidonius and Aristotle: it denoted primal revelation, or the female element within the deity) were in Simonianism combined, a fact which was responsible for much of the confusion that was inherent in the system). The Megale Apophasis represented a very late version of Simonianism, if it was Simonian at all.

Between the publication of Beyschlag's article and that of his book, there appeared from the pen of Wolfgang ULLMANN just such a religionsgeschichtlich reconstruction of the origin of Simonianism as Beyschlag most deplores ('Gottesvorstellung der

Gnosis als Herausforderung am Theologie und Verkündigung',  
 B: Tröger, 1973, pp. 383 - 403). Ullmann saw Simon against the  
 background of 'the late Hellenistic crisis of Eastern High Religion'.  
 Rome, the world empire without a world-religion, possessed the  
 mastery of the world. Simon wished to achieve world dominion, but,  
 seeing the folly of the Jewish path of self-destructive rebellion,  
 chose to try to achieve his end by invoking a power to which Rome  
 and religion alike would be subject, the cosmic power of magic.  
 Whether the Helena story contained any historical truth or not,  
 it had an important role to play as symbolising the slavery of the  
 human soul to religion.

Equally far removed from the world of Beyschlag is  
 Jacques LACARRIÈRE's account of the Gnostics, which first appeared  
 in 1973 (ET: B: Lacarrière, 1977) and included a chapter on Simon  
 (in ET 'The Highroads of Samaria', chapter 5). This book, as  
 Lawrence Durrell says in his introduction to the ET, is 'more a  
 work of literature than of scholarship' (he later calls it 'this  
 splendid poem', p. 8). It is the account of a man who greatly  
 admires the Gnostics (he anticipates an imminent recrudescence of  
 Gnosticism in our time: ET p. 125) and sees Simon as the archetypal  
 Gnostic. Lacarrière was unfortunately totally uncritical in his  
 handling of the sources: fragments of the testimonies of Acts,  
 Irenaeus, Epiphanius and the Megale Apophasis (attributed to Simon,  
 ET p. 52) appeared side by side making up a composite picture the  
 outline of which is perhaps sufficiently indicated by the  
 concluding words of the chapter:

The essential point about everything concerning

Simon Magus is that, with him, Gnosticism declares its originality, its power to fascinate, from its position on the fringes of traditional teaching and preaching, and that it presents a face that will remain uniquely its own during the following centuries. The face is that of the primordial Couple, it is the face of Desire - Desire aflame, Desire run wild - exalted as the primary fire of the world and the source of liberation, and it is the face of Wisdom, incarnate in the body of Helen, who has fallen from the heights of heaven into the depths of history to teach men that the way to salvation is through fecundating that reflection of the divine splendour - the body of a woman (p. 53).

Gerd LUEDMANN's published dissertation on Simonian Gnosis (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975) offered the reader a survey of previous literature, an analysis of sources and a reconstruction of Simonian belief and practice.

The historical survey, like Beyschlag's, was fairly comprehensive, though it shared with Beyschlag's an excessive concentration on German scholarship and began, like his, with the rise of the Tübingen School.

Lüdemann's discussion of sources was somewhat controversial, in that he was prepared to admit as 'authentic' sources only the two lost Syntagmata. The Syntagma of Justin was in substance

preserved in Irenaeus I. 5-6, 16-25 , and provided valuable proof of the existence of Simonian Gnosis by the middle of the second century. The Syntagma of Hippolytus Lüdemann thought much more difficult to reconstruct than had been supposed by Lipsius and those who had followed him in tracing a Syntagma tradition in the pages of Epiphanius, Philaster and the Pseudo-Tertullian; indeed; one could have so little assurance as to its contents that one could not seriously put the Hippolytus Syntagma forward as a basic source for one's reconstruction of Simonian Gnosis. Irenaeus I. 16.2 b,c;3 ('anstößig' though the suggestion might seem, p.81) did not represent an authentic source: the doctrines and libertine practices there attributed to Simon and his followers seemed likely to be retrojections of the views of Basilides and the Carpocratians.

As for the content of Simonianism, Lüdemann argued that at the beginning of the second half of the first century there existed a Simonian group practising the cultic worship of a Simon-Zeus figure who may or may not have derived from an historical man called Simon. Whether or not Simon was historical, Helena was definitely not. A study of the Ennoia-Helena myth suggested to Lüdemann that Helena was a secondary feature in the myth; the myth originally had been concerned with a Ennoia-Sophia-Athene figure who had functioned in it as a symbol of the human soul in need of salvation. Ennoia came later to be identified with the Greek Helen, wife of Menelaus, because Helen had become, especially in Pythagorean circles, a symbol for the human soul. Lüdemann thought it probable that the Simon-Zeus cult began in Samaria, where the worship of Zeus

had existed since the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (2 Macc. 6.2); later it was transported to Rome.

That the Simonians worshipped Simon as a Zeus-figure, as explicitly attested by Iren. I. 16 has been shown by Lüdemann to be very credible. It is a weakness in his book, however, that he used this practice to try to unravel the interpretation of Acts 8 (e.g. the meaning of *δύναμις μεγάλη*) without having established any historical connection between the Simon of Acts and later Simonianism. Down the centuries the efforts of commentators have been vitiated by their presuming the existence of a historical link. We shall attempt to show that if one looks at Acts 8 without jumping to conclusions on this subject one may be led to a very different interpretation of what that pericope is saying about the Simon it treats of than is commonly entertained.

#### Concluding remarks

It is now possible to indicate firstly those matters which the researches described above have sufficiently clarified for further investigations to be unnecessary ('it ought not to be imputed to negligence', wrote Dr. Johnson in his Preface to Shakespeare, 'that where others have said enough I have said no more') and secondly to state the principal problems that remain, - which the bulk of the remainder of this study will be devoted to an attempt to resolve.

It will be clear to the reader of the foregoing survey that there is no more agreement today among scholars on matters Simonian than there was in the past; perhaps less, indeed, - it sometimes seems as if it is a case of quot homines tot sententiae. We are of a mind with Cerfaux and Beyschlag that much of the



confusion arises from the indiscriminate use of sources without sufficient attention being paid to their date and parentage.

We intend therefore to follow Cerfaux and Beyschlag in taking the evaluation of the antiquity and provenance of sources as our main control, though the fact that these two scholars that set their course by the same star arrived at different destinations from each other prevents us from being oversanguine of our chances of avoiding all rocks and whirlpools and keeping a steady course.

We are of the opinion that it has been shown (in particular by England: A.2:England, 1940, pp. 98 -110, and by Beyschlag: A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 48 -62) that 'no confidence can be placed in the reliability of the conflict stories' (England, op. cit., p.110). We are persuaded too that the exhaustive survey by Karlmann Beyschlag of sources for Simonianism up to the time of Theodoret (c. 386 - 458) has established that many of the references are either too late to be reliable or they are clearly second hand or again they are the products of apologetical or theological preoccupations. For one or other of these reasons (sometimes for several, indeed), relying principally on the painstaking work of Beyschlag (op. cit., pp. 67 -77), we intend to pass over the Simonian references in the conflict stories (for the most part) and in the following passages: Tertullian De anima 34 and 57, De praescr. haer. 33. 12; Didasc. syr. 23; Basil Epist. 53. 1; Jerome Comm. in Matt. 24. 5; Cyril of Jerusalem Cat. VI. 14; Const. apost. VI. 6 -9, VIII. 47; Ambrose De off. ministr. I. 3, Expos. in Ev. Luc. IX. 19; Chrysostom Hom. in Act. 3 and 60; Augustine De haer. 1; Theodoret Haer. fab. comp.I.1.

This leaves as the sources requiring further study the following: Acts 8. 4 -25; John 4. 1-42; Josephus AJ 20. 7. 2; Sib. III 63 -92; Justin Apol. I 26. 1 -3, 56. 2, 64, Dial. 120. 6; Hegesippus apud Eus. HE 4. 22. 5; Irenaeus I. 16; Ep. Ap. 1 and 7; Ep. Cor. 1. 2, 10 -15; Hippolytus Ref. IV. 51, VI. 7 -20; X. 12; Clem. Al. Str. II.xi. 51. 3, VII . xvi. 107. 1, 108. 2; Ps Tertullian Adv. haer. 1; Eusebius HE 2. 1. 10 -12, 13. 1 - 15. 1; Ps Clem. H 2. 22. 5 -7, 24, R 1. 54. 4, 2. 8 and 11; Philaster Div. haer. XXIX; Ps Cyprian De rebaptism. 16; Epiphanius Pan. 21. 1. 1 - 7. 1; Marutha Concil. Nic. praefat.; the Samaritan chronicles.

We shall also take a look at some of the Nag Hammadi tractates which, though they never mention Simon or Simonianism by name, can be interpreted as containing oblique references thereto, or can be taken to exhibit Simonian influences.

Our aim in what follows is to subject the sources to a detailed re-examination with a view to assessing the date, parentage and reliability of each. Among the major source critical questions to which we shall have to address ourselves are the following: Can the contents of the lost syntagmata of Justin and Hippolytus be recovered? How much of the Megale Apophasis is present in the text of Hippolytus? How old is the Apophasis? Is it in any sense Simonian?

In our final chapter, 'Simon and Simonianism', we shall attempt to use the results of our source critical investigations to offer answers to the following questions: (i) Was the Simon of Acts 8 an historical person? (ii) Was the Simon of Acts, if historical, the founder of Simonianism? (iii) Was Simon of Gitta an historical person, and if so what can be known of him? (iv) Was Helena an historical person?

(v) Was Simonianism Gnostic from the start? (vi) What changes are discernible in Simonianism as it evolved? (vii) What implications, if any, have our conclusions for other areas of study?

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# NOTES

1. The list occurs on pages 567 to 573. It was published posthumously: Horbius had died in 1695, and his disquisition had originally been defended orally in 1669. Several of the seventeenth century treatises in our bibliography were unknown to Horbius. Horbius seems to have been the first to dispute the historicity of Helena: 'Helena Simonis', he says, 'non humanum scortum, sed materia prima, principium rerum passivum est' (p.517). The roots of Simonianism, he believed, were to be sought in Iranian religion: 'ex philosophia Zoroastris, cui addictus fuit, errorum suorum monstra deduxit Simon', (ibid.).
2. The inscription reads SEMONI SANCO DEO FIDIO SACRVM SEX(TVS) POMPEIVS SP(VRII) F(ILIVS) CQL(LINA TRIBV) MVSSIANVS QVINQVENNALIS DECVR(IAE) BIDENTALIS DONVM DEDIT: Corpus Inscriptionum Latinorum VI, 567 (cf. also 568, a similar inscription to Semo, perhaps of the second century, found on the Quirinale, where there was a temple to him: SANCO SANCTO SEMON(I) DEO FIDIO SACRVM DECVRIA SACERDOTVM BIDENTALIVM RECIPERATIS VECTIGALIBVS).
3. Mosheim pointed out, however, (A.2: Mosheim 1743, p.67), that Beausobre put the theory forward as his own without any mention of Vitringa, - or of Heumann, who had also in the meantime defended it (A.2: Heumann, 1727, p. 179).
4. He did however in the case of the Chaldean Oracles enter into the question of literary dependance in another book (F: Mead, 1908), offering the opinion that the author of the Apophasis 'doubtless knew of' the Oracles (p. 37). He was the more easily able to suppose

this because he disputed Julianus' authorship of the Oracles, arguing that they might as easily belong to the first as to the second century. Recent writers, however, seem to accept that Julianus' authorship has been subsequently clinched by Bidez (F: Dodds, 1947 & 1961; Lewy, 1956; Des Places, 1971).

5. 'If Simon Magus never really existed, neither were there any real Simonians. Those who were called so were simply those who made use of the words supposed to have been written by Simon Magus' (F: Baur, 1878, I, p. 200, n.1).

6. In a later article (A.2: Waitz, 1906 cf. also A.1.(1): Waitz, 1906), Waitz returned to the question of Acts 8, arguing that verses 10, 14 -19 offered a more exalted conception of Simon than did the rest of the narrative, and were redactional (verse 10 inelegantly anticipated the προσεῖχον of the next verse, and 14 -19 proclaimed their lateness by their interest in the late, sacramental rite of the imposition of hands). Further, the account begins with Simon facing a single Christian (Philip) and ends with him in conflict with a single Christian (Peter), and only the verses which are redactional have two Christians on the scene, viz. Peter and John. It is likely, Waitz urged, that the original version had Peter as the Christian protagonist, rather than Philip, because Acts 1 -12 is likely to be dependent on a Peter-source. Waitz proceeded to state his conviction that the historical Simon was no Gnostic, only a magician who through his practice of magic may have come to think of himself as a pagan god in human form.

7. At the end of his 1921 article, Alfarić announced that a volume entitled Simon le Magicien was shortly to appear, expounding these ideas in greater detail. It was however, never completed, though after his death fragments were found which it was hoped (A.2: Alfarić, [1956?], p. 199 n.1) might eventually be published.

8. Meyer here was guilty of misrepresenting Justin. Justin says, 'Nearly all the Samaritans, few however among other nations, worship him as first God'. It is a question of nationality, not of domicile. Justin can surely only mean, and that without any inconsistency, that there was a large colony of Samaritans in Rome who worshipped Simon, and that in deference to them the Senate erected a statue to him. Since Justin was a Samaritan probably domiciled in Rome (vid. Chapter 3 infra), we must take his implied assertion of the existence of a Samaritan colony in Rome as true. This being so, we do not see that a visit by Simon to Rome can be adjudged particularly improbable. Implausible as the legends of the encounter of Peter and Simon in Rome may be, their emergence is more easily accounted for if Simon did indeed visit Rome, though perhaps too early for him to have met Peter there.

There is explicit evidence for the existence of a Samaritan colony in Rome c. 500 A.D. in Cassiodorus Senator *Variae* 3, 45, but the early Roman emperors up to the time of Commodus, 180 -92, were, by and large, well disposed to the Samaritans, and one may suspect that Samaritans first established themselves in Rome in the first or second century.

9. From what we have written above, we shall not be expected to favour Merrill's position about Simonians in Rome. 'It will be observed', wrote Merrill (p. 295), 'that Justin does not intimate that there were any Simonians in Rome in his day, and we may safely infer not merely that there were none, but that the only ground Justin had for believing that Simon ever taught in Rome was the existence there of the century-old statue'. If there were no Simonians in Rome, would it not be passing strange that Justin, who himself **was living** there, should have supposed the Roman people to worship, and the Roman Senate to have raised a statue to, their founder? Surely it is likely not only that there were Simonians in Rome but also that they either had a statue of Simon, as Justin says, or they appropriated the Semo statue, claiming it as a statue of Simon. E.F. Osborn (A.1.(ii): Osborn 1973) has recently written in favour of the latter supposition: 'It is strange that Justin, who was resident in Rome, should have made an error at this point. The statue must have been regarded and revered by heretics as a monument to Simon. Its proximity to the Jewish quarter [viz. the Transtiburtinum, on the right hand bank of the river, Philo Legatio 23.155; cf. F: Leon, 1960, p. 136 -38] makes this an interesting hypothesis' (p. 60). On the other hand, Beyschlag's objection to this (A.2: Beyschlag, 1971, p.11, n.11) is not without force, namely that if Justin had known of such an appropriation he would have protested against it as illegitimate. Of all this, more later.

10. Elsewhere (A.2: Quispel, 1970 (1973)) Quispel said specifically that Simon based himself on the Samaritan conception of divine creation

through Wisdom (p. 328, quoting from the Samaritan liturgy 'In his Wisdom God created the heavens'). The Palestinian Targum has the same conception, as he pointed out in B: Quispel, 1971 (1973).

11. Haenchen's commentary on Acts expands his treatment of the Acts 8 pericope (A.1.(i): Haenchen, 1956. 1971). In particular he made it clear there that he did not believe that Simon was in fact converted, nor that he really tried to buy either the gift of healing or that of imparting the Spirit. 'There was no initial connection between the stories of Simon and Philip

[Philip, Haenchen thought, will probably have worked among the devotees of the Samaritan religion, Simon among the pagans]. Later, however, to illustrate Philip's great success, it was said that he even converted Simon Magus! In the process, of course, Simon had to be downgraded from the rank of an incarnate god to that of a mere magician. But even in this comparatively modest station he was too notorious for his baptism to be felt as the correct expression for his total defeat....' (ET, p. 307).

Haenchen returned to the study of Acts 8 in 'Simon Magus in der Apostelgeschichte' (B: Tröger, 1973, pp. 267-279). Having discussed other recent expressions of view (e.g. that of G. Schille (A.1.(i): Schille, 1966) who saw behind Acts 8 an old mission-legend in which Simon asked for baptism and was refused, and that of G. Klein (A.1.(i): Klein, 1967), who supposed that Philip baptised Simon but that the latter's conversion was only feigned since he was set upon propagating a syncretistic religion, until Peter and John saw through him), Haenchen repeated his belief that Simon saw himself as an incarnate deity and made no attempt to become a Christian.



He departed from the views expressed in his commentary, though this does not affect his position about the historical Simon, to the extent of now seeing two pre-existent accounts behind Acts 8.

12. H.J. Schoeps, B: Schoeps, 1956. Like Wilson, though less guardedly, he sees in Simon a transition point: 'The unanimous contention of the Fathers that Simon Magus of Samaria, a frontier district in which Semitic and Greek spiritual currents acted upon each other, was the Father of Gnosis, is confirmed to the extent that we find the Gnostic myth formulated in a relatively simple form in Simon' (p.36).

13. For Acts he appears not to have read Haenchen, Conzelmann or Dibelius. For Samaritanism, he has by his own confession no first hand acquaintance with Montgomery (p. 137, n.1). For Simonianism, he read Hippolytus only late in the day (p. 171, n.3). Weakness of reasoning is also evident throughout, though it seldom sinks as low as in the following sentence: 'To seek a definite evaluation of Ephraem's contributions to our study would lead us far beyond the scope of our study' (p.155).

14. Haardt recognised the existence of only three fragments from the Megale Apophasis; de Faye and Leisegang only one, - in VI.18. 2 -7.

15. Daniélou took the view that Frickel had established the existence of the Paraphrase, and suggested that it had been written in Rome (RScR 58 (1970) 136, 37). B. Aland said (A.2: Aland, 1973 p. 410) 'so far as formal criteria go, he is successful'. Rudolph (B: Rudolph, 1972, pp. 322 -47) concluded that Frickel had at least shown that Hippolytus could not any longer be supposed to have

reproduced the Apophasis in its entirety. Karlmann Beyschlag, however, reviewed the book unfavourably (A.1 (iv): Beyschlag, 1970; cf. A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 91, 92): Hippolytus gives no hint, he argued, that he was using a Simonian paraphrase, and indeed if he had been doing he would not have been likely to reproduce it virtually without comment; why may not Hippolytus be using, he asked, a Christian treatise on Simonianism?

16. The present writer's knowledge of Arai's position is derived from the English summary only, pp. 389 -90.

17. Arai subsequently modified and added to his analysis of Simonian Gnosis in a paper read to the Seventh International Patristic Conference at Oxford, in September 1975 (the present writer is most grateful to Prof. Arai for generously giving him a copy of this paper). From Acts 8 might be gleaned, Arai said, only one historical fact, - that Simon laid claim to divinity (perhaps identifying himself with Zeus); there were no Gnostic elements in the pericope, and there were no reasons for supposing the historical Simon to have been influenced by Gnosticism. Helena was not an historical person, and was indeed but a secondary element in the Simon-Ennoia mythology of second century Simonian Gnosis. The earliest form of that Gnosis had taught that Simon came to save man through self-knowledge (not through knowledge of Simon himself), of which operation the rescue of Ennoia (standing for the fallen human soul) was a mythical representation. The validity of this reconstruction was supported, Arai argued, by the fact that it closely paralleled the argument of the Exegesis of the Soul, from Nag Hammadi Codex II, the oldest stratum of which might properly be called Simonian (though scarcely, pace Schenke and Rudolph, pre-Simonian).

Annexe to Chapter 1

We list below in alphabetical order the main scholars treated in this chapter together with the year under which each is considered.

ALFARIC 1921	GRANT 1953
AMÉLINEAU 1887	GRONINGEN 1967
AMMAN 1941	
ARAI 1971	HAENCHEN 1952
	HEIDENHEIM 1884
BAUR 1831	HILGENFELD 1848
BEAUSOBRE 1731	HORBIUS <u>ad init.</u>
BEYSCHLAG 1971	
BOUSSET 1907	KIPPENBERG 1971
BRAUN 1955	KLOSTERMANN 1883
CASEY 1933	LACARRIÈRE 1973
CERFAUX 1925	LEGGE 1915
	LEISEGANG 1924
DALE 1700	LOISY 1920
DANIÉLOU 1958	LÜDEMANN 1975
ENGLAND 1940	MEAD 1892
	MERRILL 1924
FAYE 1913	MERX 1911
FOERSTER 1955	MEYER 1923
FRICKEL 1967	MONTGOMERY 1907
FROMMBERGER 1886	
	NUTT 1874

ORY 1956

TROCME 1957

PIEPER 1911

ULLMANN 1973

PRAEFCKE 1895

VARCL 1949

QUISPEL 1951

VINCENT 1936

VITRINGA 1708

REDLICH 1909

WAITZ 1904

SALLES-DABADIE 1969

WEISS 1914

SCHLIER 1954

WILPERT 1938

SCHMITHALS 1956

WIDENGREN 1950

SMITH 1965

WILCOX 1965

STREISGUTH 1839

WILSON 1955

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Chapter 2

THE SIMON MAGUS PERICOPE ; Acts 8. 4 -25

We shall be seeking in this section to analyse the earliest of our sources, Acts 8. 4 -25, to see what the author and the traditions, oral or written, used by him, have to say about Simon and Simonianism, and to determine, so far as may be, the date and reliability of their assertions.

We shall call the author 'Luke' without prejudice to the question of his identity. We assume only that the Third Gospel and Acts have a common author.

1. THE QUESTION OF SOURCES AND OF REDACTIONAL ADDITIONS

In the absence of anything approaching a scholarly consensus about the sources of Acts in general (1), we shall address ourselves to the question of sources in our pericope without commitment to any general theory of sources, concentrating our attention on such evidence as the passage itself affords.

(1) The evidence of the repetitions

That the pericope may derive from one or more source or may include redactional material is suggested, as many have remarked, by the inelegant and seemingly unfunctional repetitions of parts

of the verbs  $\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\iota$  and  $\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\iota\nu$  :  
 $\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu\omega\nu\ldots\epsilon\acute{\xi}\epsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\iota\ldots\epsilon\acute{\xi}\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\omicron}$  8. 9, 11, 13  
 $\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\chi\omicron\nu\ldots\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\chi\omicron\nu$  8. 10, 11

Are these repetitions evidence for the splicing together of two sources by an author who did not have the stylistic finesse to eliminate duplications of vocabulary? Or for the use of one source by an author who, with even less sensitivity, himself introduced repetitions into the text? Or for redactional activity? Or perhaps only for an author who was wont to repeat himself? Or, indeed, are the repetitions possibly functional after all?

In our view the repetitions, on their own, provide no evidence for the use of sources. The inelegancies are confined to the two verses 10 and 11, for the following of ἐξίσταίνων in 9 (active) by ἐξίστατο in 13 (passive) creates no problem at all in itself: 'Simon' - this will be the gist of it - 'astounded all the Samaritans, till Philip came along and Simon in his turn was astounded by him'. Verses 10 and 11, on the other hand are close enough to each other in sense, apart from the fact that they introduce verbal repetitions, for one to be tempted to posit the existence of a redactor:

9. Ἄνθρωπος δὲ τις ὀνόματι Σίμων προῦπηρχεν  
ἐν τῇ πόλει μαγέων καὶ ἐξιστάνων  
τὸ εἶναι τῆς Σαμαρείας, λέγων εἶναί  
τινα ἐαυτον μέγαν

10. προσεῖχον πάντες ἀπὸ  
μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου λέγοντες,  
οὗτος ἐστὶν ἡ δύναμις τοῦ  
θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη |  
λεγομένη μεγάλη

11. προσεῖχον δὲ αὐτῷ διὰ τὸ  
ἱκανῶς χρόνῳ ταῖς μαγείαις  
ἐξεστακέναι αὐτοῦς

12. ὅτε δὲ ἐπίστευσαν...

Schmiedel suggested (A.2: Schmiedel, 1903, col. 4537), rather tentatively, that verses 10 and 11 were both redactional intrusions, the first calculated to make it clear that Simon was thought of not simply as a magician or 'someone great' but as the Great Power. After making the insertion the redactor 'then thought it necessary to return in v.11 to the idea of sorcery (from which attention had meanwhile been called away) and in so doing borrowed "took heed" ( $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\gamma\chi\omicron\nu$ ) from v. 10a and  $\epsilon\gamma\sigma\tau\alpha\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\iota$  from v. 9'.

Rather than postulate the activity of so maladroit a redactor, one might suppose that only one of the two verses was an intrusion. To suppose v. 10 to be secondary, having presumably as its aim that postulated for both 10 and 11 by Schmiedel, viz. the assertion that Simon was accorded a higher position than the original narrative had allowed, is forbidden by two considerations at least: (a) the theory asks us to believe that the original was even more inelegant than the present state of the text that it finds so intolerable, for v. 11, if it followed originally hard on the heels of v. 9 will have repeated the substance of all three elements in that verse (the references to the long duration of Simon's success, to his use of magic and to his power to astound); (b) since the purpose of the insertion would be to expand on the claim made in 9b, there is no reason why  $\pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\gamma\chi\omicron\nu$  should have been used, anticipating its occurrence in 11: the attachment of the people will already have been clearly stated - twice in fact, for both 9 and 11 speak of it.

If, on the other hand, we take 11 to be in some sense intrusive, we have a much more readily explicable situation. The original account has said that Simon had had a long history of success as a practitioner of magic, making himself out to be someone great, or important, and astounding the Samaritans, who hailed him as the Great Power of God. The point of the insertion will have been to explain further the connection between the people's attachment to Simon and the latter's use of magic. We may take the sense of the verse to be:

It was in fact precisely because of his having  
astounded the people with his magic that Simon  
got them to follow him.

If this interpretation is correct, the repetitions introduced by verse 11 are not otiose at all but necessary. The purpose of the verse will have been to provide some partial exculpation for the people of Samaria, suggesting that they only acted in the way they did because they were bewitched by magic.

We see then that there are grounds for thinking v.11 represents a supplementary thought. But is it for that reason necessarily redactional? Since a sympathetic interest in Samaria is a well-known characteristic of the author of Luke-Acts (2), there is no doubt, in our view, that rather than posit a redactor we should regard the verse as an after-thought by the author himself. Having written vv.4 -10, or alternatively having written the whole passage, he added these words in order to correct the unintentionally unfavourable picture of the Samaritans presented by vv. 9 and 10 (3).



(11) The evidence of the supposed two views of Simon before his 'conversion'

Waitz' contention (A.2: Waitz, 1906, p. 352) that verse 10 must be from a different hand from 9,11 -13 on the ground that it represents Simon as a heavenly power. whereas the other verses see him only as a magus, a contention which has been very influential, seems to us very unconvincing, whether Luke saw Simon as a gentile or as a member of the Samaritan religion.

Let us suppose Luke to be taking Simon to be a gentile. In that case, since he believes that the people of Lystra took Paul and Barnabas to be divine because of their miracle-working powers (Acts 14. 11 -15), why should it be difficult to believe that he supposed the practices of the magus Simon won him similar acclaim from the Hellenized Samaritans? Indeed he records the ascription of divinity to Herod Agrippa I by the gentile elements (?) of the population of Caesarea (12. 22) without either miracle or magic. Since Hellenistic magicians were wont to make such assertions as 'I am Horus the son of Isis...', claiming some sort of identification, even if functional rather than ontological, with various deities (4), it might have seemed altogether credible to Luke that Simon should have been both a magus and, what we shall see later was implied by the title Great Power, a pretended deity.

But Luke does not in fact use the noun *μάγος* of Simon. What he does say of him, namely that he practised magic, is quite consistent with his believing him to have been (as indeed we shall

argue that he was) a member of the Samaritan sect, and this in turn is not inconsistent with his believing him to have been hailed as divine, for Celsus speaks of having seen in Syria and Palestine prophets who, from the Biblical cast of the language ascribed to them, were clearly not pagan, and who said: 'I am God, or the Son of God or a divine spirit' (Origen CC 7.9).

(111) The evidence of the supposed two views of Simon after his 'conversion'.

Bauernfeind (A.1.(1): Bauernfeind, 1939, p. 124) finds it incredible that the accounts of Simon's conversion and of Peter's harshness to him should have come from the same hand. That there is a difficulty here is clear enough. If Simon really 'believed' (8.13), then his seeking to buy the gift of imparting the Spirit could only be due to dullness of intellect and thus would not merit the severity of Peter's rebuke. Moreover, Peter seems in vv. 20 and 21 to take the damnation of Simon as a foregone conclusion, whereas v.22 seems to open the door to forgiveness. We might seek to eliminate these difficulties by supposing our account to derive from two separate sources, one more favourable to Simon than the other. We are not, however, inclined to follow this path, for the difficulties can readily be resolved by reference to Lucan theology.

Simon has 'believed' only as much as those in the Lucan parable of the Sower who 'receive the word with joy (cf. Acts 8.8: 'there was much joy in that city') when they hear it, but have no root' (Luke 8. 13). In Luke-Acts, as Schuyler Brown argues,  $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  is 'objectified, i.e. identified with the Christian kerygma...  $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$

refers to a fixed *ὁμολογία* , to be pronounced by all alike at baptism' (A.l.(1): Brown, 1969, pp. 146, 47). Ἐπίστευσεν will thus in Acts 8 mean little more than that Simon formally subscribed to the Christian profession of faith. Like Ananias, he will be thought of as having stopped short of the 'honest and good heart' (Luke 8. 15) of the genuine Christian.

The severity of Peter's rebuke may plausibly be explained in terms of Luke's preoccupation with denunciation of the service of mammon (e.g. Luke 16. 13 -15; Acts 20. 33 -35). Simon was guilty of the sin of Judas (Luke 22. 3 -6) and of Ananias (Acts 5), and, given Luke's strong views on the service of mammon, the harsh words attributed to Peter in vv. 20 and 21 should occasion no surprise.

But what of Peter's apparent volte-face at v. 22, where he envisages the possible repentance of Simon? Luke had expressed in his Gospel the view that Satan had been given leave to sift all the Twelve but that because of the intercession of Jesus Peter would be enabled to hold on to his faith so that he could in turn support others (Luke 22. 31 -32). What more natural, then, than that having roundly condemned Simon's backsliding Peter should seek to *στηρίξειν* him? Ananias, of course, received no such support from Peter after his show of avarice had earned him his rebuke, but the different fate of Ananias and Simon is susceptible of several different explanations: e.g. Luke in one case, or both, may have felt himself constrained by the historical facts of the case, or he may have believed that the action of Ananias was worse than the

attempted action of Simon (perhaps he saw Ananias as one who had received the Spirit and was for that reason incapable of repenting of his sin, and Simon as one who had not received the Spirit and who was, like Peter when he betrayed Jesus, therefore capable of repentance: so Brown, op. cit. pp. 112 -13).

(iv) Linguistic indications

Several scholars (especially Waitz: A.1.(1): Waitz, 1906) have argued that the latter half of the pericope is more Hebraic than the rest. We may, for instance, point to OT allusions (8.21: cf. Dt. 14.27, Ps. 78. 37; 8.23: cf. Dt.29.17, Is.58.6) and to Hebraising idioms: 8.20 εἶναι εἰς ? = לְהַכִּינָה; 8.22 μετανοεῖν ἀπό ? = יָשׁוּבָה. All these instances are within the words attributed to Peter, so they may possibly preserve the ipsissima verba Petri; alternatively we might suppose that the story of the conflict between Peter and Simon came from a written or oral Jerusalem tradition. It would, though, be rash to build a source theory on this evidence alone, for the number of these semitisms is scarcely statistically significant.

(v) The evidence of the repetition of οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπάρεντες

The repetition of οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπάρεντες in 11.19, from 8.4, which according to Meyer is 'a circumstance betokening that the long intervening portion has been derived from special sources here incorporated' (A.1.(1): Meyer, 1883, p. 224 n.3; cf A.1.(1): Spitta, 1891, p. 125 & A.2: Ory, 1956, p.9) will not bear the weight here

placed on it. If Luke were following a source that stated (i) that the Christian community in Jerusalem was dispersed throughout Judaea and Samaria, and (ii) that they proceeded as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, it must have narrated something in the interval to explain why they no longer remained in Jerusalem (5). Luke cannot therefore be picking up where he left off in a source.

But if the repetition of the phrase does not indicate that he is picking up where he left off, we are at a loss to understand why the repeated phrase should be considered evidence for the use of sources at all. The simplest explanation of the repetition must be assumed to be correct unless evidence to disprove it comes to light, and that explanation is that Luke is deliberately picking up his own phrase in order to say that now that Peter had baptized Cornelius the Christian diaspora felt justified in taking the Gospel into gentile territory.

(vi) The evidence of incompatibility between the roles ascribed to Philip and to Peter and John

Luke relates how, as a result of persecution, the Christian community, with the exception of the Apostles, was dispersed from Jerusalem throughout Judaea and Samaria, converting and baptizing Simon and other Samaritans, Simon being astounded at Philip's 'signs and great powers'. The Spirit was not given to the Samaritans until Peter and John arrived in Samaria. Simon, seeing that the Apostles had power to confer the Spirit by the imposition of hands, tried to buy their power from them. Peter rebuked them, and Simon asked Peter and John to pray for him. Philip in the meantime had

converted the Ethiopian eunuch at Gaza (according to the Western Text, the Spirit was on this occasion conferred), and had evangelized the towns of the coastal plain as far north as Caesarea (8.40), where he then made, or remade, his home (21.8). Peter (but not John) is then made to conduct a general tour, following in Philip's footsteps as far as Caesarea, calling at Lydda, Sharon and Joppa (9.32 - 10. 24).

Problems here abound. Why could Philip not confer the Spirit on the Samaritans? (6 ). If it was Philip who astounded Simon, why did he not attempt to buy his power? What was Peter doing following in Philip's wake and why was John absent from the latter part of Peter's journey? Why does the Philip ministry to the Samaritans need to be supplemented by the Apostolic gift of the Spirit, while his ministry to the eunuch does not? (7).

Not all the problems raised can be solved instantly. We shall for the present concentrate on solving one of them, and shall later try to use the solution proposed to solve the others. The problem that, we believe, can be disposed of at once is that of the similarity of the itinerary of Philip, for the one part, and of Peter and John for the other. With Haenchen (B: Tröger, 1973) we see herein evidence of the existence of a dual tradition of the evangelization of Samaria. The one version (the Hellenistic, handed on perhaps in Caesarea) will have attributed the evangelization to Philip, while the other version (the Jewish-Christian, handed on perhaps in Jerusalem or Shechem) will have attributed it to Peter and John. Whereas, however, Haenchen seems to think that the

two accounts are mutually incompatible, we see no reason why both should not be true: given the mixed population of Samaria, it seems to us quite likely that the 'Hebrews' and the 'Hellenists' should each have organised a missionary campaign in Samaria, each party concentrating on the elements in the population with which they had most affinity. Both traditions will have contributed to the Simon Magus pericope as it now stands.

Which verses in the pericope derive from which tradition? And what was the drift of each tradition as far as Simon is concerned? Neatly to divide the narrative after v. 13, allocating verses 4 -13 to the Philip version and 14 -25 to the Peter version, would not do much to resolve the problems we have outlined, and indeed the stylistic homogeneity of the pericope ('the style of the whole is purely Lucan': A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p.8; cf. A.1.(i): Wilcox, 1965, p. 134) forbids such a simple solution. The two traditions have been worked over by Luke and it is far from easy to say what each originally contained. We shall argue later that the Philip tradition told of Philip's preaching in Samaria and his conversion of Simon (roughly as in 8.4 -13), while the Peter tradition told of Peter's preaching in Samaria and his refusal to admit Simon, who sought baptism and Church office at his hands, to Christian fellowship. There is no evidence that either version had passed from an oral to a written form before it reached Luke; we shall therefore be on safer ground in thinking of oral traditions rather than of written sources.

## 2. THREE TEXT-CRITICAL PROBLEMS

(1) εἰς πόλιν or εἰς τὴν πόλιν τῆς Σαμαρείας (8.5)?

The article is present in B. and A. If this reading is correct, the obvious meaning would be 'the city (called) Samaria', i.e. the erstwhile capital of the Northern Kingdom. But Σαμαρεία is in the New Testament always the name of a district (as it clearly is in 8.1 & 9), never of a city, and indeed the city formerly called Samaria was in the apostolic period called Sebaste, not Samaria (Josephus AJ. 15. 8. 5). Further, the phrase 'in that city' in 8.8 tends to suggest that an unspecified city had been in mind: cf. Jn 18.15, Mt. 10.14 (vid. A.1. (i): Blass, 1895, p.108; A.1. (i): Stählin, 1966, p. 118). Again, Luke (whatever may be true of the oral tradition) is hardly likely to have thought that Philip would have preached in the pagan city of Samaria before Peter had received a divine call to admit gentiles to Church membership. Some have defended the reading with the article, taking it to mean 'the capital city of (the district of) Samaria' (A.1.(i): Lumby, 1890, p. 97; A.1.(i): Blass, 1895, p. 108) but, although this avoids taking Samaria in a sense without parallel in the NT, it still runs up against the fact that it involves Philip in a mission to gentiles before divine authorisation has been given for it. Furthermore, although πόλις in the sense of 'capital city' is found both in the NT (Mk 5.4; Lk. 8.27) and elsewhere, and although this interpretation would give us a neat opposition between πόλις in v. 5 and κώμη in v. 25 (so Blass; note, however, that



25 speaks of κώμῃ τῶν Σαμαρίτων not κ.τῆς Συμαρείας),

πόλις is in fact never found in this sense, either in the NT or elsewhere, followed by the name of the district in the genitive case.

In a similar way, we may in English when speaking of, say,

Nottinghamshire, allude to its county town simply as 'the city' or 'town', but we would never say 'the city of Nottinghamshire'.

These considerations lead us to prefer the anarthrous form ἐς πόλιν, κτλ.

(for the anarthrous use of πόλις followed by a district in the genitive case, cf. Lk 1.26, 39; 4. 31).

It is just possible that πόλις represents a mistranslation of the Aramaic ܡܢ ܕܢܗܠܐ used in its archaic sense of 'province' but wrongly taken in its newer sense of 'city'. This suggestion of Torrey's Wilcox thinks worthy of consideration (A.1.(1): Wilcox, 1965, pp. 141 -43) though he rates the chances of this ingenious theory's being right 'quite weak'. We cannot altogether exclude the possibility that the oral tradition consulted by Luke was speaking of the Samaritan province.

(11) ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη μεγάλη  
 ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ λεγομένη μεγάλη  
 ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ μεγάλη (8.10)

All three have MS support. Without MS attestation, however, is the suggestion, which has won some favour, that τοῦ θεοῦ is intrusive. Though Haenchen (A.1.(1): Haenchen, 1971, p. 303) describes it as 'a mere gloss', ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ as a periphrasis for 'God' is perfectly Lucan, being found at Lk 22. 69, and τοῦ θεοῦ must therefore not be deleted. Of course, Luke may, in

one or both of these places, have added τοῦ Θεοῦ to the phrase ἡ δύναμις standing in the tradition he was using, but that is another matter altogether.

Λεγόμενη (uncommon in Luke-Acts) and καλουμένη both presuppose that ἡ δύναμις μεγάλη is a title. Though κ. is the better attested (λ. occurs only in a few minuscules) and is more characteristic of Luke, either could easily have been written for the other by a careless copyist, while the reading without either could be the result of a scribal omission. Alternatively, if the original contained neither (as attested by two uncials, a number of minuscules, some versions and Chrysostom) κ. and λ. might have come into the MSS as attempts to fill by conjecture what copyists thought to be a lacuna in the text. We shall leave the question open.

(iii) ὅς πολλὰ κλαίων οὗ διαλίμπανεν 8.24 D

Διαλιμπάνειν (a variant of διαλείπειν, to intermit) is found in Acts 17. 13 D and (the sole other Biblical example) Tobit 10. 7 (Anna lamenting - θρηνεῖν, not κλαίειν - over the supposed death of Tobias).

Are the words a theologically motivated intrusion? Epp seems to believe so, and interprets them as insisting on what was only implicit in the B text, viz. the repentance of Simon through the agency of Peter: 'the intention to glorify Peter is quite plain' (A.1.(i): Epp, 1966, p. 160). He thinks too that D may be seeking

to provide a Petrine parallel to Paul's treatment of Elymas, Acts 13. 9 -11. On the other hand, the D reading can easily be defended. Repentance and weeping are found in Luke-Acts more commonly than in the synoptics (repent: Matthew 3, Mark 2, Luke 5, Acts 6 times; weep : Matthew 2, Mark 4, Luke 8 (or 9, counting 22. 62 D), Acts 2 times), and it is therefore perfectly conceivable that Luke wrote these five words and that they were afterwards dropped because they seemed to conflict with what later redactors had heard of Simon's subsequent career. This indeed we consider quite a likely supposition.

### 3. PROBLEMS OF INTERPRETATION

In this section we shall attempt to determine, without invoking facts and opinions about Simonianism derived from later sources (this because the identity of the Simon of Acts with the Simon of later sources cannot be taken for granted) what Luke and the traditions he was drawing upon, understood by various expressions. Did they have a particular *πόλις* in mind as the location of Simon's activities? Did they by 'John' mean John the Apostle or John Mark? Did they intend to narrate a genuine, or only a feigned conversion on Simon's part? What did *ἡ δόξα καὶ μεγαλ.* mean for them? What did they understand Simon to have asked for? Did they mean one to take his repentance as genuine?

#### (1) Which town?

Since we have seen the anarthrous reading in v. 5 to be probably correct, it is unlikely that either Luke or his oral source

had a particular city in mind; the oral tradition may indeed have been speaking of the province of Samaria, not of a city at all.

(ii) Which Philip?

Some of the Fathers seem to have taken the Philip of Acts 8 to be Philip the Apostle (e.g. Tertullian De Baptismo PL 1, col. 1330; Eusebius HE 3. 31. 1 -4) and a few modern scholars have followed them. Thus Spitta (A.l.(i): Spitta, 1891) argued that the written source to which he attributed the passage had meant by Philip the Apostle of that name (8. 14 'the apostles in Jerusalem' implied this, he thought (p. 146): if Philip the Evangelist had been meant 'the apostles' would have been said) and had placed the episode after the conversion of Paul; the redactor had brought the story forward because he thought it concerned Philip the Evangelist and he therefore placed it immediately after the Stephen-episode. E. Bishop (A.l.(i): Bishop, 1946) thought Luke himself was thinking of Philip the Apostle: 'Would not', he asked (p. 155), 'an apostle have been the person to undertake the mission to the leading city of Samaria?' (the book was, he reminded the reader, called the Acts of the Apostles); men oun (8. 4) was often a sign of transition to a new episode, so here the 'going down', presumably from Jerusalem, of Philip would not have been part of the dispersal of 8. 1, but would have been the subsequent act of one of the apostles left in Jerusalem: 'Philip then may well have been the first of the apostles to leave Jerusalem as the news of the evangelistic tours of some hundreds of dispersed filtered back

to their leaders' (p. 156); Philip the Apostle was characterized by a certain diffidence in the Fourth Gospel (e.g. Jn 6. 6 -7; 12. 20 -22), and this trait, if the Philip of Acts 8 were the same person, would admirably explain why he did not complete the Lord's work in Samaria; 'Philip could not face the sheer magnitude of the task alone; he hardly felt it was in his line; it was a case for those whom St. Paul called the ὑπερλίαν apostles' (p. 157).

We are totally unconvinced by Bishop's tendentious arguments, and find it inconceivable that Luke should not have intended the reader to identify 'Philip the Evangelist, one of the Seven' who lived at Caesarea (Acts 21. 8) and the Philip who after evangelising Samaria came to Caesarea (8. 40). Nor is the argument of Spitta any more compelling: it is true that if the Philip in question were not an apostle 'the apostles' would have sufficed in 8. 14, but the addition of 'in Jerusalem' is sufficiently explained by a desire to remind the reader that the apostles are all in Jerusalem still. We see no reason, therefore, to suppose that at any stage of the tradition the Philip in question was the Apostle.

#### (iii) Which John?

Whereas Foakes-Jackson and Lake (A.1.(1): Foakes-Jackson and Lake, 1933, p. 92) consider that it is possible that 'John' here, as in 13.13, refers to John Mark (who is referred to by his full name in 12.25 and 15.37), Haenchen contends that 'this is wholly excluded in view of 3.1 and 4.13, not to mention 12. 25' (A.1.(1): Haenchen, 1971, p. 304 n.2.). Haenchen goes too far, but it must be allowed that 'John' in 13.13 can, in the context, mean only John Mark, so

the use of 'John' there involves no ambiguity. In chapter 8, on the other hand, there is nothing in the context to suggest that 'John' might mean John Mark, and the presumption must therefore be that the John who accompanies Peter here is that John (viz. the Apostle) who accompanies him in chapters 3 and 4.

(iv) Meaning of the Great Power of God?

Luke, we have seen, wrote either that Simon's devotees hailed him as the Great Power of God or that they hailed him as the Power of God that is called Great (we cannot be sure which). Did he mean his readers to understand by this that they ascribed divine status to him?

Luke nowhere else uses this phrase, but he does use the plural  $\deltaυνάμεις$   $μεγάλαις$  in Acts 8.13 and in Lk. 22, in place of  $\acute{\epsilon}κ$   $\deltaεξιῶν$   $τῆς$   $\deltaυνάμεως$  (Mk 14.62, Matt. 26.64) he has  $\acute{\epsilon}κ$   $\deltaεξιῶν$   $τῆς$   $\deltaυνάμεως$   $τοῦ$   $\thetaεοῦ$  ( $\eta$   $\delta$ .  $τοῦ$   $\thetaεοῦ$  is a phrase used by Paul also, at 1 Cor. 1.24). Whether Luke's reading is an amplification of Mark, as most commentators believe, or whether Luke derived it from a special Passion tradition (as Vincent Taylor is inclined to believe: F: Taylor, 1972, p. 83) is little to our present purpose, for Luke must surely have meant by  $\eta$   $\deltaύναμις$   $τοῦ$   $\thetaεοῦ$  precisely what Mark meant by  $\eta$   $\deltaύναμις$ , i.e. God himself. 'H  $\deltaύναμις$  as a reverential periphrasis for God translates  $\text{אֱלֹהִים}$ , which occurs in this sense at Sifre Num. 47 and 112, Aboth d. R. Nathan 37 and in numerous other places (see, e.g. F: Dalman, 1909, p. 200; F: Strack & Billerbeck, 1922 -56, I, pp. 1006, 07; II, p.308). Barrett, inter alios, is prepared to entertain the idea that Luke may have misunderstood the Semitic idiom (F: Barrett, 1947, p. 72) but we find this less than convincing

for we cannot conceive what entity other than God Luke could have supposed ἡ δύναμις to have referred to. Whereas in 1 Cor. 1.24 ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Θεοῦ can be interpreted otherwise ('possibly (Paul) means only that in Christ God's mighty power has come into the world', F: Taylor, 1953, p. 150), in Lk. 22.69 the phrase can only mean God (God considered with respect to his power; just as in English 'the King's Most Excellent Majesty' is a periphrasis for 'The King considered with respect to his majesty').

Is Luke's use of the plural of μεγάλη δύναμις to refer to Philip's miracles consistent with the supposition that in 8.10 he meant ἡ δ. τοῦ Θεοῦ...μεγάλη as a periphrasis for God? Assuredly so: Philip, Luke is saying, realised that he was not able to work miracles ἰδία δυνάμει (Acts 3.12) any more than Peter was. His Samaritan audience, however, drew the conclusion about Simon that those who saw Paul heal a cripple in Lystra drew about him and Barnabas, οἱ ἄνθρωποι ὁμοιωθέντες ἀνθρώποις κατέβησαν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, taking them to be incarnations of Hermes and Zeus respectively (Acts 14. 11, 12; cf. 12.22). That Simon himself had illusions of divinity is not asserted, only that he had grand notions about himself: λέγων εἶναι τινα ἑαυτὸν μέγαν like Theudas (5.36: the same phrase is used, if the Western reading is original; the B text, however, omits μέγαν). The parallel with Theudas, in connection with whom there is no suggestion of any ascription of divinity, makes it unlikely that Luke (whatever may be the case with the oral tradition) wished to assert that Simon himself

had claimed to be divine.

Luke must, in our view, have taken the townsfolk in the story to have been adherents of the Samaritan religion. Chapter 10 loses much of its point if it does not narrate the recognition by the Apostles for the first time that God's plan demands the evangelisation of the gentiles. Until Chapter 8 only Jews are evangelised; in 8. 1 -25 those half-Jews, members of the Samaritan sect, are admitted to the fold; in 8. 26 -40 a representative of half-Jews of a different sort, the proselytes, is baptised; and finally in Chapter 10 the Spirit is given to the gentiles. Given, then, a Samaritan setting, rather than a Samaritan, for the story (in Luke's eyes, at least), and given the fact that Power as a periphrasis can only refer to Yahweh, it is clear that Luke, rightly or wrongly, will have supposed the crowds to have identified Simon with Yahweh, not with any pagan deity.

So much for Luke. What of the oral tradition? We must first mention the possibility that it spoke of Simon being hailed not as the Great Power but as a, or the, Great Man. Max Wilcox has suggested that it is 'not impossible' that Luke's  $\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  is a mistaken rendering of  $\chi\alpha\lambda\alpha$ , which has been confused with  $\chi\alpha\lambda\alpha$  (A.1.(1): Wilcox, 1965, p. 156). Had we found evidence to suppose that Luke was dependent on a written source, we should have taken this suggestion very seriously, but since we believe that we have to do only with oral sources, such a confusion appears very unlikely.

In which tradition will the mention of the title have stood, the Philip or the Peter tradition? Although Luke has mentioned it



in connection with the mission of Philip, this creates no presumption that it came from the Philip tradition. If, indeed, as we shall argue later, it is much more likely that the title derives from a Semitic than an Hellenistic milieu, it seems probable that it will have been handed down in the Peter rather than the Philip tradition. How the tradition will have understood the title Great Power, whether as a divine title or in some other sense, we lack the evidence to decide.

(v) Simon's conversion genuine?

We have suggested above (1.(ii)) that Luke uses the verb 'believe' of Simon in the sense in which it is used in the Parable of the sower of those who have only a weak commitment, so that when temptations come they fall away because they lack an 'honest and good heart' (Lk. 8.15). It is significant that Simon's heart is said by Peter not to be εὐθεῖα (Acts 8.21). Luke does not mean that Simon's conversion is feigned, but that he was converted at a superficial level only. His heart was not deeply committed. He was, in Wesley's phrase, an 'almost Christian'. If Luke does not specifically say that Simon, unlike the other Samaritans, did not receive the Spirit, it is because he takes it for granted that Simon ἐβαπτίσθη, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐφωτίσθη, as Cyril remarked (PG 33, col. 336: quoted in A.1.(i): Meyer, 1883, p. 229).

Günter Klein may well be right to see a suggestion of the imperfection of Simon's faith in the fact that whereas the other Samaritan converts are said to have been astounded first (8.6) and then to have believed and been baptized (8.12), Luke says of Simon first

that he believed and was baptized, and later that he was astounded (8.13) (A.1.(1): Klein, 1967, p. 69).

There can be little room for doubt that the oral Philip tradition contained the baptism of Simon (had the story reached Luke through the Peter tradition it is inconceivable that, setting such store by the role of the Apostles as he did, he would have transferred the credit for it to Philip). It will have been concerned to emphasise the success with which God crowned the missionary work of Philip. Any suggestion that Simon's conversion was imperfect would have detracted from this point, so it is likely that we owe this idea to Luke, not to the oral tradition.

(vi) The meaning of Simon's request?

Turning to the second half of the pericope, we now ask, first what Luke thought that Simon asked for, and then what the oral tradition had him ask for. As far as Luke is concerned, it is clear that for him what Simon was after was the magic power, through the imposition of hands, to convey the gift of the Spirit (8.18). There are indications, however, that the tradition had originally a different tale to tell. Verse 20 corresponds very well with Luke's horror of the service of mammon, but 21a οὐκ ἔστιν σοι μερίς οὐδὲ κληρος ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ is much less appropriate to the context and well may reflect a pre-Lucan stratum of the tradition. There is a clear echo here of Dt. 14.27 LXX: καὶ ὁ Λευίτης ὁ ἐν ταῖς πόλεσίν σου... οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ μερίς οὐδὲ κληρος μετὰ σοῦ (cf. Dt. 12.12 LXX), which is scarcely apposite in the situation

Luke is describing. Moreover, what can  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  mean here? Since there is no certain occurrence, we contend, of  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  in the weak sense implied by the translation 'in this business' (Tyndale), 'in this matter' (RV), 'in this' (NEB), whatever may be true in the OT of the Heb.  $\gamma\eta\gamma$  (8), it is best to take  $\delta' \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  here in the same sense as in v.14. The meaning of Peter's remark will have been: just as the Levite had no part or share in the land of Canaan, so you, Simon, have no title to have anything to do with the Christian Gospel. Peter will thus, as Schille argues (A.1.(1): Schille, 1966, p. 74), have been refusing to admit Simon to baptism. It is possible, though, that there is more to it than that. The word  $\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\omicron\varsigma$  reminds us of Acts 1.17, where Judas' place among the Twelve, shortly to be filled by Matthias, is described by the use of this same word. This lends some plausibility to England's theory (A.2: England, 1940, pp.26, 40) that Simon had sought to place himself at the head of the Samaritan Christian community, as an equal of Peter and John. We are therefore inclined to see in the words attributed to Peter a refusal to grant Simon either membership ( $\mu\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ ) or office ( $\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\omicron\varsigma$ ) in the Christian Church.

We are led by these considerations to believe that the Peter tradition of the evangelization of Samaria did not relate the conversion or baptism of Simon. Rather it will have represented Simon as trying to infiltrate the Christian community for unworthy ends, and being repelled by Peter.

Verse 20, with its typical Lucan attitude to mammon, we do not believe to have derived from the oral tradition; nor v. 24, for reasons given below. Verses 21 -23 may, however, may have been

taken by Luke pretty well word for word from the tradition. The tradition will have related how Peter told Simon firmly (but not violently, as in the Lucan verse 20) that he could not at present become a Christian because his motivation was wrong (8. 21b); but that if he repented of his present disposition, the situation would be different. Peter implies the possibility of repentance by echoing Ps. 78. 37LXX ἡ δὲ καρδία αὐτῶν (sc. the Israelites') οὐκ ἐύθετα μετ' αὐτῶν, which continues 'yet he (God) wiped out their guilt, and did not smother his own natural affection'. Verse 23, especially if interpreted as a prediction, might seem not to fit in with this view. We would argue, however, that a prediction would surely call for the use of ἔσεσθαι, or μέλλειν εἶναι, rather than of εἶναι, and further that the context, and the use of the particle γάρ indicate that the function of this verse is to give grounds for believing that Simon may reform rather than to predict his coming to grief (or his becoming a poison in the Church) and his servitude to sin. In fact, σύνδεσμος ἀδικίας does not mean 'fetters of sin' (NEB): it is a quotation from Is. 58.6 and means 'fetters unjustly imposed', while χολή and πικρία refer to anguish incurred at another's hands (in Dt. 29. 17 LXX an idolater is a ῥίζα ἧν ὁ φύουσα ἐν χολῇ καὶ πικρίᾳ, a root whence grows gall and wormwood, and in Lam. 3.15 & 19 the innocent, afflicted man describes his sufferings as χολή and πικρία). The meaning of Acts 8.23 is thus: 'I see that you are suffering wormwood and gall, through being unjustly fettered (by Satan)'. (9)

In verse 24 Simon asks Peter and John to pray for him that the things predicted for him may not come to pass. We have argued that nothing was predicted in vv. 21-23, so the reference will be back to the Lucan verse 20, and 24 will itself be Lucan. Luke is here perhaps deliberately echoing Lk. 22. 31, 32 where Jesus, after saying that Satan has claimed the disciples that he might sift them like wheat adds ἐγὼ δὲ ἐδεήθην παρὰ σοῦ ἵνα μὴ ἐκλίνῃ ἡ πίστις σου (10) Perhaps Luke intends us to understand that Jesus' prayer for Peter is to teach Peter himself to share in Jesus' work of intercession by his praying in turn for Simon. Since for Luke Simon was a baptized Christian (of sorts) it is even possible, as said earlier, that what Peter does for Simon is seen by Luke as part of his vocation to support his brethren (Lk. 22.32).

If our interpretation of all this is correct, it follows that neither the oral tradition nor Luke knew of any subsequent anti-Christian, heretical, or Gnostic movement associated with the name of Simon. Drane, who argues that 'it is difficult to think that Luke was unaware of the traditions concerning Simon as the originator of the Gnostic heresy' (A.1.(1): Drane, 1975, p. 137), and thinks that Luke has 'deliberately omitted the details in order that Simon may be seen as a sincere, if somewhat confused, believer in the Christian message' (*ibid.*), so as to present the primitive church as a unified movement smoothly extending outwards from Judaea to Samaria and then to the gentile world, makes an unwarranted assumption of the antiquity of the traditions; also of the identity of the Simon of Acts 8 with Simon of Gitta.

(vii) Recapitulation

Our researches have suggested that Luke took Simon to be a member of the Samaritan religion, living in an unnamed town in Samaria, who had illusions of grandeur and was hailed as divine by his admirers. When Philip visited Samaria, Simon (according to Luke) formed a superficial attachment to Christianity and was baptized. Later, Peter and John came to bestow the gift of the Spirit and Simon tried to buy from them the wherewithal to do this, only to be vehemently reproved by Peter, who, however, saw it to be possible that Simon might repent. Simon asked for Peter's prayers (and burst into tears of repentance: D).

Thus far Luke. Behind Luke we have detected the presence of two oral traditions, of which the one related Simon's baptism by Philip, the second Peter's refusal to baptize him. The contradiction of the two traditions on whether Simon was baptized Luke resolved by having Peter refuse to Simon not baptism but the power to confer the Spirit.

4. THE DATE OF ACTS AND OF THE ORAL TRADITIONS USED BY ACTS

That it would be an understatement to say that there is no scholarly consensus about the date of Acts will be readily apparent from a glance at some of the dates proposed:

-57 -62+	J.A.T. Robinson (1976)
c. 57 -59	J.M. Wilson
c. 62	F.F. Bruce; J. Munck
c. 64	C.C. Torrey; A.J. Mattill, jr.
c. 66 -70	(or, 80 -85) C.S.C. Williams

c. 66 -70	T.W. Manson
pre 70	R.B. Rackham
70 -90	R.P.C. Hanson
75 -100	C.H. Talbert
80 -85	Sir W.M.Ramsay; R.J. Dillon & J.A. Fitzmyer; E. Trocmé
80 -90	N. Perrin; G.W.H. Lampe; O. Bauernfeind; E.J. Goodspeed; W.G. Kümmel; M. Goguel; W. Neil
80 -100	H. Conzelmann
85 -90	R. H. Fuller
pre 90	F.J. Foakes-Jackson
c. 90	M. Dibelius; S.J. England; E. Haenchen
early 2nd c.	A. Jülicher; K. Beyschlag
115 -30	J.C. O'Neill

For our part we favour a date between 66 and 70. Acts 23.3 seems to us to imply a knowledge of the violent death of Ananias ben Nebedaeus, which occurred in A.D. 66. Acts 20. 25, 38 (Paul's farewell for ever to the elders of Ephesus) seems to imply that Paul, whose death is assigned to either 64 or 67, was no longer alive at the time of writing. On the other hand, Acts (whatever may be true of the Gospel of Luke, - in its present form) contains no reference to the Fall of Jerusalem and, like Stephen Williams (A.1.(1): Williams, 1971, p. 15), we believe that if the Fall had already occurred Luke's silence on the subject would be 'almost incomprehensible'. Such a date as we have proposed is early

enough to account for the author's having had access to eyewitnesses, for his many examples of accurate local knowledge (11), for his ignorance of a Pauline corpus of letters, and for his perhaps being, as tradition asserts, Luke the beloved physician; on the other hand the proposed date is late enough to explain a certain haziness about the relationship of Hellenists and Hebrews and about the institution of the Seven.

If Acts is correct to place the events of chapter 8 before the conversion of Paul, we may date them roughly to 35 A.D., between 30 and 35 years before the writing of Acts, an interval short enough for some eyewitnesses to have survived. Since we have found a contradiction between the two oral traditions we have posited, on the subject of Simon's baptism, it is unlikely that the two traditions represent oral accounts given to Luke by Philip and Peter themselves, but they will perhaps indirectly derive, at not many removes, from these two men.

## 5. HISTORICITY

If the oral traditions lying behind the Simon Magus pericope are of the antiquity claimed for them above, there must be a presumption in favour of their substantial historicity unless on examination they turn out to be to any considerable extent mutually contradictory, - in which case we should have to suppose there was some degree of deliberate distortion involved.

The existence of two traditions, one having Philip preaching in Samaria and the other Peter, suggests that both men preached there. Luke accepted a mission by both to Samaria but, despite the importance he attached to the apostolic office, gave the temporal



priority to Philip, having him evangelise Samaria and baptize the eunuch before Peter preaches in Samaria and baptizes Cornelius.

We see no reason to suppose that Luke was wrong. Perhaps a plausible reconstruction of what happened is that the Hellenist Philip, being Greek-speaking (on either interpretation of Hellenist, viz. Greek-speaking Jew, or gentile) preached first in the Hellenized towns of Samaria, such as Sebaste, and Peter and John shortly afterwards toured the towns in which the members of the Samaritan religion predominated, such as Shechem (Nablus) (12). It would follow from this that Simon will probably have come into contact with either Philip or Peter but not both, and we must ask in which of the two traditions he has a more firmly established place. We may plausibly suppose that Luke did not realise that the existence of the double tradition was due to the presence of the two groups, Hebrews and Hellenists, in the apostolic Church, and resorted, innocently if mistakenly, to theological conjecture in order to explain it; given his high evaluation of the apostolic office, it is not surprising that the answer he hit upon was that Peter and John must have followed on Philip's heels in order to supply something wanting in what Philip could provide, namely the Spirit. (13)

It did not occur to him that in that case the eunuch also stood in need of the same supplementary benefit. We may infer from all this that in point of historical fact the Spirit was conferred by Philip on all his converts.

In which tradition, then, is the figure of Simon more deeply imbedded? We find it easy to conceive that the story of Philip's successful mission originally contained no mention of Simon and was

later embellished slightly by the addition of the statement that he even converted and baptized Simon (cf. A.1.(1): Haenchen, 1971, p.307). That the Peter tradition, on the other hand, should ever have existed without any mention of Simon we cannot credit. We have seen that the Spirit motif is probably a Lucan addition to the story. If Simon did not belong to the tradition, what did it relate, apart from a bald statement to the effect that Peter and John preached in the villages of Samaria? Furthermore, if one supposed that Simon did not originally belong to this tradition one would have to conclude of the story of Simon's 'simony' and condemnation either that it was a pure invention (for which it would be hard to supply a motive) or that it originally belonged to the Philip tradition, which its Semitic flavour must make very unlikely.

We are therefore of the opinion that Philip preached in the Hellenized parts of Samaria, without meeting Simon. Peter, slightly later, accompanied by John the Apostle (14), evangelized the parts of the province inhabited by members of the Samaritan religion and encountered Simon, who will thus have been a member (of sorts) of the Samaritan sect, and refused him baptism, interpreting a bid by Simon to buy Peter's gifts (of healing, probably) as an indication that he was not ready for baptism.

If, then, the historical Simon belonged to the Samaritan sect, it becomes very likely that the ascription to him of titles such as Someone Great (8.9), Great Power (8.10) and magician (8.9, 11) - details which will derive from the Peter tradition, although Luke has associated them with the mission of Philip - is to be examined in terms of our knowledge of Samaritan theology and belief.

Μαγεύων τὰς μαγείαις (8.9, 11)

Unlike Barjesus (Acts 13.6) Simon is not expressis verbis called a μάγος. The implication is perhaps that, although not a professional magus (an avocation presumably incompatible with adherence to the Samaritan religion) he resorted to practices which a Christian could only think of as magical. What do we know of Samaritan magic in the NT era or thereabouts?

Direct evidence is scanty (the emperor Hadrian's description of Samaritans in Egypt as astrologers, haruspices and imposters (D: Bergmeier, 1974, p. 146 n. 186) may be discounted since he applies the flattering appellation equally to Jews and Christians as well as Samaritans), but in later Samaritan liturgical texts we find an extreme attachment to the divine name, and especially to the Tetragrammaton, taking superstitious forms, and among a people as conservative as the Samaritans such customs will not have sprung up overnight. Macdonald (D: Macdonald, 1959, p. 46) speaks of 'innumerable and incalculable kabbalistic permutations', and Bowman (D: Bowman, 1955, p. 55) mentions in particular the use of the Samaritan broad phylactery, the ש' אר, which was a strip of parchment containing quotations from the Torah that was worn over the arm: he tells us, for instance, of the Keble phylactery which contains the Shema written backwards (a custom that must be very ancient, for it is condemned in TB Berakoth II 3), and 'magic permutations of the alphabet'. The use of the broad phylactery must, Bowman argues, go back to NT times, for Mt. 23,5 can scarcely refer to the ordinary Jewish phylactery made from

small cubes (15). It is probable, therefore, that the Samaritans of the NT era were already addicted to magical practices, and we can tentatively suppose that Simon was a person who attempted to carry out healings and similar feats by the use of spells and incantations based on permutations of texts from the Torah, or of the letters of the Divine Name, a practice which was very common too among the Jews (cf. F: Simon, 1948, ch.XII, pp. 394 -431).

Λέγων εἰναι τινὰ ἐαυτὸν μέγαν (8.9)

In the light of the frequency of the occurrence of 'great' as applied to divine figures, especially in acclamation formulas (cf. F: Peterson, 1926, p. 126 seq.) (  $\eta \iota \eta'$   $\Sigma \iota \tau \alpha$  , said the worshippers of Yahweh (Ps. 48.1);  $\mu \epsilon \gamma \alpha \lambda \eta \eta' \text{'}\text{Α} \rho \tau \epsilon \mu \iota \varsigma \text{'}$   $\text{'Ε} \phi \epsilon \sigma \iota \omega \nu$  (D om.  $\eta'$  ) (Acts 19.34), said the worshippers of Artemis, and the devotees of other gods spoke in a similar way of the object(s) of their worship) it is possible that our text is attesting a claim to divinity made by Simon.

We consider it, however, at least as likely that Simon saw himself as the Prophet-like-Moses. The phrase used of Simon in 8.9 is used of Theudas (without the  $\mu \epsilon \gamma \alpha \nu$  according to the B text ; it is present, though, in D) by Gamaliel I in Acts 5.36. Now, it has been observed to be 'curious' (F: Schürer, I, 1973, p. 457 n.6) that in the speech attributed to Gamaliel 'the followers of Jesus.... are aligned with the followers of Judas the Galilaean and of Theudas, both of whom had clashed with Rome's political interests in Palestine'. But in the case of Theudas it is, we contend, far from

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clear that he was a political activist. What we are told of him by Josephus, AJ. 20. 5.1 (he dates the event to the procuratorship of Cuspius Fadus (A.D. 44 - 46); either Josephus or Luke must be wrong about the date, unless, improbably, there was more than one Theudas), is that he was a would-be prophet who set off to the Jordan with a crowd of followers and intended to divide the waters of the river. Such a Joshuan gesture would suggest that Theudas saw himself as the Prophet-like-Moses of Dt. 18. In that case may not Simon, too, when claiming to be 'a certain great person' have been intending to identify himself with this figure, a figure which had a very special place in Samaritan theology? In that case, we might imagine his reason for wishing to buy miraculous powers from Peter and John to have been that he might reveal the location of the hidden tabernacle, for Jos. AJ. 18. 85 -87 speaks of a Samaritan leader who assembled the Samaritans on Gerizim to reveal to them the whereabouts of the holy vessels supposedly buried in 586 B.C. by Jeremiah (cf. 2 Mac.2).

Ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη / λεγόμενη μεγάλη (8.10)

If we may presume that the tradition is accurate in associating this title (with or without τοῦ Θεοῦ, with or without ἡ καλουμένη / λεγόμενη) with Simon (and its very peculiarity is the best guarantee of its authenticity) then we might seek to explain it in one of several ways:

(1) Noting that δύναμις in the first century and thereabouts was frequently used of the angelic powers, we might, with Morton Smith, suppose that Simon was seen as an incarnation of an angel (A.1.(1):

Smith, 1965), in much the same was that Jacob in the Prayer of Joseph claimed to be an incarnation of Gabriel, or Origen opined that John the Baptist may have been an angel incarnate (Smith, op. cit., p. 14) ( 16). The chief objection to this view is that there is no one angel who could be said to have been regarded as par excellence The Great Angel.

(ii) In the light of the Lydian inscription of the second century A.D. which speaks of the lunar god Men as the *μεγάλη δύναμις τοῦ ἄθανάτου θεοῦ* (vid. e.g., A.2: Beyschlag, p. 111), we might suppose that Simon was regarded as a divine being distinct from yet deriving from the highest God. However, the situation would not be the same, for Men was not thought of as incarnate; also the conception is too pagan to readily commend itself if Simon belonged, as we contend, to the Samaritan religion.

(iii) Since Great, or Greatest, are epithets used of magical powers (vid., e.g., Beyschlag ibid: *μεγίστη δύναμις... ὑπὸ κυρίου θεοῦ τεταγμένη* ) it is possible that Simon was seen as such a power. The idea, however, of an incarnation of a magical power is without precedent.

(iv) Bergmeier's suggestion, after Peterson (D: Bergmeier, 1974, p.151), that underlying the Acts text is an acclamation which had been wrongly understood

Μέγας ὁ Σίμων  
Μεγάλη (ἡ) δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ,

an acclamation which made very modest claims for Simon, is very ingenious but quite unconvincing.

(v) The view of Klostermann that *μεγάλη* conceals an Aramaic

ܡܫܠܐ , 'revealer' (A.1.(1): Klostermann, 1883, pp. 15 -21) cannot be ruled out; in the absence, though, of any evidence that ܡܫܠܐ was used as a title by the Samaritans, it would be hazardous to espouse it.

(vi) In Samaritan literature, Great Power, usually ܡܠܚܐ ܡܫܠܐ is an extremely common periphrasis for the Deity. In the Memar Marqah (probably 4th century A.D.) it occurs on nearly every page at least once (D: Macdonald, 1963), and if the Durran is as early as Kippenberg believes (D: Kippenberg, 1969) it may be attested as early as the second century (the more common view, however, takes the Durran to be from the 4th century or later). It may be hard to credit that Samaritans should have hailed one of their number as an incarnation of the Deity but the followers of Jesus made such a claim for him, and Celsus' prophets who quoted the Bible and therefore, presumably, were not Gentiles, and spoke of a coming judgment which those should escape who believed in them, made such a claim for themselves (Origen CC 7.9), so the idea cannot be dismissed as unthinkable.

It is generally accepted (e.g. F: Grundmann, 1935) that the concept of power in the Hellenistic world was impersonal (whether it referred to specific powers and capacities inherent in plants, objects and animals, or to a cosmic principle) whereas in the Semitic world power was either a capacity of the personal God, or a surrogate for him or a personal emissary of his (an angel). To suppose that Simon was identified by his disciples with the vital

life-force of the universe is to suppose (as England, who does it, admits: A.2: England, p. 36) that they did something without precedent. To suppose, on the other hand, that they identified him with the personal Deity is only to suppose them to have done something very unusual. The evidence would therefore tend, in our view, to support the last theory, namely that Simon's disciples hailed him as an incarnation of Yahweh (17).

### Simon a Gnostic?

Though we have agreed with those scholars who see in the Great Power the Samaritan  $\text{הַגָּדוֹל הַבְּרִי}$ , we must, with Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p.121) protest at the over-hasty assumption of most of them that the pre-existing Samaritan title became instantly Gnostic when applied to Simon. There is, in fact, not a single Gnostic text in which  $\text{μεγάλη / μεγίστη δύναμις}$  refers to an incarnated hypostasis. There is nothing at all in Acts 8 to suggest that Simon was a Gnostic. To Rackham (A.1.(1): Rackham, 1904, p. 119) the presence of the words  $\text{δύναμις}$  and  $\text{ἐπίνοια}$ , both words that played a part in Gnostic systems, suggests 'that Simon may have held the germs of gnostic doctrine', but we may reply that  $\text{δύναμις}$  is common to many systems of thought and  $\text{ἐπίνοια}$  in 8.22 is not used in the special sense that the word, and its cognate  $\text{ἐννοια}$ , had in Gnosticism.

### Which city?

The fact that Caesarea is the only city of Samaria which we know to have contained a Christian community may be used (so A.2: England, 1940, p. 27 n.13) to support the conjecture that it



may have been the location of the Simon episode (as Loisy first suggested: A.1.(1): Loisy, 1920, p.62). The fact that it was also the populace of Caesarea who hailed Herod Agrippa I as a divine incarnation (Acts 12. 20 -23; Jos. AJ. 19. 8.2) might be thought to support this theory, although it will presumably have been the gentile population that divinised Herod Agrippa, whereas it would have been the members of the Samaritan sect in Caesarea who would have divinised Simon. However, it is clear that Luke, from the itinerary that he gives Philip and Peter did not take the city to have been Caesarea, and if Luke, as we have argued, wrote only three decades after the event it is unlikely that, had the venue been the important city of Caesarea, his informants would have referred to it vaguely as 'a city'.

We conclude that the city may have been any Samaritan city with the exception of Caesarea (for the reason given) and Sebaste (because the latter was so thoroughly Hellenized.)

#### Did Simon repent?

A number of scholars (e.g. Easton and Rackham: A.1.(1): Easton, 1955, p. 65; Rackham, 1904, p. 120) have argued that Acts 8.23 shows that the author knew that Simon was not to repent but was to go on to give the Church much trouble. We have, however, seen reasons for believing that the words are not to be construed as a prediction at all.

R.P.C. Hanson also thinks, though for different reasons, that Simon's non-repentance is implied. It appears to him that the

pericope ends rather lamely unless one supposes that Luke knew something of later nefarious episodes in Simon's life and was saying, in effect: 'This man who claimed later so much occult power in rivalry to the Church was converted and baptized by Philip and rebuked by Peter and humbly accepted the rebuke' (A.1.(1): Hanson, 1967, p. 105). But, we ask, would not the 'lameness' of the ending be avoided equally well if Luke knew not of the degeneration but of the reformation of Simon? In this case Luke would be saying, in effect: 'See the mercy of God that such a man, formerly held in servitude to mammon by Satan's wiles, should have been given the grace to seek forgiveness through the intercession of the Apostles'. On Hanson's understanding of things, we cannot conceive why Luke should have included verses 22 and 24 at all. The emphasis on intercession, without any suggestion that the intercession might for some reason be in vain, surely favours the view that Luke was presupposing a knowledge of the repentance of Simon.

If the D text of v. 24 is authentic ('he ceased not to weep'), as it very possibly is, the repentance of Simon is even more clearly presupposed. The picture of Simon weeping copiously will doubtless be connected with that of Peter weeping bitterly in Luke 22. 62 (18). Peter (Luke will be saying) wept penitently after his fall, and when Simon (his namesake) also shed tears of remorse Peter, in exercise of his vocation to 'support' his brethren (Lk. 22.32), assisted him with his prayers, thereby giving him the same sort of

support that Jesus had given to him ('I have prayed for you...', Lk. 22.32).

This evidence for a reformation on Simon's part must make it very likely that the Simon narratives in the Church Fathers either relate to a different Simon (in the NT era Simon was the commonest of all names (19)) or, if they relate to the Simon of Acts, they are badly misinformed about his subsequent style of life.

Having repented, Simon was no doubt eventually baptized, probably by Peter. The assertion of the Philip tradition that he was baptized by Philip is probably an inaccurate recollection of this event.

#### SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Acts 8. 4 -25 draws on two oral traditions of substantial historicity. One recounted the evangelization of the Hellenized parts of Samaria by Philip and his supposed baptism of Simon, the other the evangelization by Peter and John of the parts of Samaria inhabited by the adherents of the Samaritan religion and the refusal of Peter to admit Simon to Church membership (and perhaps Church office). Simon originally belonged to the second tradition only. He was a member (of sorts) of the Samaritan sect who had illusions of grandeur, perhaps seeing himself as the Prophet like Moses; his disciples went further and invested him with divinity. Hoping to augment his magical powers Simon sought to infiltrate the Church but was told by Peter that his dispositions were wrong. Later, assisted by the prayers of the Apostles, he was granted the necessary change of heart.

## Notes

1. 'It has not been possible to define any of the sources used by the author of Acts in a way which will meet with widespread agreement among the critics': A.1. (1): Dupont, 1964, p.166. R.H. Fuller asserts that since the work of Dibelius 'there is general agreement to abandon the quest for written sources in Acts' (F: Fuller, 1963, p. 106); a perusal of recent work on Acts suggests that this is an exaggeration, but opinion is certainly moving in this direction.
2. Luke alone among the Synoptics has Jesus travelling through Samaria (9.52-56; 17.11-19); alone among the evangelists he has the parable of the Good Samaritan (10.30-37) and that of the Ten Lepers of whom the only grateful one was a Samaritan (17.11-19). In Acts the mission to Samaria is next in importance to those to Judaea and Galilee (1.8; 9.31). We find it difficult to square with those texts Arnold Ehrhardt's strange view (A.2: Ehrhardt, 1964, p.166) that Luke exhibits an 'antipathy for the Samaritans'.
3. We may note that Bauernfeind (A.1.(1): Bauernfeind, 1939, p.124) likewise takes verses 9-11 to be from one hand (that of the author of a Vorlage, in his view), and seeks to explain the repetition in rather a different way. The verses contain three motifs, (a) ἡμεῖς τε καὶ αὐτοὶ , (b) the significance of Simon, (c) πρὸς ἑξῆς ; each is deliberately repeated once, in the following order: abc, bca. The purpose of the repetition would on this view be to emphasise the role of Simon. Our explanation appears to us less artificial and forced.
4. J. M. Hull (F: Hull, 1974, p.28) says of 'the very common magical device of pretending to be the god' that it is 'more a mystical and power-producing identification than native trickery'.

5. The same argument will serve to refute G. Ory, who also uses the repetition as evidence that 8.5-11.18 is an interpolation (A.2: Ory, 1956, pp. 9-16) but argues that it was added to Acts after it left the hands of Luke, - in fact c. 170 A.D.

Sorof (A.1.(1); Sorof, 1890, p. 64) also believes that 8.4-40 is redactional: a Ueberarbeiter, he thinks, inserted 8.5-40 from a Peter-source and composed 8.3, 4 himself, clumsily taking  $\delta\iota\gamma\lambda\theta\omicron\nu$  from 11.19 where it had point (referring to the advance to Cyprus and Antioch) whereas in the way he himself used it it had none for Philip and Peter advanced nowhere, but stayed in Judaea and Samaria. Sorof's point about the awkwardness of  $\delta\iota\gamma\lambda\theta\omicron\nu$  and the unusualness of its absolute use is well taken, but it is not convincing. Verses 2 and 3 refer to the Jerusalem Church and 4 reverts to the Dispersed ones of v.1, and in this context  $\delta\iota\gamma\lambda\theta\omicron\nu$  is clearly shorthand for  $\delta\iota\gamma\lambda\theta\omicron\nu \acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma \tau\eta\varsigma \text{'Ιουδαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας}$ , and there is nothing to suggest that anyone other than Luke was responsible for the phrase.

6. Why could Philip not confer the Spirit on the Samaritans? We may here briefly advert to some unsatisfactory attempts to solve this problem. J.D.G. Dunn (F: Dunn, 1970) argues that the reason why, unusually, the gift of the Spirit did not accompany Christian baptism in this instance is that the Samaritans' response and commitment were defective (p. 63): they had been expecting a Taheb and took Philip to be proclaiming Jesus as a Taheb (only). Luke expected the reader to conclude from the expressions  $\delta\iota\mu\omicron\theta\upsilon\kappa\alpha\delta\omicron\nu$  (8.6) and  $\kappa\alpha\tau\epsilon\beta\epsilon\beta\alpha\tau\epsilon\nu \tau\omega \Phi\iota\lambda\acute{\iota}\pi\pi\omega$  (8.12), and from the inconsistency between Simon's baptism and his subsequent conduct, that the campaign of Philip was the result of 'a wave of mass emotion... the herd-instinct

of a popular mass-movement'. (p. 64, 65), leading to 'intellectual assent... rather than commitment to God' (p. 65), with the result that the Samaritans did not really become Christians (p. 66-68). We regard this argument as very tendentious. Since nothing is said about the expectation of a Taheb, how is the reader to know that the Samaritans recognised Jesus only as a Taheb? Why should the reader interpret the Samaritans' conversion as an hysterical outburst while the conversion of those who entered the church at Pentecost was not, presumably, intended to be so interpreted? We agree with Behm, arguing against an earlier attempt (that of Neander in 1847) to find something defective in the Samaritans' response: 'One does not at all receive from Acts 8. 5-13 the impression of a defective reception of the Gospel by the Samaritans, a superficial conversion. On the contrary, the whole account, particularly the statement in v. 14: δέδοκται ἡ Σαμαρεία τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ (cf. 11.1; 17.11), stresses the fact that the Samaritans had all the subjective requirements for the reception of the message of the Christian mission' (F: Behm, 1911, p. 29).

Some scholars (e.g. those listed in F: Dunn, 1970, p. 55 n.1 and n.2; p. 62 and n.31) have taken Luke to mean that Philip did give the Spirit to the Samaritans, but that a second reception of it, or perhaps the reception merely of charismata preparatory to the missionary extension of the church, followed the arrival of Peter and John, but the explicit statement (8. 16) that 'the Spirit had not yet fallen on any of them' must rule all such expedients out of court.

The suggestion in 1860 of Hoffmann that Philip had not been intending to evangelise Samaria, so that when he saw the Samaritans'

faith he only baptised them but made no attempt to confer the Spirit upon them because he did not know whether it was in order to involve the Samaritans in the church's mission, was rightly criticised by Behm (op. cit., pp. 30-32) on the ground that if Philip did not hesitate to baptise<sup>it</sup> it is difficult to see why he should have hesitated to confer the Spirit (p. 32). Behm argued too that Hoffmann did violence to the text by limiting the meaning of the gift of the Spirit to the sensible effects of the Spirit as the means for the missionary work of the church.

Others again have sought to explain the anomaly by supposing that his theological beliefs must have led Luke to alter the tradition he had received. Thus Käsemann has argued that Luke was motivated to modify a tradition which told of a missionary campaign independent of the Jerusalem church because of his desire to show the primitive church to have been unified and directed from Jerusalem (F: Käsemann, 1964, pp. 144-46). A similar position has been adopted by C.H. Talbert (B: Talbert, 1966). As Dunn has written, however (F: Dunn, 1970, p.61), 'as for Luke's alleged desire to preserve an unblemished picture of the Una sancta, we need only point to 8. 26-40; 9. 1-19; 11.19-24; 18. 24-28 to show how ill it accords with Luke's overall presentation'. As for the role of Jerusalem in Luke's thinking, if authorization from Jerusalem was quite as important to Luke as Käsemann supposes (so too Conzelmann: 'the church of Samaria is legal because it is sanctioned by Jerusalem': A.1. (1): Conzelmann, 1972, p. 62), it is hard to see why he was prepared to leave Philip's baptism of the eunuch unauthorized by the Jerusalem church.

7. In place of the B reading in 8. 39, πνεῦμα κυρίου ἥρπασεν τὸν Φίλιππον, the Western text has πνεῦμα ἄγιον ἐπέπεσεν ἐπὶ τὸν εὐνοῦχον, ἄγγελος δὲ κυρίου ἥρπασεν τὸν Φίλιππον. 'The riddle of

the Western Text in Acts', as Klijn says, 'has not yet been solved' (A.1. (i): Klijn, 1969, p. 64), and the originality of the B readings cannot be presumed. If both the B and the Western texts should prove to be Lucan (Blass' theory, which cannot be said to have been totally disproved), it is possible that Luke first wrote the longer, Western reading and in a later version abbreviated it to the B text to avoid having a non-apostle conferring the gift of the Spirit. Alternatively one may suppose, as argued recently by Matthew Black (A.1. (i): Black & Smalley, 1974, p. 123), that the Western reading, supported in this instance by A and cop. G 67, is original, and that the B text is due to a copyist ('it is much more difficult to account for the growth or expansion of the B text out of the shorter form than to explain the latter as a deliberate or accidental shortening of the "Western" reading... in favour of an accidental shortening of the text is the variant of the Harclean which read for  $\piνεῦμα \xi\upsilon\iota\omicron\nu, \piνεῦμα \kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\nu$ . The scribe's eye may have slipped from the first  $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\nu$  to the second and omitted the intervening words'). However, Epp has plausibly explained this Western reading in terms of theological tendencies which, he argues, pervade the Western Acts, especially a tendency to be anti-Judaic and to show the non-Jews in a good light, particularly with reference to the Holy Spirit; thus 8.39 is stressing that the gift of the Spirit is not confined to the Jewish nation. Epp is at pains not to draw 'premature' conclusions about the original text of Acts from the tendencies he has detected in the Western Text (A.1. (i): Epp, 1966, p. ix) but Klijn is surely right in saying that the 'marked theological trends' found by Epp (op. cit.) and Menoud (A.1. (i): Menoud, 1951) 'can only be explained as elements introduced into a text like B' (A.1. (i): Klijn, 1968, p. 104). Not all the Western



readings, however, obviously exhibit these strong theological tendencies: some of those that do not may well be original (vid. infra on 8. 24D).

8. 'In nullo NT loco vocabulum *λόγος* simpliciter rem significat; sed ubique verbum seu orationem, vel etiam rem verbis expressam': A.2: Ketwich, 1845, p. 21). Ketwich aptly renders ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ 'in hac causa Evangelii'. Arndt and Gingrich, however, (F: Arndt & Gingrich, 1971, sv *λόγος* 1a, c) group together several NT occurrences under the connotation 'the subject under discussion, matter, thing generally', viz. Mk 9. 10, Acts 15.6, 19. 38 and our present text, together with two passages where they think it may bear this meaning, Mk 8. 32, Mt 5. 32. In our view in Mk 9. 10 τὸν λόγον ἐκράτησαν means 'they seized upon these words' (so NEB), in Acts 19.38 εἰ...ἔχουσιν, πρὸς τινὰ λόγον means 'if they have a case against anyone' (NEB), in Mk 8. 32 παρηγοῖα τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει means 'he spoke the saying openly' (RV) and in Mt 5.32 παρεκτὸς λόγου πορνείας means 'for any cause other than unchastity'. The only case quoted by Arndt & Gingrich for 'matter' or 'thing' which we find at all plausible is Acts 15. 6, where ἰδεῖν περὶ τοῦ λόγου τούτου could certainly, as they claim, mean 'look into this matter'. But we think it at least as likely that it means 'consider this remark/argument'. (In Phil. 4. 15 εἰς λόγον, though often loosely translated 'in the matter of' is really, as practically all commentators allow, a mercantile metaphor: 'to the account of...').

9. Preuschen (A.1.(1): Preuschen, 1912) saw in σύνδεσμος ἀδικίας an allusion to Hos. 13. 12 LXX συστrophὴν ἀδικίας ἔφραζεν (Hosea mentions Samaria four verses later). A secondary allusion

to this text, in addition to the primary reference to Is. 58. 6, is possible.

10. Lumby, on the other hand, (A.1. (i): Lumby, 1893, p. 103) finds in Simon's plea an echo of Pharaoh's 'entreat the Lord for me', Ex. 8. 8, 28; 9. 28; 10. 17. Such an allusion is unlikely: the verb used in Ex. LXX is (προς)εύχεσθαι, and 'for me' is περὶ ἐμοῦ not δέσθαι and ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ as here.

11. The accuracy of the local knowledge shown will especially support our early dating, of course, if the present reluctance of scholars to believe in written sources for Acts is justified. This accuracy has recently been defended by, among others, Sherwin-White (F: Sherwin-White, 1969, passim) and Munck (A.1. (i): Munck, 1967, pp. XLVIII f.).

12. Since the Gentile population of Samaria will doubtless have been found chiefly in the towns, and the adherents of the Samaritan religion in the countryside, the statement that Peter and John preached in the κώμῃ (Acts 8. 25) offers significant support for our analysis.

13. The Spirit could be conferred, Luke believed, only through an Apostle. We say deliberately 'through an Apostle', not 'through the imposition of the hands of an Apostle' because, pace Easton, (A.1. (i): Easton, 1955, p. 100 ) and others, the notion that Luke believed that the imposition of the hands of an Apostle was always, or even normally, necessary is, as Hull for instance has shown (A.1. (i): Hull, 1967, pp. 101-120), a figment: only twice in Acts, 8.18 (the Samaritans) and 19.6 (the Ephesian disciples) is the giving of the Spirit preceded by the apostolic imposition of hands: it is not mentioned in 2.38 (Pentecost), 9. 17 (Paul: hands are laid on him, but not those of an Apostle, but only those of Ananias) or 10.44

(Cornelius). On the other hand, Hull errs in supposing that repentance, faith in Jesus and readiness to be baptised are normally sufficient conditions for the gift of the Spirit in Luke's theology (op. cit., p. 99): the mediation of an Apostle is also necessary. Apart from the Eleven (2.1) and Paul (9.17) who, as Apostles, appropriately received the Spirit through a direct divine initiative (Ananias was the means of Paul's recovering of his sight, not of his receiving the Spirit: cf. 22. 13), there is no instance, with the possible exception of Apollos, of a man being said to receive the Spirit without Apostolic intervention (8.39 (Western Reading) is not, we have argued (supra, n. 6), authentic).

As for Apollos (Acts 18. 24-28) we think two interpretations of the passage worthy of consideration:

(a) Schweizer's view (A.1 (1): Schweizer, 1955) is that when he arrived in Ephesus Apollos was but a Jewish teacher and Luke misunderstood his source, taking the phrase *κατηχημένος τῷ ᾧ τὸς Κυρίου* therein used of Apollos to mean that he was instructed in the Christian Way. Knowing, however, that Aquila and Priscilla had had to supplement his education, Luke had presumed that there must have been something defective about his faith, and, acting on his own initiative, sought to resolve the matter by attributing to him only John's baptism. Mistaking the meaning of the phrase *ἔειπεν τῷ πνεύματι*, which in the tradition had meant 'fervent in spirit', he took it that somehow Apollos had already received the Spirit. This could explain why Luke did not narrate the re-baptism of Apollos despite the fact that he tells how the Ephesians who similarly had only received John's baptism were re-baptised: he would have assumed that Apollos must have been the recipient of some special divine dispensation of the Spirit which made baptism unnecessary.

(b) If, on the other hand, we suppose that Luke himself meant ζέων τῷ πνεύματι in the sense 'fervent in spirit' (J. C. O'Neill provides good reasons for thinking, contrary to the majority view, that this is its meaning in Rom. 12. 11 (F: O'Neill, 1975, p. 202), an alternative interpretation is possible which avoids the assumption that Luke misunderstood his source and the attribution to him of the invention of 18. 25c. According to this view, Apollos was a Jew who was interested in Jesus and 'taught accurately the facts about Jesus' (18.25b NEEB), but only became a Christian when Aquila and Priscilla took him in hand. Luke did not narrate the re-baptism and reception of the Spirit because he lacked information about the circumstances in which they occurred.

According to view (a), Apollos will have been for Luke such a special case that he can be left out of account; according to (b), Luke will have presumed that at some time Apollos subsequently received baptism and the Spirit, probably in Achaia, and will have taken it for granted (if he gave any time to considering the matter) that it will have been through an Apostle. We incline to accept view (b) rather than (a), for Luke has Cornelius receive baptism after the Spirit has come to him (10. 48), so there is no evident reason why, if Schweizer's view were correct, Apollos should have been thought exempt from the need for baptism; Schweizer's Luke, therefore, since he is not averse to invention, would have created the story of the baptism of Apollos.

One point seems to us abundantly clear. That Luke believed the presence of an Apostle was normally a sine qua non for the reception of the Spirit (for the period of which he was writing, at least) is a conclusion demanded by Acts 8 : as the chapter has left

Luke's hands it requires the reader, if he is to make sense of it, to believe that for Luke there was vested in Peter and John, and not in Philip, the power to confer the Spirit. Whether Luke adopted this view that Apostles alone can confer the Spirit as a result of pondering on the traditions about Samaria, or whether it was already part and parcel of his thinking when he came to write the chapter, we cannot say.

14. We see no good reason for doubting John's involvement. Waitz' reason for eliminating him (A2: Waitz, 1906, p. 352), namely that whereas vv. 14-19 mention two Apostles, vv. 20f. mention only one, is flimsy: it is perfectly natural that Peter alone should have done the speaking, as is recorded too in Acts 3 (Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate).

15. Bowman builds on the earlier work of Moses Gaster (D: Gaster, I, 1925, pp. 387-461: 'Samaritan Phylacteries and Amulets').

16. cf. Gospel of the Hebrews, fragment 1 (F: Hennecke, I, 1963, p. 163): 'When Christ wished to come upon the earth to men, the good Father summoned a mighty power in heaven, which was called Michael, and entrusted Christ to the care thereof. And the power came into the world and it was called Mary, and Christ was in her womb seven months'.

17.  $\text{ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν}$  does not necessarily, any more than  $\text{ὁ κύριος}$ , derive from an  $\text{ἐγώ εἶμι}$  formula: both third and second person formulations can represent a 'community confession' (cf. Mt. 16.16) (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 40) There is no presumption, therefore, that Simon used the title of himself.

18. The authenticity of Lk. 22.62 is not, however, beyond doubt:

it is omitted, probably, by uncial 0171 (4th century) and certainly by some MSS of the *Vetus Itala*.

19. cf. F: Fitzmyer, 1971, pp. 108, 109.

### Chapter 3

#### THE TESTIMONY OF JUSTIN MARTYR

In this chapter we shall analyse the texts in the mid second century Christian writer Justin Martyr which explicitly refer to Simonianism, namely Apol. I 26. 1 -3 and 56. 2 and Dial. 120. 6, to ascertain the reliability of their testimony. We shall also ask whether Apol. I 64 is relevant to our inquiry. First, though, we must seek to discover whether the extant texts of Justin may be supplemented by sections of his lost work against heresies preserved in Irenaeus and other authors.

##### 1. THE LOST 'SYNTAGMA OF ALL THE HERESIES'

In his first Apology, having spoken briefly of Simon, Menander and Marcion as men who, though they went by the name of Christians, were actuated by evil spirits to propagate a false religion, Justin adds that he has composed (1) a treatise (σύνταγμα) of all the heresies that have arisen which he will be happy to give the emperor, to whom the Apology is addressed, sight of (Apol. I 26). Is it, as since the work of R.A. Lipsius has been widely held, possible to reconstruct this Syntagma, in substance at least, from quotations in later authors? The question is clearly of some moment for our purposes, for any such reconstruction if authentic would be an important and very early witness to Simonianism and could legitimately be used to clarify the somewhat cryptic references in Justin's extant writings. It might well, for instance, conclusively show whether or not Justin identified the Simon of whom he speaks in the Apology and the Dialogue with Trypho with the Simon of Acts 8 and whether or not

the Simonianism he was attacking was a form of Gnosticism.

It is pretty generally believed that Irenaeus knew and used Justin's Syntagma (2) and that later writers (Hippolytus, Ps Tertullian, Epiphanius, Philaster) were influenced by it, directly or indirectly. We shall concentrate our attention here on testing the strength of the evidence for the crucial point in the Lipsian case, namely the possibility of disinterring the Syntagma from the text of Irenaeus.

Does Irenaeus directly allude to the Syntagma?

In Adv. Haer. IV. 11.2 Irenaeus writes

καὶ καλῶς ἰουστινῶς ἐν τῷ πρὸς Μαρκίωνα συντάγματι  
φησιν· ὅτι αὐτῷ τῷ Κυρίῳ οὐδ' ἂν ἐπέισθην, ἄλλον  
θεὸν καταγγέλλοντι παρὰ τὸν δημιουργόν

(Greek original quoted by Eusebius HE 4. 18. 9; Eusebius mentions this work also at 4.11. 8 but the words there allegedly quoted from it come in fact from Apol. I. 28). Is this 'Syntagma against Marcion' the same work as the Syntagma of all heresies? If so Irenaeus was clearly well acquainted with the latter work and it must straightway be pronounced a very likely source, though not necessarily the only one, for his information about Simonianism.

Kunze (A.1: Kunze, 1894, p. 36, 37) was inclined to follow Lipsius (A.1.(vi): Lipsius, 1865, p. 58) in identifying the two syntagmata. In the passage in which he refers to his Syntagma of all the heresies (Apol. I 26), observed Kunze, Justin mentions only Simon, Menander and Marcion, a sequence that is to be found again in Apol. I 56 and 58; presumably, thought Kunze, Justin's list will



have culminated in Marcion, his contemporary, and that is why it could have been familiarly known as his Syntagma against Marcion. Doubtless, since it was concerned with 'all the heresies', it will have included more than three, but the others in the list were less likely to be the Valentinians, Basilideans and Saturnilians mentioned in Dial. 35, since these may well have not yet become a major threat at the time he wrote the Syntagma, than the seven Jewish heresies mentioned in Dial. 80, the Sadducees, Genistae, Meristae, Galilaeans, Hellenians, Pharisees and Baptists. Justin will have omitted to list them in the Apology for the excellent reason that this work is addressed to gentiles.

Harnack, who with Hilgenfeld (A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1884, p. 4 n.7, 5 n.7, 13 n.18) had previously believed the two syntagmata to be distinct works, argued in 1921 in his book on Marcion for their identity (F: Harnack, 1921, 6\*, 8\*). Justin in his Apology had, after speaking of Simon and Menander, mentioned only one heretic by name, Marcion. It was therefore likely that although the Syntagma of all heresies will have included Simon, Menander, Marcion (Apol. I 26), the Valentinians, Basilideans and Saturnilians (Dial. 35), Marcion will have been the principal object of its attack and hence it will aptly have been styled the Syntagma against Marcion for short. Harnack also argued that the fact that the order in which the heretics are listed in Dial. 35 (Marcionites, Valentinians, Basilideans, Saturnilians) will reflect the order of the Syntagma of all heresies, and the fact that Irenaeus in a passage that follows hard upon the mention of the Syntagma against Marcion and was doubtless dependent on that work

gives a list of Gnostics reminiscent of the Dial. 35 list (Marcion, Valentinians, Basilides, Carpocrates, Simon: Adv. Haer. IV. 11.3) supports the thesis that the two syntagmata are one.

Of the two reconstructions mentioned of the contents of the Syntagma of all heresies, we prefer Kunze's, for if the Gnostics of Dial. 35 had been included in the Syntagma, as Harnack supposed, they must surely have been such a threat at the time when Justin wrote the first Apology that he would have alluded to them there. In this case, Harnack's second argument collapses. His other argument, used by Kunze too, based on the climactic prominence given to Marcion in the passage of Justin which mentions the Syntagma of all heresies, as well as in Apol. I 56 and 58, is, as Loofs (A.1.(iii): Loofs, 1930, p. 225 n. 4) has indicated, too tendentious: there is no compelling reason to suppose that Marcion dominated the Syntagma of all heresies. If the contents of the Syntagma were as postulated by Kunze, Marcion will have been probably the most recent heretic in the list, and this will sufficiently explain why he is mentioned last in the first Apology.

There is some evidence for distinguishing the syntagmata from each other, for instance, though we attach less weight to it than did Hilgenfeld (A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1884, p. 4, n.7), the fact that Photius clearly distinguishes between them:

ἔστι δὲ αὐτῶ [ῥηουστίων] καὶ ὁ περὶ Θεοῦ μοναρχίας [λόγος]  
καὶ ὁ ἐπιγραφόμενος Φάλητος, καὶ μὲν καὶ κατὰ Μαρκίωνος  
ἀναγκαῖοι λόγοι καὶ ἡ κατὰ πασῶν αἱρέσεων χρήσιμος  
πραγματεία (Bibl. cod. 125)

Jerome similarly seems to believe there were two syntagmata (De viris

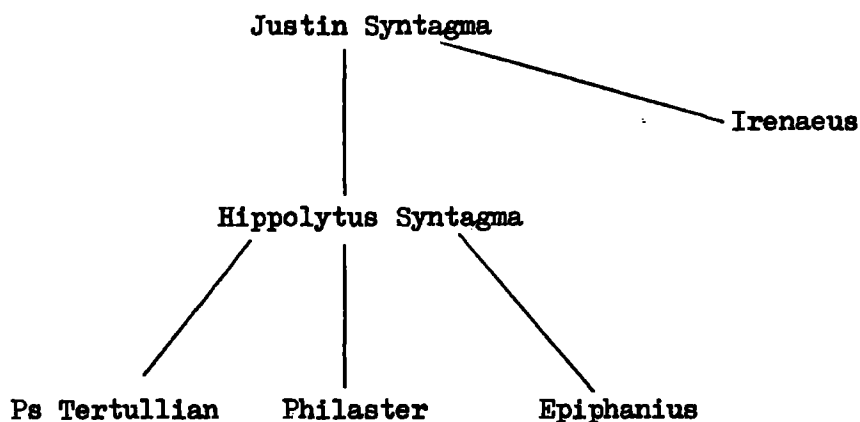
illustr., 23). Both Photius and Jerome, however, give a rather confused account of Justin's works and seem to speak of them from hearsay rather than knowledge.(3)

We conclude that it is uncertain whether there was one syntagma or two, and that the passage in which Irenaeus quotes the Syntagma against Marcion provides no conclusive proof that Irenaeus has access to the Syntagma of all heresies.

Does Irenaeus tacitly draw on the Syntagma of all heresies?

To decide whether Irenaeus draws on the Syntagma of all heresies and, more importantly, whether, if so, the text or at least the substance of it can be recovered from a close study of Irenaeus, we must spend some time looking at the classic presentation of R.A. Lipsius, who answered both questions in the affirmative, and at the important analyses of his work by Harnack and Kunze. It is our view that Lipsius' studies, masterly though they are, have been too uncritically followed and that the weighty objections raised, especially by Kunze, have been overlooked or ignored.

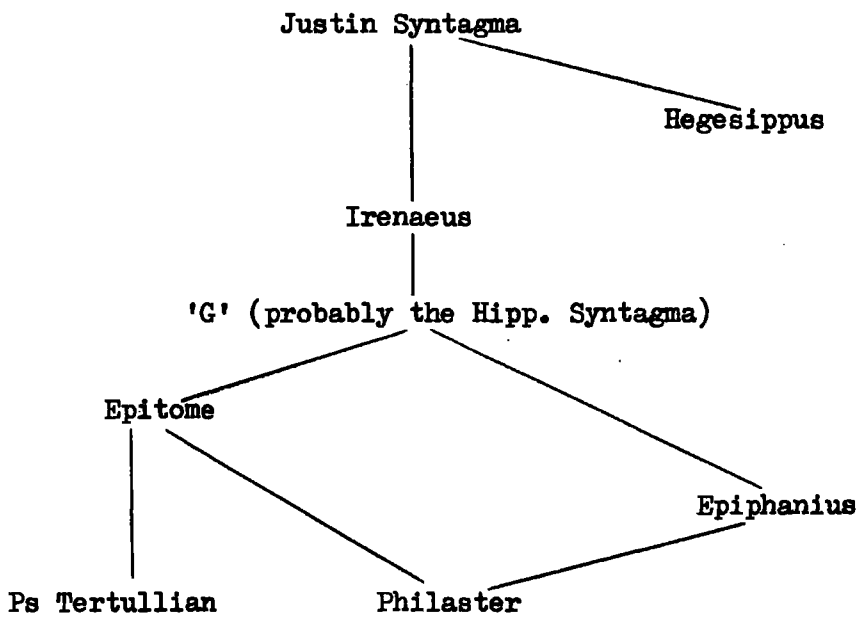
In his epoch-making study of the sources of Epiphanius (A.1.(vi): Lipsius, 1865), R.A. Lipsius pointed to close similarities between the heretic-lists of Irenaeus, Ps Tertullian, Philaster and Epiphanius, and sought to explain them on the hypothesis that Epiphanius, Philaster and Ps Tertullian were all derived from the (lost) Syntagma of Hippolytus, but were not influenced by Irenaeus. The Hippolytus Syntagma and Irenaeus each derived from the Syntagma of Justin:



The case for supposing the Hippolytus Syntagma and Irenaeus to have a common source in the Justin Syntagma was argued at some length. Lipsius contended (to summarise the points most germane to our purpose) that Adv. Haer. I. 15<sup>6</sup> - 25<sup>4</sup> was only loosely related to the rest of Irenaeus' book, being non-Irenaeian in thought and vocabulary and having its own introduction and conclusion, and, inasmuch as it professed an intention of refuting all heresies, it represented a digression from Irenaeus' real purpose, which was to disprove the Valentinian system. This section of Irenaeus listed Hyginus as ninth bishop of Rome, thereby following the Roman numeration attested in the Catalogus Liberianus rather than Irenaeus' usual numeration which made him the eighth; this pointed to a Roman source for this section of Irenaeus. Since Irenaeus was acquainted with the Justin Syntagma against Marcion, which was, thought Lipsius, but the last part of the Syntagma of all heresies, and since the Simon statue story was probably derived from the Justin Syntagma because, Lipsius contended, Irenaeus showed no knowledge of the first Apology, it was likely that I. 15<sup>6</sup> - 25<sup>4</sup> had in substance been lifted by Irenaeus from the Justin Syntagma. (Lipsius, followed by Harnack, further attributed

I:5 and 6 to the same source. It is scarcely relevant to our purpose to pursue their reasons, nor Kunze's reasons for dissenting).

Harnack (A.1: Harnack, 1873 and 1874) was critical inter alia of the arguments advanced by Lipsius for Irenaeus' use of Justin's Syntagma as a source, though his own investigations led him to conclude that the hypothesis itself was not unlikely. His view of the relationship of the heresiological sources, which differed chiefly from that of Lipsius in that he thought that the Hippolytus Syntagma did depend on Irenaeus, may be represented thus:



Harnack argued that Hegesippus (110? - 180?) was dependent on Justin's Syntagma (A.1: Harnack, 1873, p. 36 -41) on the ground that the list of heretics given by Hegesippus (quoted Eus. HE 4. 22) followed the same order as the list given in the Justin Syntagma as

reconstructed by Harnack:

<u>Hegesippus</u>	<u>Justin</u>
Simon	Simon
Cleobius	
Dositheus	
Gorthaeus	
Masbuthaeus	
Menandrians	Menander
Marcionites	Marcion
Carpocratians	
Valentinians	Valentinians
Basilideans	Basilideans
Saturninians	Saturnilians

Since the last three names in the second column are conjectural (we have seen reasons for accepting Kunze's reconstruction; Lipsius' list, incidentally, is different again: Simon, Menander, Saturnilus, Basilides, (Nicolaus,) Carpocrates, Cerinthus, Valentinus, Cerdo, Marcion), and since Lipsius subsequently produced strong arguments against Hegesippus' dependence on Justin (A.1: Lipsius, 1875, p. 5 -36), as that the list of Jewish sects given by Justin, Dial. 80, would not be likely to be at total variance with that of Hegesippus if Harnack were right, we are not disposed to delay over this matter.

Lipsius returned to the defence of his own view in 1875 (A.1: Lipsius, 1875). Although he introduced some modifications to his former position (he was no longer so sure that one could prove the

Hyginus tradition Roman, and was now prepared to believe that Irenaeus showed knowledge of Justin's first Apology, so that the statue story might have come from there rather than directly from the Syntagma), the substance of the argumentation remained unaltered.

Kunze argued (A.1: Kunze, 1894) against Lipsius, that Adv. Haer. I: 15<sup>6</sup> - 25<sup>4</sup> was not loosely related to its context, was not non-Irenaeian in thought or vocabulary, and did not profess a different aim from the rest of the book. That it was influenced by the Justin Syntagma was quite likely, but it was certainly far from being a direct quotation therefrom. Indeed it was quite impossible to derive from it any indications as to what the Syntagma had contained. Since Kunze's view, with which we find ourselves in substantial agreement, is not the majority position and since his arguments have not been accorded the attention they deserve, we shall devote some space here to examining the case he constructs against Lipsius, and in part against Harnack.

Lipsius had argued that it was surprising, if this section of Irenaeus' first book formed an integral part of it, that it should have had its own preface, I: 15<sup>6</sup>, and epilogue, I: 25<sup>4</sup> (Lipsius, 1865, p.52). Kunze tried to show that not only the corpus of this section but even the preface and epilogue were thoroughly Irenaeian in thought and language. The reference in the preface to Bythos was characteristic of the author (cf. Adv. Haer. II.4.4; 6.3; 7.2; 16.2 ; 20.1.), the address to the reader in the singular was paralleled by I: 19; 8.10 ; 10.1 &c., the work having been written as a result of the request of a friend, and Irenaeian parallels could easily be adduced

for such phrases as 'necessarium arbitrati sumus', 'varia', 'multifaria', 'propositum est', 'contradicere', 'secundum ipsorum charactera', 'referre', 'defluxerunt', and 'fructus'. Similarly in the epilogue terms such as 'impudorate' and 'adulterare veritatem' were pointers to Irenaeus authorship.

As for the thought expressed in the preface and epilogue, Lipsius' argument that Irenaeus himself was interested only in refuting Valentinianism, so that the reference in the preface to the intention to refute all heresies must derive from a source, Kunze had no difficulty in showing to be very unconvincing (as indeed Harnack had already done: A.1: Harnack 1873, p. 42): the very title of Irenaeus' work, his explicit words in I. 5. 4 (though as we have seen Lipsius thought this passage too came from the Syntagma) as also in I. 29 and IV praef. 1, and indeed the attention he in fact pays to non-Valentinian heresies, showed that from the start Irenaeus meant his work to serve as a refutation of all heresies. If he concentrated a seemingly disproportionate amount of time on Valentinianism, this was explicable from his statement that he regarded that system as a 'recapitulation omnium haereticorum' (IV praef. 1.), so that to refute them was to refute all (Kunze, p. 13-15) (4).

Having shown that preface and epilogue are characteristically Irenaeus, Kunze had no difficulty in doing the same for the corpus of I. 15<sup>6</sup> - 25<sup>4</sup> and the argument of Harnack (1873, p. 43) that the treatment of the heretics there considered is so summary that Irenaeus can only be making excerpts from a source, he satisfactorily



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rebutted by arguing (p. 19) that Irenaeus' policy was not to give a full account of all heresies, only to indicate their points of divergence from the 'recapitulatio', Valentinianism.

Harnack, following Lipsius, had argued (1873, p. 51) that the picture of Simon as the 'fons et origo' of heresy could scarcely be original to Irenaeus since it was difficult to see how he could have regarded the Ebionites as cast in the Simonian mould, and therefore that the notion was derived from Justin, who in the first Apology expresses a view of which this sounds like an echo:

πάντες οἱ ἐκ τούτων ὁρμύμενοι...Χριστιανοὶ καλοῦνται  
(Apol. I 26). In fact what Justin says was, Kunze urged, far removed from the Irenaeian picture of the heretics as forming a sort of anti-church which broke away from the Apostles in the time of Simon, an anti-church which had a sort of apostolic succession like the Church inasmuch as they were the spiritual progeny of Simon and received their 'recapitulatio' in Valentinianism (Kunze, p. 38, 39). Irenaeus' picture was dependent on the idea of the apostolic succession, a notion unattested in Justin. Justin in his extant works did not treat all heretics as successors of Simon: he said this of Menander, certainly, whom he asserted to have been a disciple of Simon, but not of Marcion, whose link with Simon was only that, like all heretics (Apol. I 26), he owed his success to demonic forces.

As for the argument about Hyginus, who in I. 24 is described as ninth from the Apostles whereas in III. 3. 3, 4. 2 he is the eighth, which Lipsius had said (1865, p. 56) could be explained only on the supposition that Irenaeus was innocently transcribing details from a source, an argument which Harnack had found unconvincing since at the most it seemed to prove a Roman author for a certain part of the

whole section (Harnack, 1873, p.44), Kunze was prepared to grant (p.23) that the facts might point to Irenaeus' reliance here on a peculiar source (not necessarily the Justin Syntagma) for his information. However, the language of the sentence was thoroughly Irenaeian (cf. III 3. 3), and whereas it was easy to see why the Liberian catalogue (345 A.D.) came to count Hyginus as the ninth bishop through taking Cletus and Anacletus as two men instead of one, such a mistake would be much more remarkable, especially in a Roman source, in the second century. Kunze therefore opined that it was perfectly possible that the text of Irenaeus was corrupt (through confusion of the Latin H with the Greek Θ) or that Irenaeus' memory had played him false.

We may finally mention a few further arguments used by Kunze to throw doubt on the theory of a close link between the Justin Syntagma and Irenaeus. Though Justin's heretic-list, in his extant works, began like Irenaeus' with Simon and Menander, thereafter it diverged (p. 38); Justin's Saturnilus was called by Irenaeus Saturninus (*ibid.*); the birth-places of Simon and Menander, given by Justin in Apol. I 26, were not mentioned by Irenaeus (*ibid.*); if Justin's Syntagma had been the comprehensive list of (Christian) heretics supposed by Lipsius and Harnack, it would be difficult to explain why such an important work had been allowed to fall into oblivion (p. 40). Since, on his view, the Syntagma of all heresies and the Syntagma against Marcion were one and the same, and since Irenaeus expressly quotes the Syntagma against Marcion, Kunze obviously could not dispute Irenaeus' reliance on the Justin Syntagma

of all heresies, but he argued that Irenaeus used not one source but many, especially the writings of the heretics themselves (cf. I. 16.3 'ex ipsis assertionibus eorum' (the Simonians); 20. 2, 3; 28.9.) (p. 33). 'Quid Irenaeus Justino debeat', he wrote (p. 40), 'diiudicari non iam potest'.

Since we are not persuaded that the two syntagmata are to be identified with each other, we are not even able to feel sure that Irenaeus had any acquaintance with the Syntagma of all heresies, though doubtless there is an inherent probability that he did. In any case, Kunze's arguments show that Irenaeus cannot be quoting Justin wholesale, nor can Justin's lost work be reconstructed, in whole or in part, from Irenaeus.

## 2. JUSTIN AND ACTS

Was Justin acquainted with the text of canonical Acts? On this question, which is of some moment for an evaluation of his testimony about Simon and Simonianism, scholars are not of one mind. The majority view is that Justin did know Acts: scholars taking up this position include L.W. Barnard, F.F. Bruce, H. Chadwick, B.L. Gildersleeve, E.J. Goodspeed, E. Haenchen, A. Jülicher, E.F. Osborn, J.C.T. Otto, F. Overbeck, G.T. Purves and T. Zahn; altogether they muster 27 possible parallels between Justin and Acts, of (in our view) varying degrees of plausibility. Prof. John Knox is one of the smaller number of scholars who deny Justin's use of Acts ('the fact that Justin...apparently made no use at all of Acts suggests that the composition of this work may possibly have been in progress in A.D. 150': F: Knox, 1942, p. 136 n.29). Eduard Zeller in the last century

maintained that all the parallels adduced were unconvincing since 'there is not one that could not be most naturally accounted for by the accidental accordance of authors belonging to the same age and the same circle, and handling kindred topics' (A.1.(1): 1875, I, p. 139); but this, he thought, did not amount to evidence for Justin's ignorance of Acts, for 'a quotation from this work could not have been expected from him, even had he been acquainted with it' (op. cit., I. p. 138). The latter assertion we find as arbitrary as the contrary assertion of Knox ('one would have expected Justin to make use of Acts in his Apology if he had known it': Knox, ibid.). Harnack boldly laid it down that 'the Acts of the Apostles was hidden in obscurity up to the time of Irenaeus (even taking into account the writings of Justin and the Gnostics)' (F: Harnack, 1928, col. 126), a view endorsed by Dibelius (A.1.(1): 1956, p. 89 and n.5), who saw in parallels between Justin and Acts evidence not of citation but only of 'similarity of material'.

In our view the number of places in Justin in which a direct allusion to Acts is plausibly to be detected may be reduced to nine (Apol. I 10. 1; 40. 6 -9; 49. 6 -9; 50. 8 -10; Dial. 16. 9; 36. 1; 68. 5; 76. 20; 118. 7). Of these nine, three appear to us to be virtually certain:

Apol. I 10. 1

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ δέεσθαι τῇ παρὰ  
ἀνθρώπων ὑλικῇ προσφορᾷ  
παρελήφαμεν τὸν θεόν, αὐτὸν  
παρέχοντα πάντα ὁρῶντες

Acts 17.25

οὐδὲ [ὁ θεός] ὑπὸ χειρῶν  
ἀνθρωπίνων θεραπεύεται  
προσδεχόμενος τινας, αὐτὸς διδοὺς  
πᾶσι ζωὴν καὶ πνοὴν καὶ  
τὰ πάντα

Apol. I 40. 6 -9

...τὴν γεγενημένην Ἡρώδου  
τοῦ βασιλέως Ἰουδαίων καὶ  
αὐτῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ Πιλάτου  
τοῦ ὑμετέρου παρ' αὐτοῖς  
γενομένου ἐπιτρόπου σὺν τοῖς  
αὐτοῦ στρατιώταις  
κατὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ  
συνέλευσιν  
(proceeds to quote Ps 2)

Dial. 118. 7

κριτῆς ζώντων καὶ  
νεκρῶν ἀπάντων αὐτὸς  
οὗτος ὁ Χριστός

Acts 4. 27

συνήχθησαν γὰρ ἐπ' ἀληθείας  
ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ ἐπὶ τὸν  
ἅγιον παῖδα σου Ἰησοῦν, ὃν  
ἔχρισας, Ἡρώδης τε καὶ Πόντιος  
Πιλάτος σὺν ἑστέσιν καὶ  
λαοῖς Ἰσραὴλ

(immediately preceded by  
quotation from Ps 2)

Acts 10.42

ὁ ὠρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ  
κριτῆς ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν

(1 Pet. 4.5 and 2 Tim. 4.1

contain the same idea, but

use the verb κρίνω / κρίνεν

instead of the noun κριτής ).

Justin's references to Acts are all by way of being echoes rather than quotations. He had perhaps no copy of Acts to hand as he wrote and took no steps to consult one, for his position as an apologist did not make this necessary, Acts not having the importance for his purpose of the Old Testament or the Gospels. He had, we believe, a considerable acquaintance with the text of Acts and, consciously or unconsciously, phrases from that book, stored up in his memory, found their way into his writings.

### 3. JUSTIN'S SOURCES

The scholar who has gone furthest into the source analysis of Justin's Simonian references is Karlmann Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 10). Seeking to show that Justin was drawing on two sources, directly on an ecclesiastical and indirectly on a Simonian source, he has pointed out that Helena is absent from the Rome legend; that Apol. I 56 & 26.3 have Simon being worshipped by the populace of Rome, including the Senate, whereas I 26. 2 has him being worshipped by nearly all the Samaritans or Samaritans but few of other nationalities; that in I 26 there is a 'surprising' change of subject from the third person singular (passive) to the third person plural (active) (...ἐνομιζέθη ... προσκυνοῦσι ... λέγουσιν ) accompanied, he suggests, by a change from the legendary to the mythological genre. Beyschlag has further suggested (ibid.) that Apol. I 26 reflects the influence of Acts 8 in that both texts have Simon appearing in a town, doing wonderful deeds and being divinised by the people.

Beyschlag deserves our thanks for one thing at least, for pointing out again the contradiction (already noted long ago by Van Dale: A.1.(ii): Dale, 1700, p. 584 -85) between the statement that few except Samari(t)ans worshipped Simon and the assertion that the Romans were so impressed by him as to erect a statue to him as to a god. If one must have a Simonian and one a Christian provenance, we would take the first to be the Christian one, but we can no less easily conceive of both as deriving from Christian circles. We shall seek later to explain how the contradiction came about. As for

Beyschlag's other points, we find them singularly unconvincing: his remark about the 'surprising' change of person shows only that he is too easily surprised, and his suggestion that the statement 'in Rome he was deemed a god and honoured with a statue' is legendary while 'the Samari(t)ans claim him as the first God and worship him...' is mythological seems to us to be quite gratuitous. Beyschlag's source-critical analysis is far too subtle.

As for dependence on Acts, although we have seen reason to believe that Justin had some acquaintance with the text of Acts, we are not persuaded that the Simonian references owe anything to Acts 8. The two passages, though both describe the divinisation of a magician in a city because of his magical deeds, use different terms to tell their stories:

Acts 8

Apol. I 26 & 56

μαγέων

δύναμει ποιήσας μαγικάς

ἐξιστάνων

ἐξήπάτησαν ... κατεπλήξατο

ἡ δύναμις μεγάλη

θεὸν νομισθῆναι ... τιμηθῆναι

Though an indirect influence of Acts 8 on the tradition before it reached Justin cannot be ruled out, Justin himself seems not to be thinking of Acts 8 at all.

This conclusion is of some considerable significance, for it strongly suggests that for Justin Simon of Gitta was a different person from the Simon of Acts. Had he identified the two, we should have expected him to mention the title Great Power. Indeed, given his

desire to discredit Simon of Gitta in the eyes of the Romans, the absence of any reference to 'simony' or to Simon's being rebuked by Peter is again powerful evidence that Justin thought there were two Simons of Samaria. We find ourselves here very much of a mind with Merrill.

#### 4. JUSTIN AND THE STATUE OF SIMON

Moving on at last to the content of Justin's Simonian references, we shall in this section attempt to test the credibility of the assertion that a statue was erected to Simon in Rome. The relevant passages are as follows:

Σίμωνα μὲν τινα Σαμαρέα, τὸν ἀπὸ κώμης λεγομένης  
Γιττῶν, ὃς ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου Καίσαρος διὰ τῆς τῶν ἐνεργούν-  
των τέχνης δυνάμει ποιῆσαι μαγικὰς ἐν τῇ πόλει  
ὑμῶν βασιλίδι, Ῥώμῃ θεὸς ἐνομίσθη καὶ ἀνδριάντι παρ' ὑμῶν  
ὡς θεὸς τετίμηται, ὃς ἀνδριὰς ἀνεγέγερται ἐν τῷ Τίβερι  
ποταμῷ μετὰ τῶν δύο γεφυρῶν, ἔχων ἐπιγραφὴν  
Ῥωμαϊκὴν ταύτην · SIMONI DEO SANCTO

Apol. I 26. 2

καὶ γὰρ παρ' ὑμῶν, ὡς προέφηκεν, ἐν τῇ βασιλίδι Ῥώμῃ  
ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου Καίσαρος γενομένου ὁ Σίμων καὶ τὴν  
Ἱερὰν Σύγκλητον καὶ τὸν Δῆμον Ῥωμαίων εἰς  
τοσοῦτο κατεπλήξατο, ὡς θεὸν νομισθῆναι καὶ  
ἀνδριάντι, ὡς τοὺς ἄλλους παρ' ὑμῶν τιμωμένους θεούς,  
τιμηθῆναι... τὸν ἀνδριάντα, εἰ βούλεσθε, καθελεῖν

Apol. I 56



The substance of Justin's assertions is to be found also in Irenaeus Adv. Haer. I.16. 1, Eusebius HE 2. 13, Tertullian Apol. 13. 9, Cyril of Jer. Catech. 6. 14, Theodoret Haer. fab. comp. 1, Augustine De Haer. 1. Two only of these Fathers add details absent from Justin: Theodoret says the statue was of bronze or brass, and Augustine says the Romans had a statue also of Helena. A variant of Justin's version is found in Acta Petri 10, which speaks of an inscription 'Simoni Iuveni Deo' (equivalent perhaps to Σίμωνι νέῳ Δεῷ ) on a statue to Simon erected by Marcellus.

When in 1574 an inscribed base of a lost statue to the Sabine god Semo Sancus (Sangus) was discovered 'between the two bridges', that is in the Island of San Bartolomeo, in Rome, a number of scholars concluded that Justin's assertion must have been based on a confusion between Semo and Simon. There was, said Jean Daillé, a scholarly consensus ('inter eruditos constat': A.1.(ii): Daillé, 1656, p. 240) to the effect that Justin had wrongly read 'Semoni' as 'Simoni' and 'Sanco' as 'Sancto'. Perhaps, opined Grabe (A.1.(ii): Grabe, 1700, p.51), the Samaritans in Rome had deceived Justin into believing that a statue to Semo (not that of which the base was discovered in 1574) with the spelling 'Simoni' in place of 'Semoni' (as one sometimes found 'Mercurius' misspelled 'Mircurius' and suchlike) and 'Sancto' instead of 'Sanco' (as in Ovid. Fasti 6.213 [MSS M and m only]), was in fact dedicated to Simon. Alternatively it was suggested by Deyling (A.1.(ii): 1708, p. 142) that Justin may have been ignorant of Latin (though, as Ashton was to point out, it is scarcely credible that someone born in the Roman colony of Flavia Neapolis, as Justin was,

the son probably of a Roman father, judging by his name, Priscus, should have had much difficulty over reading a Latin inscription three words long: A.1.(ii): Ashton, 1768, p.219).

Daillé, it soon became clear, had gone much too far in speaking of a consensus. In fact between 1600 and 1800 rather more scholars accepted the historicity of the statue story than rejected it, or so our investigations suggest. In the nineteenth century the numbers on either side were nicely balanced, and it is only in the last half century that belief in Justin's accuracy has been virtually abandoned, only Edmundson (F: Edmundson, 1913, p. 62), Wilpert, Weinreich and Wilkenhauser (vid. infra) having taken up the cudgels on Justin's behalf.

The case against Justin may be expressed as follows. There is no reason why a magician from Samaria should have been honoured by the Romans, particularly in the principate of Claudius, who insisted on the strict enforcement of the law that no statue should be raised, except by persons who had restored public buildings, without express permission of the Senate (Dio Cassius 60. 25. 2 -3). 'Quis credat', wrote Deyling (ibid.), 'Senatum Romanum hominem, ex vilissima Samaritanorum gente ortum, & praestigiatores, publico solemnique ritu consecrasse?' Moreover, we know from the 1574 discovery that Semo Sancus was worshipped on the Island, and it would be too much of a coincidence if 'Simon Sanctus' should also have been worshipped there. It is difficult to explain why no one apart from Justin appears to have seen the statue, since all the Fathers who mention it seem to be dependent on Justin (so A.2: Schlurick, 1844, p.20). Furthermore, it

is remarkable that Hippolytus, who knew Rome well, does not repeat the statue story.

This is the substance of the case. Other arguments have, over the centuries since 1574 (before that date the reliability of Justin's account had never been doubted, as Thirlby pointed out: A.1.(ii): Thirlby, 1722, p. 39), been advanced, but they are of lighter weight and need not detain us long. Such are the arguments that 'Sanctus' was never used of gods (an assertion which three minutes spent with a Latin lexicon will suffice to disprove), or that statues or divine honours were not bestowed on human beings in their lifetime. On the latter point, there is little to add to what Edward Burton wrote a century and a half ago (5) except to append to the instances he recorded that of Sejanus, who was accorded both a statue and divinity while he yet lived (Tacitus Ann. 4. 74; Suetonius Tib. 48 & 65; Dio Cassius 58. 2 -8). There are a number of other examples of the award of statues but without the mention of the ascription of divinity (e.g. to Flora the courtesan, Plut. Pomp. 2. 2 -4; to Scorpis the charioteer, Martial 4. 67. 5; 5. 25. 10, &c; to Messalina, Tacitus Ann. 11. 38). The argument of Schlurick (A.2: Schlurick, 1844, p. 20) that if a statue to Simon had existed it would have been listed in Publius Victor's book on the regions of Rome will convince few today. The book concerned (of which the author is unknown: the name Publius Victor is a figment of Pomponio Leto's imagination) has come down to us in two recensions, commonly known as the *Curiosum* and the *Notitia*, and was originally written in the principate of Constantine (F: Merrill, 1906, pp. 133, 34; E. Dudley, 1967, p. 28) and the fact that the Constantinian author did

not know of the statue proves nothing: 'maiores nostri', wrote Cicero (in a passage which Schlurick himself refers to), 'statuas multis decreverunt, sepulchra paucis. Sed statuae intereunt tempestate, vi, vetustate' (IX Phil., 6).

The arguments adduced in favour of Justin's story are of very unequal force. Little credit can be attached to the oft-repeated contention of Baronius (A.l.(ii): Baronius, 1612, p. 329) that Justin was 'Romae diu multumque versatus' (6), nor to the attribution to Justin of scrupulous habits of scholarly accuracy (7). The claim that since Justin refers to the involvement of the Senate he knew that statues could only be erected by the Senate, and that since the 1574 inscription mentions an individual as responsible he could not be speaking of this statue, is weak; there is, surely, no incompatibility between the Senate sanctioning and an individual's erecting a statue, and at best the argument could only prove that Justin was not led astray by this particular statue. We would place little reliance, too, on the contention that Theodoret's and Augustine's additions to the Justin account show that these authors are independent of Justin and therefore add weight to his testimony (A.l.(ii): Jenken, 1728, p. 178). Nor does the assertion of F.K. (A.l.(ii): K, 1861, p. 536) that since Semo had a temple on the Quirinal the 1574 inscription must originally have come from there rather than from the Island do much to strengthen the case for Justin. (8.)

The weight of the case advanced by earlier scholars for Justin's reliability which has been not so much refuted as ignored in recent

decades, may be presented in the following terms. Justin would be hardly likely, in an address to the Roman emperor, to have asserted 'nebulonem impurissimum in numerum deorum Romanorum ascriptum fuisse...nisi rem totam compertam exploratamque habuisset' (A.1.(ii): Thirlby, 1722, p. 42) (9). If Justin had in fact been in error, his opponents, such as Crescens the Cynic, would have exposed him to ridicule and later Christian writers would have dropped the allegation (F: Foggini, 1741, p. 254, 257). It has also been urged that Justin was in at least as good a position to know how the Romans of the previous century might have reacted to Simon as are modern scholars (Thirlby, op.cit., p. 40, 41) (10).

As we have seen earlier, a fresh attempt to rescue the credibility of Justin was made in 1938 by Wilpert, who argued that Simon was traditionally represented as a Jove-figure (on the basis of Irenaeus' testimony about the two statues, as well as the sarcophagus which Wilpert rather speculatively identified as Simonian), whereas Semo was thought of as an Apollo-figure (11). The evidence for the latter assertion is the Vatican statue of Semo. Three caveats must be entered against placing too great a reliance on Wilpert's argument. In the first place, it is not totally certain that the Vatican statue concerned is of Semo: H. Jordan has suggested that the inscribed base and the statue may not belong together (E: Preller, 1883, p. 273). Furthermore, without assuming on Justin's part a longer acquaintance with Rome than the evidence justifies, one cannot presume that Justin was familiar with the iconographical

conventions about the representation of Simon and Semo. Finally, whether or not there was a convention of representing Semo as an Apollo figure, his close connections with Jupiter, which have been amply documented (see, e.g. E: Fowler, 1908, p. 135 -45), prevent us from ruling out the possibility that he was also on occasions represented as a Jove-figure.

In the hope of ourself throwing a little more light on the statue question, we propose now to attempt to relate Justin's statement to our present knowledge of the principate of Claudius (41 - 54 A.D.).

The ancient authorities agree that Claudius was suspicious of new-fangled religious sects, cults and customs, including the deification of live emperors ('I do not wish', he wrote, 'to seem vulgar to my contemporaries, and I hold that temples and the like have by all ages been attributed to the gods alone': letter of 41 A.D. to the Alexandrians, quoted in E: Nock, 1934, p. 498; reproduced in full in ET in F: Scramuzza, 1940, p. 64 -66). In 47 as Censor he denounced the encroachment of foreign rites (Nock, op. cit., p. 499). He wished to reinstate aspects of the old Italian cults, and in 47 he therefore revived the college of haruspices (Tac. Ann. 11. 15). He was bitterly opposed to Druidism (Suet. Cl. 25. 5; Plin. NH 29. 54, &c.). He was hostile to magicians and astrologers: Lolliia was forced to commit suicide having been accused of consulting 'astrologers and magicians and the image of the Clarian Apollo' about her chances of marrying Claudius (Tac. Ann. 11. 38); in 52, Furius Scribonianus having consulted astrologers

about the emperor's death, a law 'stringent but ineffectual' was passed, banishing astrologers from Italy (Tac. Ann. 12. 52); Statius Priscus was ruined by Agrippina on an accusation of 'magical superstitious practices' because she wished to acquire his gardens (Tac. Ann. 12. 65). In 45 Claudius removed from the city (ἐτέρωσε ποι μετέθηκε ) the statues (except, presumably, those of deities whom he approved of) that cluttered up the temples and forbade the erection of statues without Senate approval except by builders or repairers of public works (Dio Cassius 60. 5. 5; 60. 25. 2 -3) (12).

However, Claudius' policies were clearly not implemented in a consistent way. We know, for instance, that he allowed a temple to himself to be erected at Camulodunum (E: Nock, 1934, p. 498), and that, probably in 52, he permitted a splendid basilica to be built in Rome, albeit outside the city walls, for the practice of an oriental religion, an oriental religion in fact with strong links with magic, Pythagoreanism, although it was destroyed before the end of his principate (F: Carcopino, 1926, p. 27). Other oriental cults on which he looked with favour were the Eleusinian mysteries and the worship of Isis (Nock, op. cit., p. 499) but these he was able to Romanise and therefore incorporate within the traditional Roman religion, which is unlikely to have been the case with Pythagoreanism.

Momigliano was inclined to question the picture given us by the ancient writers of Claudius the religious conservative, seeing the instances of his reviving ancient Italian customs as all being of a 'trivial nature' (F: Momigliano, 1934, p. 28). Basically, he

thought, the emperor was 'suspicious of all religious movements' (p. 34). Claudius certainly wished to restore ancient ways, but for the political purpose of firing the new institutions that were necessary with the spirit of an earlier age. This desire, however, he held in conjunction with another which weighed more heavily with him, the desire to admit, if not welcome, oriental religious rites and ideas in the interest of imperial unity (p. 27 -28). Momigliano found evidence in two letters sent to Claudius of an interest on his part in oriental lore, superstition and culture (p. 91, 92 n.16).

The evidence of Claudius' treatment of the Jews admirably illustrates the fact that Claudius was either governed by conflicting considerations or was lacking in rationality. In one and the same year, 41, he, on the one hand, re-introduced the traditional immunities that the Jews had enjoyed, which had been withdrawn by Caius Caligula, and, on the other, both forbade the Jews of Rome rights of assembly and, in a letter to the Alexandrians in which he enjoined peaceful co-existence on Greeks and Jews, accused the Jews of 'fomenting a general plague infesting the whole world'. Either in this same year of 41 or more probably in 49, he banished from the imperial city the Jews who 'impulsore Chresto had continually raised tumults' (Suet. Cl. 25; cf. Acts 18. 2) (13). Either we must account this behaviour irrational or we must say that Claudius was pulled in two different directions, whether (following the traditional picture of him) we suppose that he disliked Judaism as an alien religion but was prepared to tolerate it within limits for the sake of public harmony, or (taking our cue from Momigliano) we



take Claudius to have been sympathetically disposed to Judaism as an interesting oriental religion but to have had to repress the Jews when they caused public disturbances. His treatment of the Jews and Samaritans of the Near East is certainly not inconsistent with the second view. While Agrippa I lived (ob. 44 A.D.) the Jews of Judaea fared well, but the procurators who succeeded him handled the population much less tactfully; the imperial government, though, intervened from time to time reversing or modifying their decisions to the advantage of the Jews (e.g. Jos. AJ. 20. 1 ff; 20. 97 ff). The Jews of Alexandria, despite the violence of Claudius' language in speaking of their religion, had their civil rights scrupulously preserved (in 53, Claudius condemned to death Isidore and Lampon, who had been stirring up hatred of the Jews in the city), though they were warned in the letter of 41 'not to bring in or admit Jews who come down the river from Syria or Egypt, a proceeding which will compel me to conceive serious suspicions' (F: Scramuzza, 1940, p. 66). As for Samaria, although we hear of Claudius' putting some Samaritans to death in c. 52, it would be hazardous to conclude from this that he harboured any animus against the Samaritan religion since, if Josephus' version of the story is to be credited, according to which they had massacred some Jews and they bought by bribery the connivance of the procurator Ventidius Cumanus (AJ. 20. 6. 1 - 3 (118 -36); BJ 2. 12. 3 -7 (232 -46), a slightly different account, attributes Cumanus' non-intervention to his pre-occupation with other matters) Claudius' conduct in the matter was only such as one would expect from any emperor, whatever his religious likes or dislikes.

The upshot of all this is, that if Simon had arrived in Rome after the Reform of 45 A.D., it is not safe to suppose that his followers would have been permitted to erect a public statue to him ( it would have required a concession from the Senate, which probably would have been granted only if the emperor had intervened; and the evidence about Claudius' religious views is so ambiguous as to make it very hazardous to postulate such an intervention). However, before 45 the situation was quite different. Had Simon's entourage wished, in the period of Claudius' principate preceding the Reform, to erect a statue to him, there is no doubt that, whether the emperor's own feelings about the new religion had been favourable or unfavourable, they would have been allowed to do so. The total absence of prohibitions on such activities in this period is clear from Dio:

πάντες μὲν γὰρ οἱ ναοὶ πάντα δὲ καὶ τὰ  
 ἄλλα ἔργα καὶ ἀνδριάντων καὶ ἀναθημάτων  
 ἐπεπλήρωτο 60. 5. 5

ἡ πόλις πολλῶν εἰκόνων ἐπληροῦτο (ἐξῆν γὰρ  
 ἀνέδην τοῖς βουλευμένοις ἐν γραφῇ καὶ ἐν χαλκῷ  
 λίθῳ τε δημοσιεύεσθαι 60. 25. 2 -3

Recognition of Simon's claims by the Senate is another matter altogether, and we would suggest that Justin's assertion about this arose because the Christians knew about Claudius' Reform but thought that it came about before Simon's arrival, and they therefore concluded that the statue that tradition spoke of as having been raised to Simon in the principate of Claudius had Senate approval.

The fact that the Island ('Insula Aesculapii', Suetonius calls it, Cl. 25. 2, for there was a temple/hospital of Aesculapius there) was outside the city may be of some significance. If, as we have suggested,

Simon of Gitta arrived in Rome ('quo cuncta undique atrocia aut pudenda confluunt celebranturque': Tac. Ann. 15. 44) with some followers. between 41 and 45, and if his followers proceeded to raise a public statue to him (which, given the passion of the age, of which Dio complains, for raising statues, is very easy to credit), in 45 it would have had to be transferred 'somewhere else', in Dio's phrase. Where more likely than the Island, which, being technically outside the city but conveniently near at hand, is surely just the sort of place to have become in 45 a dump for prohibited statuary? It is relevant to make mention in this connection of some words of Maurice Besnier's in his study of the Tiber Island (E: Besnier, 1902, p. 277 n.1):

L'île recevait justement sur son territoire les cultes que, pour une raison ou pour une autre, on ne voulait pas admettre dans la cité même, à côté des vieux cultes urbains.

If the hypothesis which we have advanced is correct (and, conjectural though it may be, we think it quite as likely as the idea that Justin misread an inscription to Semo) a difficulty no doubt remains over the close similarity of SEMONI SANCO and SIMONI SANCTO. Weinreich (A.1.(ii): Weinreich, 1915, p. 21 -5) (14) and Wikenhauser (A.1.(i): Wikenhauser, 1921, p. 394 -96) have sought to lessen the coincidence by supposing that the Acta Petri preserves the real reading of the Simon inscription (probably Σίμωνι νέῳ θεῷ 'to Simon the new god'), of which the Justin wording would be a corruption due to assimilation to Semo inscriptions, (15). We are reluctant to place much reliance on a document the historical

value of which is at best slight, but we think it quite likely that the original wording has not been correctly preserved by Justin. Alternatively we think it not impossible that the Simonians or the masons employed by them deliberately modelled the Simon inscription on those of Semo. (16)

## 5. SIMON AND HELENA

Justin tells us in Apol. I 26 that nearly all the Σαμαρείταις though few among other nations, confessed and worshipped Simon as τὸν πρῶτον Θεόν and called a certain Helena, his consort, who had previously been a whore, his ἑνώσια πρώτη. In Dial. 20. 6. we are further told that his followers hailed Simon as Θεὸν ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως.

What conception of Simon is implied in the words here used? The term πρῶτος Θεός is used by Justin in Apol. I 60 with reference to the Demiurge (following a common Middle Platonic usage: A.1.(11): Andresen, 1952 -53, p. 190). Since the Demiurge is an important dramatis persona in Gnosticism, this might seem to support the case of those many scholars who argue that the Simonianism of which Justin wrote was already Gnostic. However, there is nothing Gnostic per se about the belief in a Demiurge (the idea occurs frequently outside Gnosticism and is absent from some Gnostic systems) and indeed it is far from obvious that if the Simonians did refer to Simon as ὁ πρῶτος Θεός they will have meant thereby to identify him with the Demiurge, though Justin may well have taken them to do so. We strongly suspect that the Simonians did use the phrase but meant thereby to identify Simon not with the Demiurge but

with the supreme deity, as is strongly implied by the phrase

θεὸν ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως.

We further suggest that for them the supreme deity meant Zeus.

Although the phrase πρῶτος θεός is not commonly found in

extant literature as a title for Zeus, its aptness as a description

of him whom all called 'Father of gods and men' and 'The most high',

and of whom the Orphic hymn said Ζεὺς πρῶτος ἐγένετο, Ζεὺς

ὑψίστος ἀρχικέραυνος (F: Cook, 1925, II. 2, pp. 1027, 28)

is sufficiently evident. Again, did not Plutarch sum up the

philosophy of the old θεολόγοι καὶ ποιηταί in the phrase

Ζεὺς ἀρχή, Ζεὺς μέσσα, Διὸς δ' ἐκ πάντα πέλονται

(Def. Or. 436D)? Did not Xenocrates identify the Monad with the

triad Ζεὺς - Νοῦς - πρῶτος θεός(fr. 15)? Did not Posidonius speak

too of a triad Ζεὺς - φύσις - εἰρηρμένη of whom Zeus was

πρῶτος (fr. 103)? Even more to the point, the use of the

very title ὁ πρῶτος θεός for Zeus is attributed to a Middle

Platonist of the second century, Harpocration, by Proclus (F: Diehl,

1903, p. 304B, C) (17). Dillon has plausibly suggested (E: Dillon,

1977, p. 260) that Harpocration may have been commenting on Plato

Phaedr. 246D: ὁ μὲν δὴ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν οὐρανῷ Ζεὺς, ἐλαυνὼν  
πτηνὸν ἄρμα, πρῶτος πορεύεται, διακοσμῶν πάντα καὶ ἐπιμελούμενος.

We note finally that in Apol. I 64 (vid. infra) Justin refers to

a group of people who say of Athene that she is the πρώτη ἔννοια

(the very title that he says that the Simonians used of Helena)

- of Zeus.

Apol. I 64 further helps to make clear what is meant in I 26

about the Simonian doctrine about Helena, namely that she was Athene incarnate, the goddess who in the old Greek myth had been born from the head of Zeus. The description of Athene as the thought of Zeus was in fact a commonplace of late classical philosophy (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 56) although in no text outside Justin is the actual phrase ἑνωια πρώτη explicitly used of her (18.).

Was the Simonianism that Justin knew, or knew of, Gnostic? We agree with Conzelmann (A.1.(i): Conzelmann, 1972, p. 61), Van Unnik (A.1.(i): Unnik, 1967, p. 242) and Bergmeier (B: Bergmeier, 1972, p. 204) in giving a negative answer here. The attempt of Lüdemann (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 55 - 78) to refute the scholars named is methodologically unsound, since none of the sources quoted for a Gnostic understanding of Helena/Athene/Ennoia and of the prostitution motif can be proved to antedate Apol. I. That the Simonians of Justin's day saw Helena as a figure of the prima salvanda as in later Simonianism is made unlikely by the fact that Justin evidently wished to imply that together with Simon she was venerated as divine by the Simonians. Lüdemann (op. cit., p. 56) will have it that the prostitution reference is to be interpreted as implying that Helena was thought of as having received salvation through Simon, but we would suggest that it need not have any religious import at all. We see no reason to suppose that Justin saw Helena's past career as anything more than an historical circumstance that tended to render ridiculous the divine claims made for her. We see, so far, no reason to doubt the historical existence of Helena, nor the accuracy of the statement about her discreditable past. We would

tentatively put forward the hypothesis that the very incongruity of an ex-prostitute being venerated as a goddess helped to give rise to the Simonian Gnosticism that Irenaeus knew three decades later. Is the notion that Simon of Gitta identified himself with Zeus and having taken as his consort a prostitute (possibly, one may conjecture, a sacral prostitute from a Zeus temple) called her Athene, perhaps because she was the 'brains' of the partnership, so very implausible?

#### 6. SIMONIANS IN APOL. I 64?

In Apol. I 64 Justin refers derisively to those who under demonic influence set up an image of Kore/Persephone 'upon the waters', giving her out to be the daughter of Zeus, thereby, he claims, aping Gen. 1. 1; he says too that they make Athene out to be the  $\pi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\tau\eta \epsilon\upsilon\omega\epsilon\alpha$  of Zeus her father, a ludicrous notion, he thinks. Since we have found the expression  $\pi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\tau\eta \epsilon\upsilon\omega\epsilon\alpha$  used by the Simonians of Helena in Apol. I 26, and since the worship of Kore in Samaria is amply documented ( a statue of her holding a torch and bearing a pomegranate and ears of corn, from the first century B.C. or A.D., was discovered in 1932 at Samaria-Sebaste, and several inscriptions mention her: D: Crowfoot, 1957, pp. 37 and 73 and plates viii. 1 and ix. 1; 1966, p. 66), it is not unreasonable to ask whether the people mentioned in I 64 might not be Simonians. Since Helen of Troy was a daughter of Zeus, like Kore and Athene, and sister of the Dioscuroi, whose worship in Samaria-Sebaste has been established (A.3.(iv): Narkiss, 1932), and since she is even identified with Kore on Alexandrian coins (A.3.(iv): Vincent, 1936, p. 225), it is very tempting to connect I 26 and I 64.

Three considerations must, however, give us pause. Firstly, if Justin means, and this is admittedly uncertain, to attribute a Trinitarian schema (Zeus; Kore; Athene) to the people he is speaking of, the comment of Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 12) that the Simonians are not said elsewhere to have distinguished two female principles within the divinity is very relevant. Again, since, as we have seen, the characterisation of Athene as the thought of Zeus was very widespread, to suppose that Justin could only be referring to Simonians is very hazardous. Thirdly, we see no compelling reason to suppose that Justin must be speaking of one group of people rather than two, in which case the grounds for supposing either of them to be Simonian would be even slighter than if there were but one group.

Such considerations have persuaded us not to invoke this text as evidence in our inquiry.

#### 7. EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF JUSTIN'S TESTIMONY

Our study of the texts of Justin that can safely be regarded as material to our inquiry, suggests to us that he did not necessarily have any contact with Simonians in Rome while he was writing his first Apology there. One tradition he knew about them spoke of their founder, Simon of Gitta, as having arrived in Rome in the principate of Claudius and having so impressed the Roman authorities that the Senate decreed him a statue. This tradition's accuracy must be questioned in one particular, in that the inherent implausibility of Simon's having had such an effect upon the Romans is augmented by the insistence of another tradition known to Justin that Simon had few adherents who were not Samari(t)ans.



We may suppose the former tradition's assertion about Simon's popularity resulted from the fact that it was not realised that the prohibition on the erection of statues without Senate approval came into force only in 45. With this modification, we see no reason to dispute the historicity of the tradition, which fits in quite well with our knowledge of Rome in the time of Claudius (19). We may therefore posit the arrival of Simon of Gitta in Rome between 41 and 45 and suppose that he won such acclaim among them that his fellow-countrymen in Rome raised a statue to him, which was removed to the Tiber Island in 45 as a result of Claudius' reform. The statue, long since lost, will not have been the Semo statue whose inscribed base came to light in 1574, though Justin's account of the wording on it may show the influence, on someone's part, of a/the Semo statue.

Simon of Gitta identified himself with Zeus (so Justin implies, and there are no grounds for thinking him mistaken), a fact which, together with the absence of any traces of the influence of the Samaritan religion, suggests that he was a gentile inhabitant of Samaria (like Justin himself), a Samaritan rather than a Samaritan (20). He can therefore hardly have been the Simon of Acts, and indeed we have seen reasons to think that Justin himself was well aware of this.

The statement that Simon of Gitta had a female consort called Helena, an erstwhile prostitute, whom he called his  $\pi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\tau\eta$   $\epsilon\nu\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$  and thereby, by implication, identified with the goddess Athene, we have also found no good reason for questioning. We think that the idea of calling her Athene/prote ennoia may have been suggested

by the fact that Helen of Troy, like Athene, was a daughter of Zeus and that Helena was the more articulate and brainy member of the team.

Though we find no evidence of direct contact between Justin and Simonians, there were Simonians living in Rome still in Justin's day is strongly suggested by the energy that he devotes to attacking Simonianism and the vehemence of his plea for the Simon statue to be destroyed. That these Simonians were Gnostics, however, we have no reason to suppose.

To anticipate for a moment, we shall have occasion to argue later that the evolution of a non-Gnostic into a Gnostic form of Simonianism resulted from or at least was facilitated by three coincidences, namely (i) that the historical Helena shared the name of a Greek heroine/goddess who had already in Pythagorean circles come to serve as a symbol of the human soul in need of redemption, (ii) that Helena was an ex-prostitute and the Gnostics (or allied groups) spoke of the human soul as a maiden that had come down from heaven to be imprisoned in a brothel, (iii) that Athene, with whom Helena was identified from the beginning of Simonianism, possessed a title that has also an important role in Gnostic thought, viz. Ennoia. That the Gnostification of Simonianism had already begun by 150 is not impossible but it is not for another three decades that, in the pages of Irenaeus, we have proof of its having happened.

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# NOTES

1. Barnikol has, it is true, urged that Justin's words do not imply that he was himself the author of the Syntagma, and that there are grounds for supposing that he was in fact using a work composed earlier by another author (A.1.(ii): Barnikol, 1938). That Justin's words (ἐστὶ δὲ ἡμῶν καὶ σύνταγμα...συντεταγμένον) are patient of such an interpretation, we should not wish to deny. However, the sense in which the words have been understood down the centuries is the more natural one and is to be preferred. Barnikol argues that since the Syntagma spoke only of Simon's exploits in Samaria and knew nothing of any in Rome, this suggests that it may have been an Eastern compilation (p. 17). This is confirmed, he thinks, by its narration of Menander's career in Antioch, and he contends that his knowledge of contemporary Menandrians

(καὶ νῦν εἰσὶ τινες ἂν ἐκείνου τοῦτο ὁμολογοῦντες ) tends to indicate that the author of the Syntagma was resident in Antioch (p. 18). The absence from the Syntagma of references to the 'real' Gnostics, who were active further West, adds further strength, he believes, to his case (p. 19). It will be evident that Barnikol's argument depends entirely on the assumption, an assumption which we shall show to be unsafe, that we are in a position to know what the Syntagma contained.

2. So, for instance, in this century Cerfaux (A.2: Cerfaux, 1962), Prigent (A.1.(ii): Prigent, 1964), Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 10 n.8: 'for a whole century, one of the established presuppositions

of the study of early Christian heretics') and Lüdemann (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 36). Lüdemann, for instance, argues on the strength of this theory that Simon was regarded as the Father of all Heresies in the time of Justin, which we shall see to be a very precarious position.

Prigent, as Lüdemann remarks (op. cit. p. 119 n. 31), did not accomplish what he set out to do. His aim was, on the basis of a study of the Dialogue with Trypho to reconstruct Justin's Syntagma of all heresies (which, p. 66, he identified with the Syntagma against Marcion) but the result was not an elenchos at all but rather a homily, a homily moreover which, says Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 10 n.8), contains no scintilla of reference to the heresies listed in Apol. I 26. Osborn (A.1.(ii): Osborn, 1973, p. 12) found Prigent's work very attractive, believing that the theory satisfactorily explained the puzzling order of the material in the Dialogue. It would seem to us, however, that at the most Prigent has shown that the Dialogue is influenced by a lost work: nothing that he has written makes it in any way plausible that the lost work was the Syntagma since the reconstructed work is clearly of a different literary genre.

3. Martha Müller (F: Müller, 1936, pp. 80, 81) has also rejected the identity of the two syntagmata.

4. Lipsius' argument (A.1.(vi): Lipsius, 1865, p. 54) that the importance given to Marcion in the epilogue, and the promise to give a more extended treatment to that heretic later accorded ill with Irenaeus' supposed lack of interest in and close knowledge of

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Marcionism, had already been refuted by Harnack (1873, p. 42). The promise to confute Marcion in another place ('seorsum') is, Kunze noted, repeated by Irenaeus at III.12.15 ('in altera conscriptione').

5. 'Philostratus informs us, that Apollonius of Tyana...was worshipped in many places as a God, with altars and statues. Athenagoras furnishes an instance still stronger to the point, when he states that the people of Troas erected statues to Nerullinus, a man who lived in those days (Supplicatio 26): and Clement of Alexandria (Strom. 5. 2) mentions another Gnostic, Epiphanes the son of Carpocrates, who was worshipped as a God in Cephallene, with a temple, altar, sacrifice, &c.' (F: Burton, 1829, p. 375 - 76).

6. How well, if at all, did Justin know Rome at the time when he wrote Apol. I?

According to the *Acta martyrii Iustini et sociorum*, the earliest version of which may date from c. 300 A.D. (A.1.(ii): Knopf, 1965, p. 137), Justin at his trial in Rome (c. 165) told the prefect Rusticus, 'I am now living in Rome for the second time' (*Acta*, 3). The simplicity of this document and its freedom from hagiographical features create for it a presumption of historicity (cf. A.1.(ii): Goodenough, 1968, p. 75). In HE 4. 11. 11, Eusebius writes:

ὁ δ' αὐτὸς οὗτος Ἰουστίνος καὶ πρὸς Ἕλληνας ἱκανώτατα  
πυνήσας, καὶ ἐτέρους λόγους ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμετέρας πίστεως  
ἀπολογίαν ἔχοντας βασιλεῖ Ἀντωνίνῳ τῷ δὴ ἐπικληθέντι  
Εὐσεβεῖ καὶ τῇ Ῥωμαίων συγκλήτῳ βουλῇ προσφωνεῖ·  
καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῇ Ῥώμῃ τὰς διατριβὰς ἐποιεῖτο.

Though Rufinus' version seems to show him to have taken Eusebius to mean that most of Justin's life was spent in Rome ('...in urbe etenim Roma maxime consistebat'), the meaning of Eusebius' words is simply that at the time of writing the first Apology Justin was staying in Rome. In the absence of any evidence tending to refute Eusebius (we are not persuaded by the argument of an anonymous reviewer (A.1.(11): Anon, 1841, p. 177) that in Apol. I 26 'Justinus spricht hier offenbar von Rom als einer ihm fremden und ferner Stadt, er spricht aus der Fremde an Fremde ἐν τῇ πόλει ὡς ἐν βασιλίδι, ὡς ἐν ἑξωτερῇ, und nicht von einem Anwesendem erwarten sollte': Justin's words indicate no more than that he was not a Roman), we accept the accuracy of his testimony. The date of this will have been c. 153, for Apol. I 29. 3 refers to Felix governor of Alexandria, who held that post 151 -54 (A.1.(11): Goodenough, 1968, p. 81). Are we to suppose that having written the first Apology Justin left Rome and returned later; or that his first visit preceded the writing of the first Apology and the second lasted from 153 or earlier till Justin's death c. 165?

The Dialogue with Trypho was composed after the first Apology, to which it refers in 120. 5, and since the scene is laid in Ephesus and Justin says that he is expecting to put to sea shortly (142. 2), we must suppose that he went to Ephesus for a time between composing the first Apology and his death (the date of his return is not important for our purposes, but enough time must be assigned to his second visit for him to have composed the second Apology during it, for therein he says that his life is endangered

by Crescens the Cynic; and Tatian, a disciple of Justin (Iren. Adv. Haer. I.26), says that Crescens was a resident in, though not a native of, Rome: Oratio, 19).

These considerations lead us to conclude that Justin's knowledge of Rome at the time when he wrote Apol. I 26 is very uncertain. This was his first visit, but whether he had been there for weeks or years we lack the evidence to say.

7. Even if Justin's extraordinary statement that the Septuagint translation was made when Herod was king (Apol. I 31) is a textual corruption, the fact remains that 'he makes many trivial mistakes' (A.1.(ii): Chadwick, 1964, p. 276), such as his confusion of Zephaniah and Zechariah (Apol. I 35) and his reference to the uncle, rather than father-in-law, of Moses (Apol. I 62).

8. One of the most ingenious, and least convincing, attempts to save Justin's credibility is that of W. Schmid (A.1.(ii): Schmid, 1941), who argued that Justin was not really asserting the existence of a statue to Simon but was, supposedly like Paul in Acts 17, following a literary device of deliberately misinterpreting inscriptions for polemical reasons. The context of Justin's remarks, however, indicates that he was not speaking tongue-in-cheek. To have asked the emperor to raze a statue to Simon which he knew was really dedicated to Semo (even if Simon's disciples identified the two) would have been to expose himself to ridicule without doing anything to refute the claims made for Simon.

9. Thirlby, however, too readily converts the magician of Justin into the libertine of later heresiologists.

10. It is only fair to mention that Thirlby himself seems to have

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been imperfectly persuaded by the arguments he advanced, for he confesses (p. 42) 'patroni me potiusquam iudicis partes egisse negare non possum', and in his own copy of Maran's Justin (now Durham University Library, Routh VI. A. 10) we find a MS note in his hand commenting on the editor's judgment that the idea of an error by Justin was no more than a 'conjectura incerta' (p. lxxxvij): 'all conjectures are uncertain...tho' I have taken some pains to defend Justin, I always thought the conjecture infinitely more likely than his story'.

11. Graenovius had similarly argued (A.1.(ii): Graenovius, 1698, pp. 3, 4) that Simon was represented as Jove and Semo as Hercules. He said too that Justin could scarcely have failed to notice the 'Fidius' which would have occurred in any inscription to Semo (p. 9); further, that Tertullian's reference to the statue (Apol. 13. 8) must be regarded as independent and valuable testimony: he would not merely have echoed Justin without checking to see that the statue still existed, and he at any rate was too good a Latinist and too well acquainted with Rome to have confused Semo Sancus with Simon Sanctus.

12. Claudius was thereby not so much instituting a new law as reinstating a very old one that had fallen into neglect, a law which went back all the way to the decree of the Twelve Tables SEPARATIM NEMO HABESSIT DEOS, NEVE NOVOS NEVE ADVENAS NISI PUBLICE ADSCITOS PRIVATIM COLUMTO (Cic. de leg. 2. 8; for instances of application see Livy 4. 30, 25.1, 38. 18, also Tertullian Apol. 5, Adv. Marcionem 1. 18, Ad nat. 1. 10).



13. Scramuzza (op. cit., p. 151) has suggested that those expelled were the leaders of the Jewish Christian community which had broken away from the 'orthodox' Jews. Leon (F: Leon, 1960, p. 25 - 27) similarly limited the expulsion to those Jews who were chiefly involved in Jewish-Christian disturbances. Other scholars take the reference to be to all Jews.

Eisler (F: Eisler, 1929, i. 132 - 33) maintains that 'Chrestus' was Simon Magus, but this is based on nothing but surmise, and the picture of turmoil in the Jewish community because of the Christian Gospel is far easier to credit.

The date 49 A.D. is given for the expulsion by Orosius (fl. 410 A.D.), vii. 6. 15 -16, and is plausible.

14. Weinreich took it for granted that the 1574 inscription belonged to the statue to which Justin referred, even boldly stating 'hodie nemo negat de uno eodem titulo agi et Justinum errasse' (p. 22). Since the 1574 inscription is not dated, he argued (ibid.) that Justin's statement that the Simon statue was erected in the principate of Claudius seemed to show that his account was based on hearsay rather than on personal knowledge of the statue. The existence of inscriptions to Simon he thought could be proved from Irenaeus, who clearly had other sources of information apart from Justin because in addition to the data which could have been gleaned from Justin Irenaeus (I. 16.3) mentions the assimilation of Simon and Helena to Jove and Minerva (ibid.). To our mind, the text of the bishop of Lyons thirty years later can scarcely be used as evidence for the state of affairs in Rome in Justin's day.

15. Acta Petri will have abbreviated the wording of the inscription, which, judging by extant inscriptions to 'new gods', will have read perhaps Σίμωνι (or Σήμωνι) νέω θεῷ ἐπιφανεῖ (Weinreich, pp. 24, 25; Wikenhauser, p. 396) or have concluded with the name of the god to whom Simon was being compared (Wikenhauser, ibid.).

16. However, while the present writer was pondering the question of the Simon statue, his eye was caught by an instance in the pages of Boswell's Johnson, sub anno 1738, of a coincidence far more improbable than would have been the existence on San Bartolomeo, which may have contained any number of statues, of a statue 'Simoni Sancto' not far from another 'Semoni Sanco': in 1738 Johnson began to translate Paul Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent, 'but', says Boswell, 'the design was dropt; for it happened, oddly enough, that another person of the name of Samuel Johnson, Librarian of St. Martin's in the Fields, and curate of that parish, was engaged upon the same undertaking'.

17. Elsewhere Harpocraton calls Zeus 'the second god', which Proclus thinks inconsistent of him. Dillon comes to Harpocraton's defence, suggesting (E: Dillon, 1977, p. 260) that Proclus 'is being less than fair to the complexities of his exposition. What I think we have here is a conflation... of exegeses by Harpocraton of different passages of Plato'. The phrase 'the second god' Dillon thinks Harpocraton may have used in commenting on Cratylus 396 A - C.

18. One may note, however, that Dio Chrysostom's twelfth discourse,

delivered at Olympia in A.D. 97, which is entitled Ὀλυμπικὸς ἡ  
περὶ τῆς πρώτης τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐννοίας and is devoted to the  
theme of an innate conception (ἐννοία ; ἐπίνοια ) of the deity  
common to all men, begins with a reference to Athene, whose wisdom  
it lauds.

19. Any attempt to make out that Justin dates the episode in the  
principate of Claudius because that is when he thinks the events  
of Acts 8 occurred (as in, e.g. , A.2: Meyer, 1923, p. 280)  
founders on the fact that Justin does not identify the two Simons;  
moreover, there is no reason to suppose that Justin would have  
taken the events of Acts 8, which precede the account of Paul's  
conversion, to pertain to the time of Claudius rather than to  
that of Caius Caligula (emperor 37 - 41) or even to that of Tiberius  
(14 - 37).

20. In Justin Σαμαρεὺς has to do service for both Samaritan,  
as in Dial. 120, and Samaritan, as in Apol. I 53.

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## Chapter 4

### THE TESTIMONY OF HEGESIPPUS AND IRENAEUS

#### A. HEGESIPPUS

Of the Church historian Hegesippus, whose testimony we must briefly examine next, very little is known. He was a Jew by birth (Eus. HE 4. 22. 8), and made a journey to Rome in the pontificate of Anicetus (c. 154 -66), taking in Corinth on the way and holding conversations with bishops at the places through which he passed (HE 4. 22. 8). Returning home he wrote the five books of his Hypomnemata, during the pontificate of Eleuther(i)os (c. 175 -89); fragments of this work have been preserved for us by Eusebius. Together with Clement of Rome and Irenaeus (a younger contemporary of his) he was one of the principal architects of the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession (F: Ehrhardt, 1953, pp. 62, 63, 65, 66, 117), and himself compiled at least two succession lists, those of the bishops of Jerusalem and Rome.

In HE 4. 22 Eusebius quotes Hegesippus as saying that the Church was a virgin until the death of James the Just, after which time one Thebouthis, baulked of his design to become bishop of Jerusalem, began to defile her purity. This Thebouthis, Hegesippus says, belonged to 'the seven heresies' (namely, no doubt, the seven Judaic sects that he proceeds to list: Essenes, Galileans, Hemerobaptists, Masbothaeans, Samaritans, Sadducees, Pharisees), from which heresies came Simon, Cleobius, Dositheus, Gorthaeus and the sects named after them, as also the Masbothaeans; from them (the leaders named, or the sects) came in turn the Menandrians,

Marcionites, Carpocratians, Valentinians, Basilideans and Saturnilians.

What bearing has this on our inquiries? Beausobre (A.2: Beausobre, 1731) saw therein evidence that Hegesippus knew that the Simon of Acts was not the Simon that had founded Simonianism: Hegesippus, he thought, showed that the latter was a Jew, not, like the Simon of Acts, a Samaritan; also, since the corruption of the Church did not for Hegesippus begin until the death of James in the 60's of the first century he cannot, Beausobre thought, have identified the Simon of whom he speaks, who must have been roughly a contemporary of Thebouthis, with the Simon who had already been active in Samaria for a long while at the time of Philip's arrival (Acts 8. 11). We do not find this argumentation convincing. It is quite likely that Hegesippus' virgin Church will have been not the universal church but the local church of Jerusalem (see HE 3. 22, where Hegesippus' remark also appears, in a context which strongly suggests this meaning). It is therefore far from clear that Hegesippus took Simon to be contemporary with Thebouthis. Nor is it evident that he took the founder of Simonianism to be strictly a Jew, for his Jewish sects include the Samaritans. Beausobre's argument is therefore invalid.

Can anything at all be inferred from Hegesippus about Simon? A little information may be gleaned about Hegesippus' understanding about Simon's date and background. We may take it that he took Simon, Cleobius, Dositheus, Gorthaeus and the Masbothaeans to antedate the Menandrians, Marcionites, Carpocratians, Valentinians,

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Basilideans and Saturnilians, though it would be unsafe to suppose that he intended to list either the individuals or the sects in chronological order. We conclude from this that he will have thought that Simon lived in either the first or the early second century, which unfortunately does not help us very much. It seems too that for Hegesippus Simon was in a broad sense Jewish or Judaic. However, it is relevant to mention here a suggestion of Stanley Isser (D.1: Isser, 1973, pp. 16 -20). Isser notes:

The passage that tells us that Thebouthis began to corrupt the Church (by teachings) "from the seven sects among the people, from which (sects) he also came", is awkward. The text implies that Thebouthis was a member (of all?) of the Jewish sects, and that the Christian heresies arose from those sects. At least so Eusebius understood the passage. But Eusebius may have been in error (p. 17).

Noting that Marqah (MM III. 6) speaks about 'seven evils' typified by men who falsely claim to be prophets, Isser suggests that the original text of Hegesippus has been corrupted by Eusebius and that it ran something like this:

"Thebouthis...began to corrupt (the Church) among the people by means of the seven evils, from which (evils) he also came. From these (evils) came Simon..Dositheus..."

If we were persuaded that Hegesippus did indeed write 'seven evils', we should have to regard it as less than self-evident that he took

Simon and the others to be Judaic (although the idea of the 'seven evils', since it is attested only in Marqah, may be Samaritan, so it could be argued that all in the list are specifically Samaritan: so Isser, p. 19). But the text as reconstructed by Isser seems to us not a whit less awkward in construction than the unemended version, so we are not disposed to accept it.

Since it seems, then, that Hegesippus took Simon to belong among the seven Judaic sects, it seems likely that he identified Simon of Gitta and the Simon of Acts. There is nothing in the evidence we have examined so far, nor will there be in that to be surveyed later, to suggest that the Simonians were Jewish, so the simplest explanation for Hegesippus' taking them to belong to the 'seven heresies' is that he identified their founder with Simon the Samaritan. He may well have been the first person to have made this identification, and since it is clear that Irenaeus used Hegesippus (reproducing, for instance, his Roman succession list), Hegesippus may well be responsible for misleading Irenaeus and subsequent writers on this point.

### B. IRENAEUS

To the second subject of this Chapter we need to devote much more space since he is a very important witness to Simonianism. In his youth a disciple of Polycarp, Irenaeus hailed from Asia Minor; he visited Rome at least once, and in 177 -78 became bishop of Lyons. His consuming interest was the defeat of Gnosticism, and it is to this fact that we owe the extended treatment of Simonianism that he provided in his *Adversus Haereses*.

1. Ideas first appearing in Irenaeus; their heterogeneity.

We may begin our survey of the account of Simonianism in Irenaeus Adv. Haer. I. 16 (references throughout are to the edition by W.W. Harvey) by listing the chief points at which Irenaeus (who was writing while Eleuther(i)os was bishop of Rome, III. 3.8, i.e. c. 175 -189) departs from or supplements the texts of Justin discussed in our preceding chapter.

(a) Irenaeus (wrongly, in our opinion) connects Simon of Gitta (though he omits mention of his birthplace) with the Simon of Acts 8, quoting part of the Simon Magus pericope. In doing this, he modifies the Lucan account, explicitly attributing bad faith to Simon ('... fidem simulavit...cum adhuc magis non credidisset Deo...', I. 16. 1) and suppresses the request by Simon for the prayers of the apostles, as also the account of his baptism.

(b) The Helena of Irenaeus has the following new characteristics:

- (i) Simon redeemed her from her brothel, which was in Tyre.
- (ii) She was 'mater omnium'.
- (iii) Through her as prote ennoia ('primam mentis ejus conceptionem') he 'mente concepit angelos facere et archangelos'.
- (iv) She 'sprang out' from him ('...exsiliem ex eo').
- (v) She 'cognoscentem quae vult pater ejus, degredi ad inferiora, et generare angelos et potestates, quibus et mundum hunc factum dixit'.
- (vi) The world-creating powers out of 'invidia' held her captive lest she 'recurreret sursum ad suum patrem'.



- (vii) She suffered 'omnem contumeliam' at their hands.
  - (viii) She was put in a human body and 'per saecula veluti de vase in vas transmigraret in altera muliebria corpora'.
  - (ix) She was in Helen of Troy and punished Stesichorus with blindness for cursing her.
  - (x) The brothel constituted the last of a series of humiliations.
  - (xi) She was 'the lost sheep' ('hanc esse perditam ovem').
  - (xii) Men needed to have hope in her, as in Simon.
  - (xiii) She was worshipped by the Simonians under the form of Minerva.
- (c) The Simon of Irenaeus has the following new characteristics:
- (i) 'Docuit semetipsum esse qui inter Judaeos quidem quasi Filius apparuerit, in Samaria autem quasi Pater descenderit, in reliquis vero gentibus quasi Spiritus Sanctus adventaverit.'
  - (ii) He accepted 'vocari se quodcumque eum vocant homines'.
  - (iii) He was the one 'ex quo universae haereses substiterunt'.
  - (iv) He was totally unknown to the world-creating powers.
  - (v) He came 'ad emendationem rerum' because the world-creating powers were mismanaging the universe.

- (vi) He descended 'transfiguratum, et assimilatum Virtutibus, et Potestatibus, et Angelis, ut et in hominibus homo appareret ipse, cum non esset homo; et passum autem in Judaea putatum, cum non esset passus'.
- (vii) He came 'uti eam assumeret primam et liberaret' and to give men salvation 'per suam agnitionem'.
- (viii) 'Secundum ipsius gratiam salvari homines, sed non secundum operas justas'.

(d) Of the Simonians we are told that their priests are libertines who use philtres, exorcisms, incantations, magical practices and the like. They are also said to ignore the prophets and to have writings ('assertiones') which are available for consultation.

(e) Of the world-creating powers we are told that the Simonians believed:

- (i) That they did not wish to be known to be creatures of another.
- (ii) That they contended among themselves for the hegemony.
- (iii) That they spoke through the prophets.
- (iv) That the (OT) moral prescriptions were dictated by them, and the Simonians were therefore free from their observance.

One thing is immediately apparent. The Simonianism described by Irenaeus is scarcely a homogeneous, logically consistent system of thought. Why, we may ask, if Simon were unknown to the powers

did he need to disguise himself as one of them for his descent? Or how is one to reconcile the statement that Simon descended 'ad emendationem rerum', to set the world to rights, with the subsequent statement that for Simonian believers the world is destroyed ('solvi mundum')? Or why is Helena now a goddess who saves those who believe in her and punishes those who defame her and now a humiliated figure in need of salvation? It is our contention that some of the inconsistencies in Simonianism as attested by Irenaeus arise from the difficulties the Simonians had in grafting Christian theologoumena on to pagan theology in order to produce the hybrid pagan-Christian system that early Simonianism in essence was, while others originated later when this early Simonianism (the Simonianism known to Justin) became Gnosticised and a Gnostic Helen-Ennoia myth was superimposed upon the earlier system.

We would tentatively, pending the detailed study that follows, indicate the following points as remnants of a non-Gnostic Simonianism: the description of Simon as 'Deus' and the use of the Trinitarian formula (Simonians in Justin's day, we recall, already called themselves Christians and had presumably already assimilated, or tried to assimilate, Christian ideas), the description of Helena as the 'prima conceptio' of Simon's mind that had sprung out from him and descended (cf. Athene). The assimilation of Helena to Helen of Troy will also have occurred before the system was Gnosticised, for in the Stesichorus episode we have a victorious, powerful Helen, as against the suffering, humiliated Helen of the Gnostic myth. The idea too of Simon coming 'ad emendationem rerum' will also derive from the non-Gnostic Simon-Zeus theology rather

than from Gnostic Simonianism, which was more anti-world than this conception is. The idea of setting aside the OT prophets may also derive from this earlier version of Simonianism, as may the ascription to Simon and Helena of the creation of the world.

The Gnostic myth, we shall argue, saw Simon as the highest cosmic deity who came to earth in human form to liberate the human soul (= Helena), which had been imprisoned by the world-creating powers, who had been produced by Ennoia (Ennoia, like Helen of Troy, occurred both in early Simonianism and in the Gnostic myth from which it subsequently drew). Although the inner logic of the myth should have required the liberation of the soul forthwith, that is not narrated, only the liberation of Helena from a bordello and her accompanying of Simon during his preaching. The historical facts and the logic of the myth are thus imperfectly reconciled.

The fact that the Gnostic myth sat in a very uneasy relationship with the earlier non-Gnostic system sufficiently disproves the common notion, which is as old as Irenaeus ('Simon Samaritanus, ex quo universae haereses (sc. Gnosticae) substiterunt'), that Simonian Gnosis was an archaic form of Gnosticism which paved the way for all the other Gnostic systems. In that case, we should have expected to find Gnostic Simonianism evolving from non-Gnostic by a relatively natural, organic 'development of doctrine', which is by no means the case. Also, as Salmon long ago observed, 'if Simon had been really the inventor of the Gnostic myths, it is not credible that they should pass into so many systems which did not care to retain any memory of his name' (A.2: Salmon, 1887, p. 683).

This argument is even stronger now than when Salmon advanced it, since the number of Gnostic texts available is much greater today than it was ninety years ago.

## 2. Sources.

There are a number of linguistic features in the account which might be pointers to the use of sources.

1. 'Ipsum enim se in totum ignoratum' might be seen as remarkable in that Simon has not been mentioned in the last few lines. However, it must be remembered that the previous three sentences are all in oratio obliqua, governed by 'dicens', of which Simon is the subject.
2. The detention of Ennoia is mentioned twice. However, in the circumstances this is natural enough, for the thought has been interrupted in the meantime by a reference to Simon's relations with the powers.
3. The humiliation of Ennoia and her transmigration from body to body likewise appear twice. Again, however, this can be sufficiently accounted for by the fact that the sequence of thought has been interrupted, in this case by the insertion of a completely different motif (that of Helen and Stesichorus).
4. In I. 16. 3 'igitur horum mystici sacerdotes' might be thought to be strange, inasmuch as 'horum' must refer to the Simonians, while the subject of the previous sentence is not the Simonians but Simon. However, the

'eos qui sunt ejus' of the previous sentence refers to the Simonians, so the 'horum' is natural enough.

5. The only point on which we should place any reliance is the fact that after I. 16. 1, which begins 'Simon enim Samarites' we read in I. 16.2 what sounds very much like a second incipit, 'Simon autem Samaritanus...'. I. 16. 1 is also very hostile to Simon, whereas I. 16.2 is for the most part much less so. We are therefore inclined to think that in I. 16. 2 Irenaeus is drawing on a written source which may well have been Simonian (Irenaeus clearly had access to such: I. 16.3 ad fin.). Or possibly he may be using two sources in I. 16.2, one of which may have presented the non-Gnostic version of the religion (this source could be the Justin Syntagma), the other the Gnosticised version.

For I. 16. 1 there is no sound reason for suspecting the use of sources at all. Irenaeus' identification therein of Simon of Gitta with the Simon of Acts 8 and his modification of the Acts pericope to fit this view will be his own work (under the influence, probably, of Hegesippus).

I. 16. 3, together with the second half of I. 16. 2, is suspected by Lüdemann of being derived from accounts of Basilideans and Carpocratians and having nothing to do with Simonians. We do not share his view (which is examined in detail in the section following) and can see no good reason for supposing that I. 16. 3 rests on written sources of any sort, though for I. 16. 2b we posit

a Grundschrift used by both Basilideans and Simonians.

3. Admissibility as evidence of I. 16. 2b, c ('cum enim male...' onwards), I. 16. 3.

Lüdemann (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, pp. 81 -86) has argued that the parallels which have long been noted between the second half of Irenaeus' account of the Simonians and his accounts of Basilides and the Carpocratians are so close that direct influence must be posited; he further contends that the Simonian account is secondary and that Irenaeus, misled by a reference to a Simon (Simon of Cyrene, actually) in the Basilides account, by the fact that a belief in metempsychosis was common to Simonians and Carpocratians and by his conviction that Simonianism was the 'fons et radix' of heresy, has inadvertently inserted into his Simonian account two passages which have nothing to do with the Simonians.

I. 16. 2b. That there are a number of striking resemblances between this passage and Irenaeus' account of the Basilideans is incontrovertible. Both groups are reported to have represented the world-powers as striving for supreme power and to have had doctrines of the descent of the highest God, of his seeming to suffer at the hands of men, of his ability to transform his appearance at will, of his granting to believers of freedom from the dominion of the world-powers, and of the dictation of the words of the prophets by the world-powers. We note, however, firstly that the two accounts are not verbally very close, secondly that there are major motifs in Irenaeus' account of Basilides (I.19)

absent from his account of the Simonians (e.g. the characterization of the God of the Jews as one of the angels, and the idea that there are 365 worlds), thirdly that the ideas of ἐπανόρθωσις and κατέλυσις are absent from the Basilides account, and lastly that the idea of transfiguration has a different function in the two accounts. One might hope that if one account derived from the other this last point might give one a clue as to which account were the more authentic, but unfortunately the transfiguration motif is equally gauche and contrived in both accounts. In the Simonian account Simon, as we have seen, disguises himself to hide his identity from the powers, who, however, did not know him. In the Basilidean account, the Christ changes bodies with Simon of Cyrene to avoid suffering and death, despite the fact that he is 'virtus incorporalis et Nus innati Patris', and therefore presumably impassible. Both transfigurations are thus otiose. This suggests to us that the two accounts cannot be completely independent (why should Simonians and Basilideans independently have adopted a version of the same pointless motif?), but rather than, with Lüdemann, credit Irenaeus with the rather crude mistake of lighting upon an account of the Basilideans similar to but not identical with the one given in I.19 and taking it to be Simonian because of the presence of the name of Simon of Cyrene in it (which Irenaeus then excised!), we are inclined to suppose that behind both I. 16. 2b and I. 19 there lies a Grundschrift appropriated by both Simonians and Basilideans (or rather, one group of Basilideans: Hippolytus' Basilideans are rather different from Irenaeus'), with the additions suitable for each group. It will, for instance, have



included a reference to the transfiguration of the redeemer, probably a Gnostic borrowing a Christian motif, and the two groups will both have tried, equally artificially, to adapt it to their own system of ideas. If it should be objected that there is an inherent implausibility in the idea of different Gnostic sects sharing sacred texts, then one can only comment that Hippolytus makes the Naassenes quote the Megale Apophasis (Ref.V. 9.5) and Epiphanius speaks of a book called 'The Ascent of Paul' used by more than one Gnostic group (Pan. 38. 2.5), so we have clear examples of this practice being followed, a practice to which Clement Alex. Str. VII. 17 (οἱ τοίνυν τῶν ἁρεβῶν ἀπτόμενοι λόγων ἄλλοις τε ἐξάρχοντες ...) may refer, thinks England (A.2: England 1940, p. 17).

Since Irenaeus' account of Basilidean doctrine is at variance with all other accounts (save those which derive from Irenaeus) one might be tempted to suppose that the truth was the very reverse of what Lüdemann argues for, and that Irenaeus has inadvertently taken an account of Simonian doctrine to be Basilidean. It would be difficult, however, to assign a plausible motif for such a mistake. Also, it is scarcely credible that an account which has no room for Ennoia and makes the redeemer the Son, not the Father, can be second-century Simonian. Our hypothesis of the Grundschrift seems far more probable.

I. 16.2c. We must now comment on the parallels between I. 16. 2c & 3 and Irenaeus' account in I. 20.2 of the Carpocratians. It will be helpful not to consider these passages in isolation but in relation to several others.

## I. 16. 2c

...et ut liberos agere quae  
velint: secundum enim ipsius  
gratiam salvari homines et non  
secundum operas justas. Nec  
enim esse naturaliter operationes  
justas sed ex accidenti;  
quemadmodum posuerunt qui mundi  
fecerunt angeli, per huiusmodi  
praecepta in servitutem  
deducentes homines

## I. 16. 3

igitur horum mystici sacerdotes  
libidinose quidem vivunt, magias  
autem perficiunt, quemadmodum  
potest unusquisque ipsorum.  
Exorcismis et incantationibus  
utuntur. Amatoria quoque et  
agogima, et qui dicuntur paredri  
et oniropompi, et quaecunque sunt  
alia perierga apud eos studiose  
exercentur. Imaginem quoque  
Simonis habent factam ad  
figuram Jovis, et Helenae in  
figuram Minervae

## I. 20. 2,3

...sola enim humana opinione  
negotia mala et bona dicunt...  
per fidem enim et caritatem  
salvari; reliqua vero, indifferentia  
cum sint, secundum opinionem  
hominum quaedam quidem bona,  
quaedam autem mala vocari, cum  
nihil natura malum sit.

## I. 20.2 - 4

artes enim magicas operantur et ipsi,  
et paredros, et oniropompos, et  
reliquas malignationes, dicentes  
se potestatem habere ad dominandum  
jam principibus et fabricatoribus  
huius mundi: non solum autem, sed  
ex his omnibus, quae in eo sunt  
facta...sed vitam quidem luxoriosam,  
sententiam autem impiam ad velamen  
malitiae ipsorum nomine abutuntur...  
imagines, quasdam quidem depictas,  
quasdam autem et de reliqua materia  
fabricatas habent

## I. 19. 3 (Basilideans)

utuntur autem et hi magia, et  
 imaginibus, et incantationibus,  
 et reliqua universa perierga

## I. 23 (Nicolaites)

indiscrete vivunt...nullam  
 differentiam esse docentes  
 in moechando

## I. 26. 2

alii autem rursus a Basilide et  
 Carpocrate occasiones accipientes,  
 indifferenter coitus, et multas  
 nuptias induxerunt...

## I. 7. 4 - 6 (Marcus)

adhuc etiam et amatoria et  
 adlectantia efficit

cf also I. 1.12 and 28.9 (sexual libertinism); I.7.4 and 17  
 (magical practices).

Undoubtedly I. 20.2 and 16.3 resemble each other more closely than either resembles any of the other passages (they have in common the accusation of libertinism, of magical practices, of idolatry and of the use of 'paredri' and 'oniropompi'), but it is clear that for Irenaeus virtually all Gnostics were tarred with the same brush as far as their behaviour was concerned, and we are unpersuaded that I. 16.3 is based on a passage relating to Carpocratians which Irenaeus, led astray by the fact that Carpocratians like Simonians believed in metempsychosis (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, pp. 84 - 88) believed to refer to the Simonians.

It does not follow from this, of course, that Irenaeus' account is necessarily to be regarded as accurate. The anti-Simonian bias of the passage makes it quite clear that it does not depend on

Simonian testimony. Doubtless Irenaeus heard oral reports of the immorality of the Simonians, Basilideans and others from Christians and readily credited them (believing all Gnostics to be lax in their morals except those, like Saturninus, I. 18, who practised a 'ficta continentia'). The similarity of the terms in which he speaks of each group will spring from the fact that each account is Irenaeus' own work, uninfluenced by the use of written sources. Whether Irenaeus' information is likely to have been trustworthy, or whether it is as unreliable as the accounts of Christian cannibalism that circulated among pagans and Jews; is a question we shall return to later.

#### 4. Helena.

We purpose now to examine closely the figure of Helena as described in Irenaeus, looking in particular at possible links with Athene, Isis, the World Soul, Sophia, Helen of Troy and Psyche in order to test the validity of the hypothesis we have formulated, according to which an originally non-Gnostic Helena conceived of as an victorious, creative and salvific deity was amalgamated with Gnostic conceptions of Ennoia and Helen of Troy.

##### (1) Helena and Athene

Whereas in Justin the connection of Helena with Athene is implicit, in Irenaeus it is quite explicit, inasmuch as Irenaeus says that the Simonians worshipped an image of Helena 'in figuram Minervae'. The words 'exsilientem ex eo...' probably also contain an allusion to Athene, of whom Homer, Iliad 4. 74 -79; says:

βῆ δὲ κατ' Ὀλύμπιοις κερήνων ἀΐξασα... καὶ δ' ἔθορ' ἐς μέσσαν.

It is relevant to remind ourselves that Athene was commonly given the title σωτήρ (corresponding to Zeus' title of σωτήρ). It would seem to be likely to be at least partly due to this fact that Simonianism, which in the time of Justin bears no sign of being a religion of salvation, became soteriologically orientated.

Athene is also represented by Heraclitus, author of the *Quaestiones Homericae* (1st c. A.D.), as creator of the world:

δημιουργός ἐστιν πάντων καὶ θεὸς ἐργάνη (25.7),

a fact which may have influenced the attribution to the Simonian Helena of creation of the powers which made the world.

#### (ii) Helena and Isis

Did the Simonians identify Helena with Isis? To Justin's statement that Helena had been a whore, Irenaeus adds that this was in Tyre. This addition is too reminiscent of the tradition (Epiphanius *Ancoratus* 104. 11) that Isis lived in Tyre for ten years as a prostitute (1) for one to be able to be sure that it preserves an historical recollection. If Helena's brothel was in fact in Tyre, this coincidence may itself have occasioned such an identification. On the other hand, there are a number of other considerations which may have caused such an identification, and the Tyrian brothel may be a subsequent borrowing from Isiacism.

What other considerations? We must bear in mind that not only were the early Christian centuries a period of great religious syncretism, but that Isis in particular, whose cult was at its height at this time (F: Witt, 1971, p. 259), was identified with nearly every other goddess: in Apuleius *Met.* XI.5., Isis lists ten

goddesses with whom she is to be identified, and in a famous litany of the early 2nd c. A.D. (Oxyrh. pap. XI no 1380: F: Grenfell and Hunt, 1915, p. 190) this goddess, who elsewhere was frequently given the title *μυριώνυμος* (F: Witt, 1971, p.112), is twice called *πολύωνυμος* (ll. 97, 101) and is in fact invoked under a thousand names and we find therefrom (ll. 111, 12) that in Bithynia she bore the name Helen (cf. F: Chapouthier, 1935, p.148). Helen and Isis were also connected with each other in Samaria in that both, according to J.W. Crowfoot, were there probably assimilated to Kore (D: Crowfoot et al., 1957, p.8), as, according to the aforementioned litany (ll. 71, 72), Isis also was in Egypt in the Metelite nome and outside Egypt (ll. 104, 05) ἐν Μάγοις for which the editors suggest the emendation ἐν Μάγοις 'among the Magi'. The litany further attests the assimilation of Isis with Athene (with whom we have seen that Helena was assimilated from the time of Justin) in the Saite nome of Egypt (ll. 29, 30) and at Charax, also in Egypt (ll. 72, 73). In the light of the tradition, as old as the time of Plato (Crat. 407), of treating Athene as a figure of νοῦς, δεινότης, φρόνησις, ἐννοια or πρόνοια, it is perhaps significant too that the litany attests (ll. 43, 44) Isis' identification with πρόνοια at Catabathmus in Egypt and (ll. 33, 34, 60, 61) with ἐπίνοια at two other Egyptian sites, Sebennytus and Schedia, while at Apis (in Egypt again) she was hailed as φρόνησις and she is twice (ll. 117, 124) given the epithet φρονίμος. She is further called in three places (ll. 20, 91, 293) σῶτ[ε]ρα (a title she shares with Athene),

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which she is also called (together with *Πολύνομος*) in the first hymn to Isis from Medinet-Madi, probably from the 1st c. A.D., l. 26 (F: Bernand, 1969, p. 632), and in several inscriptions (F: Vidman, 1969, nos. 179, 247) (cf. Apul. Met. XI. 9, 15 and 25: Isis as dea sospitatrix).

There is evidence that Isis, like Athene, was sometimes portrayed in a creative role: in Apuleius Met. XI. 5 she is described as 'rerum naturae parens' (see comment ad loc. of Fredouille and Griffiths, - F: Fredouille, 1975 [1] & [11], pp.55; 140, 41) and in the first Medinet-Madi hymn to Isis, l. 9, we read σοῦ τε χάριν συνέστηχ' ὁ πόδας καὶ γαῖα ... (cf. also II.3) (see comment ad loc. of Bernand: F: Bernand, 1969, p. 632).

We may further note that Isis was frequently given the title *Κυρία* (F: Vidman, 1969, nos. 332, 334; F: Malaise, 1972, p.182), and Hippolytus Ref. VI. 20.1 says that the Simonians accorded this title to Helena; also that Isis was even more closely associated with the practice of magic than was Helena's Simon (F: Bergman, 1968, pp. 285 -89).

In addition, Jesi (F: Jesi, 1961) has shown that in Pythagorean circles the figure of Helen of Troy (to whom Helena was early assimilated by the Simonians, probably under Pythagorean influence, vid. infra) was sometimes linked to that of Isis. Thus, for example, on an Alexandrian coin of the principate of Trajan, now in the British Museum, we find Isis taking Helen's place between the Dioscuri, Helen's brothers: F: Poole, 1892, no. 451, p.54).

We conclude from this review of similarities between Helena and Isis that it is very probable that the Simonians identified

Simon's female companion with the Egyptian goddess of ten thousand names. Since Isis resembles the victorious, salvific Helena of the earlier version of Simonianism rather than the suffering Helena of the later, this identification will have taken place before the Gnostification of the religion.

(iii) Helena and the World Soul

Plato in Leg. 896E speaks in a way which led many Platonists, whatever he himself may have intended, to posit the existence of an evil world soul alongside the good. This evil cosmic principle (or the single cosmic principle, among Platonists who admitted the existence of only one) was frequently associated with matter: thus Atticus thought of it as indwelling in matter (Proclus Tim. I. 119B) and Plutarch (An. Procr. 1015 D, E) made the world soul the cause of evil. Xenocrates made the world soul the 'mother of the gods'. Can it be that in the Simonian Helena, a female deity, the mother of all, consigned to imprisonment in matter, we should see the influence of the Platonic world soul? Beyschlag believes so (A:2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 135 -41), but we are unpersuaded. The Simonian Helena is not thought of as either evil or the cause of evil, and the world soul for its part is not thought of as receiving liberation.

(iv) Helena and Sophia

Sophia, who occurs frequently in Philo as the Mother of All (e.g. Leg. all. II. 49; Quod deterius 54; De ebrietate 31) is also



a stock character in Gnosticism, where she retains her maternity but is thought of primarily as a fallen daughter of God, imprisoned very often in matter. Despite the obvious parallel, we can find nothing in Irenaeus' account to lead us, with Beyschlag, Lüdemann and Arai, to describe the basis of Irenaeian Simonianism as a Sophia myth. Certainly Irenaeus ascribes to the Simonians a doctrine of the imprisonment of Helena in matter but he never gives her the title Sophia; the assimilation of the Simonian Helena-Ennoia to Sophia occurs for the first time in the early third century in the Ps. Tertullian (Adv. omnes haer. 1) and is confined to him and to the Ps Clement (Recog. 2. 12; Hom. 2. 25). An assertion such as Beyschlag's (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 145)

...whereas in Valentinianism the supreme syzygy, the Urvater and Ennoia (Platonic: the Nous-monad extended into a syzygy) are linked together and the fallen daughter of God, Sophia, expressly distinguished therefrom, in the Simonian Ennoia both aspects, syzygos and daughter of the Father (Athene) are contracted, and indeed the Sophia aspect outweighs the Ennoia aspect (despite the use of the name Ennoia) is unsatisfactory. Were the influence of the figure of Sophia on the Simonian myth such as Beyschlag and most other scholars suppose, the absence of the name Sophia from the accounts of Irenaeus and Hippolytus would be virtually inexplicable. Further, it is nowhere said or implied in Irenaeus' account of Simonianism that Helena was seen as at fault or sinful in what she was doing, whereas the Gnostic

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Sophia is always painted in these colours (e.g. Apoc. John 36; Hyp. Archons 94; Hipp. Ref. VI. 30).

But are we not led back to the Gnostic Sophia, or at any rate to the Hebrew hokmah from whom she probably derives, as an explanation of the fact that Helena-Ennoia is said to be the medium of creation? Do we not catch an echo here of such texts as Prov. 3.19 ('through wisdom Yhwh created the earth')? Lüdemann believes so (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p.70), but we note that although the LXX sometimes translates cognates of hokmah by ἐννοια (e.g. ה' י' ב' Prov. 4. 1; 23. 4; ה' י' ב' ג' : Prov. 2. 11; ה' י' ב' ג' ד' : Prov. 18. 15;

ה' י' ב' ג' ד' ה' : Prov. 16. 22) an examination of the passages invoked by Lüdemann will reveal that never once does ἐννοια occur in LXX in a context concerned with the creative role of wisdom. We further observe that there are a number of NT echoes in Irenaeus' Simonian narrative but no obvious reference to the OT, so we cannot assume that the second century Simonians made use of the OT. Since we have seen that Athene and Isis were in some circles given a role in the creation of the world, we are inclined to see Helena's creative role as an early Simonian motif deriving from her assimilation to these goddesses. Inasmuch, however, as Helena does not create the world itself, but only the world-creating powers, we would also suspect that the Simonians were not uninfluenced by NT passages speaking of the creation of the cosmic powers through Jesus, such as Col. 1. 16.

(v) Helena and Helen of Troy

a) In early Simonianism

That Helena the ex-prostitute should have been assimilated to

Helen of Troy whom Aeschylus (Ag. 62) had called πολυζώνη and Stesichorus (in his lost Iliou persis) more bluntly 'a woman with two or three husbands, a faithless spouse' (2) was in a syncretistic age only to be expected. There are in fact other points of contact between the two figures apart from the obvious one of sexual irregularity. Helen of Troy, like Helena (if the story is true), had links with the city of Tyre (Herodotus II. 112 -20). Again, if Helena was a divinity who had come down from heaven to do the Father's will, the same was true of Helen of Troy as interpreted by the Pythagoreans. Treating as they did the Odyssey and the Iliad as sacred books, the Pythagoreans tried to rehabilitate the compromised heroine Helen by making her into a goddess who had come to earth to do the will of Zeus (3), either from heaven or from the moon (the word play Ἑλένη - Σελήνη, first explicitly attested in the 12th c. A.D. in Eustathius Homericorum IV. 2. 1488 may well have originated among the Pythagoreans, who were much addicted to the practice of etymology (E: D  tienne, 1957, passim)) (4). The tradition of Stesichorus and his recantation, which Irenaeus says the Simonians made use of, was probably also of Pythagorean origin (D  tienne op. cit., pp.139 -44).

The Pythagorean treatment of Helen of Troy, which turned a woman of loose morals into a goddess sent on a divine mission, furnished the early Simonians with an excellent apologia for Helena ('cognoscentem quae vult pater ejus' doubtless echoes this tradition) and was an important factor in the emergence of the Helena doctrine of early, non-Gnostic Simonianism.

#### b) In Gnostic Simonianism

In the Exegesis of the Soul 136. 35 the Soul quotes, applying them to her own condition, Helen's words in Odyssey 4. 259 -64:

αὐτὰρ ἐμὸν κῆρ

χαῖρ', ἐπεὶ ἤδη μοι κραδίη τετραπτο νέεσθαι  
 αἶψ' οἴκονδε, ἅτην δὲ μετέστενον, ἦν Ἀφροδίτη  
 δῶχ', ὅτε μ' ἤγαγε κείσε φίλης ἀπὸ πατρίδος αἴης,  
 παῖδα τ' εἰμὴν νοσφισσάμενην θάλαμὸν τε πόσιν τε  
 οὐδ' οὐδ' εὐδυσόμενον, οὐτ' ἄρ' φρένας οὔτε τι εἶδος.

The Exegesis is clearly taking Helen's desertion of, and return to, her home as symbolic of the fate of the human soul, whether or not

1. 35 actually contains the name 'Helene' as the Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-gnostisch Schriften, unlike Krause and Labib, suppose (B: Tröger, 1973, p. 38; B: Krause and Labib, 1971, p. 86). The date of the Exegesis is very uncertain (Krause assigns it to the end of the second century A.D. because of affinities with the Gospel of Philip and with Valentinianism: B: Foerster, 1974, p. 103), so that, if it is based only on this one text, the judgment of the Berliner Arbeitskreis that 'the probability that the allegory "Helen" for the fate of the fallen soul is already pre-Simonian appears to be very strong' (B: Tröger, 1973, p. 38) would seem a little hasty. But the Exegesis has a number of points of contact with Pythagoreanism (B: Robinson, 1970, pp. 116, 17), so the Helen allegory may well be an old Pythagorean idea, as is strongly suggested by the fact that the Pythagorean Heracleides, c. 360 B.C., in his book about the soul seems probably to have connected the fall of the soul with the fall of Helen from the moon (Détienne, op.cit., pp. 137, 38; A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 75).

It seems likely, therefore, that Pythagoreanism, either directly or through Gnostic intermediaries, was as influential in the emergence of the Gnostic conception of Helena in Simonianism as it had been earlier in the emergence of the Simonian non-Gnostic Helena. (5)

(vi) Helena and salvation

The words '...in eum et in Helenam ejus spem habeant...' imply a salvific conception of Helena which fits in very easily to the picture of Helena-Athene which we find in Justin, but accords much less well with the Gnostic connotation of the words '...uti eam assumeret primam et liberaret eam a vinculis...' In the first quotation Helena appears as saviour, in the second as salvanda.

We may wish to ask ourselves what the early Simonians, in turning with spes to Helena-Athene ( - Isis?), were looking for. For eschatological salvation? If we may judge from passages concerned with Isis as saviour, it is more likely that they were looking mainly if not exclusively for health, happiness and success in this world. Isis in Apuleius Met. XI. 5.1 -4 thus addresses her devotees:

Adsum tuos

miserata casus, adsum favens et propitia. Mitte  
iam fletus et lamentationes omitte, depelle  
maerorem; iam tibi providentia mea inlucescit  
dies salutaris. Ergo igitur imperiis istis meis  
animum intende sollicitum.

(cf also the first hymn to Isis from Medinet-Madi, F: Bernand, 1969, p. 632)

When we turn to the picture of Helena as salvanda, we note first a certain awkwardness in the text, in that the redemption of Helena from her fleshly bonds and her return to superterrestrial regions, which would seem to be what her salvation 'ought' to consist of, does not occur. She is merely freed from the brothel, to accompany Simon on his preaching campaigns. This, we suspect, is because the system had not been thought up 'in vacuo' but was, to an extent, working within the constraints of historical data about a real Simon and a real Helena.

If what we have written about Helen of Troy as a symbol of the human soul is correct, the liberation of Helena from her brothel will have been seen as effecting human salvation generally, - for Simonian believers, that is to say. It is relevant to note in this context that in the Exegesis of the Soul the Soul's fall and redemption are represented under the image of imprisonment in, and deliverance from, a brothel.

Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 154) has argued that if the liberation of Helena were to be thought of as identical with the salvation of mankind, as we have suggested and as Hippolytus seems to have supposed (Ref. VI. 19.5: τὴν δὲ Ἑλένην λυτρωσάμενος οὕτως τοῖς ἀνθρώποις σωτηρίαν παρέσχε διὰ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιγνώσεως), it would not have been said that Helena was constantly reincarnated in female bodies (only); she ought to have been reincarnated in male and female bodies alike. The argument would have some force if Helena were a purely mythical figure, but if, as we believe, she was an historical person, the Simonians, the illogicality of their

theological position notwithstanding, would perhaps have hesitated to say that she had previously been incarnated in male bodies. It is interesting to note that two centuries later, by which time the historical Helena was a very distant figure, we find it said that she was incarnated even in the bodies of animals 'and others' (plants?) (Epiph. 21. 2.5).

The salvation of Simonian believers was perhaps conceived of in terms of 'realised eschatology'. This at least is suggested by the fact that where the Latin translation of Irenaeus has 'solvi mundum et liberari eos qui sunt ejus ab imperio eorum qui mundum fecerunt repromisit', Hippolytus Ref. VI. 19.8 has λέγουσι, which suggests that the original of Irenaeus may well have had a verb of 'saying' rather than of 'promising'.

That the Simonians were not completely consistent in their soteriology is suggested by the phrase 'uti eam assumeret primam'. Helena here seems to be thought of merely as the first of the saved.

(vii) Helena as 'mater omnium per quam in initio mente concepit angelos facere et archangelos'.

How did Helena come to attract this description to herself?

Since, as we have seen, Athene, with whom Helena was first identified, was sometimes given a creative role, one might look to her as a possible source. However, although Athene, who was usually thought of as a virgin, was sometimes assimilated to goddesses of a maternal nature, the themes of maternity and creation are not found together in her case.(6).

Eve, of course, is very much a mother-figure, but she is not thought of as creator, only procreator, except where she is assimilated to a creator-figure (e.g. Sophia: Hipp. Ref. VI. 34.3).

In Gnosticism we find two chief mother figures, Ennoia and Sophia. Thus in Apoc. Joh. 35 seq. Ennoia, the syzygos of the Father, and Sophia, who is responsible for the existence of the sensible world, are both called Mother. In Exc. ex Theod. 29 Sige-Ennoia is 'Mother of all', but in 2.2, 33 and 39 Sophia is also called Mother, sc. of the angels, the pneumatics, the Demiurge and Jesus. In Hippolytus' account of the Valentinians, we hear how the Father brought forth a dyad (representing the Ennoia figure of other accounts) consisting of Nous and Aletheia, 'mistress (κυρία), beginning and mother of all the aeons which they number within the pleroma' (VI. 29.6), but Sophia, 'from whom the psychic and hylic creation derives its present condition' is called 'the mother of all living creatures' (VI. 34. 1 -3). We seem, despite numerous instances of confusion and contradiction, to have in Gnosticism generally the picture of two maternal principles: Ennoia, the divine syzygos of the Father who represents the thought process by which he creates all within the pleroma, and Sophia, a defective or fallen aeon who is responsible directly or indirectly for the existence of the world outside the pleroma. We have no doubt that it was the first of these with whom Helena became assimilated (with Sophia, as we have seen, Helena has nothing functional in common). Nothing was more natural than that Helena, the partner of Simon, who was already identified with Athene the prote ennoia of Zeus, should become further assimilated to the



divine mother Ennoia who in the Gnostic systems was the partner of the highest deity.

Lüdemann (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 58) has pointed to an interesting parallel between Iren. I. 16.2. and 11.1, where Irenaeus is discussing the views of Marcus, a disciple of Valentinus:

<p>11.1 Marcus enim, inquiunt, incipiens id quod est secundum conditionem opus, statim <u>in</u> <u>principio matrem omnium</u> ostendit, dicens: 'In principio fecit Deus coelum et terram'. Quatuor haec nominans, Deum et principium, coelum et terram, quaternationem ipsorum quemadmodum ipsi dicunt figuravit (cf. 8. 12)</p>	<p>16.2 hanc esse primam mentis ejus conceptionem, <u>matrem omnium</u>, per quam <u>in initio</u> mente concepit angelos facere et archangelos</p>
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Lüdemann suggests that 'matrem omnium' in 16.2 is intrusive, its presence being due to a recollection of 11.1. This suggestion is somewhat speculative, and quite unnecessary. What the parallel suggests to us is that the Simonians were influenced by Valentinian thought. Another instance of Valentinian influence on Simonianism may be found in the fact that the Simonians called Helena *κυρία*, a title given by the Valentinians to Ennoia; however, as we have seen the Simonians may already have adopted this title at an earlier date as a borrowing from Isiacism.

(viii) Helena as the Lost Sheep

Cerfaux has argued that there is no reason to see in this motif

a Christian borrowing. Criophorous statues were common in pagan antiquity, and the idea of Helena as a lost sheep rescued by Simon would be completely comprehensible in pagan terms (A.2: Cerfaux, [1926], p. 481 seq.).

It is true that criophorous statues were far from uncommon in the pagan world: the oldest known one being a statue of Apollo from c. 550/540 B.C. Veyries, who made a special study of these statues, found that in Greece they represented either the natural benevolence of the deity involved, showed him as offering a lamb for sacrifice, or marked him out as leading a pastoral type of life (E: Veyries, 1884, p. 29). Three instances from the Roman period represented Attis, or another solar deity, in the role of 'shepherd of the stars'.

Although it seems to be likely that early Christian representations of Jesus as Good Shepherd were modelled on these pagan statues (F: Leclercq, 1938), since the pagan emphasis was always on the bearer, not the lamb, 'a/the lost sheep' would have meant nothing to someone who did not know the Gospels.

We may take it, then, that there is a reference in the Simonian Lost Sheep motif to the Christian Gospels. But a further point remains to be considered. The Gnostics also made frequent use of the Gospel parable as a way of representing the rescue of the Gnostic believer (see examples in A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 128 - 35), so we must ask whether the Simonians were imitating other Gnostics (so Beyschlag, loc. cit.). In this case, the Simonians will have been historicising a myth rather than identifying a character in a parable with an historical person. We tend to agree with Beyschlag that the latter procedure would have been so

bold that it must be less plausible than the alternative account.

(ix) Imprisonment of Helena through  $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$

The themes of the imprisonment of Ennoia and of  $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  both occur frequently in Gnostic literature, but they are connected together only in Irenaeus' account of Simonianism. Foerster sees therein an indication of the antiquity of Simonian as against other forms of Gnosticism (B: Bianchi, 1966, pp. 190 -96). To Beyschlag, on the other hand, the  $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  motif derives from the idea of the envy of the devil (Wisd. 2. 23), was then transferred via the Jewish Adam-haggadah to Ialdabaoth the Gnostic Demiurge (e.g. Apoc. Joh. 44; Hypost. Arch. 90; Iren. I.28. 4: anonymous Gnostics, - Ophites?) and thence came into Simonianism, where, since this system contained no demiurge (not because it was a primitive system but because it had contracted the Urvater or Ennoia and the Demiurge into a single figure) the  $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  was predicated of the world powers (F: Beyschlag, 1966, pp. 49 -51; A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 146 -50).

If Simonianism were the 'fons et radix', to use Irenaeus' term, of Gnosticism, we should perhaps have expected one at least of the Gnostic systems to have used the Simonian imprisonment- $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  conjunction. On the other hand, the original association of  $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  with death (death of the human race in general, and of Abel in particular) which is so evident in the Jewish traditions, is also remarkable for its absence from the Gnostic texts, so one might as readily suppose the Simonians to have got the  $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  motif from the Jewish Adam-haggadah tradition directly as through Gnostic writings.

(x) Helena and contumelia

It is not altogether clear whether 'omnem contumeliam' is to be thought of as including the sexual violation of Ennoia by the powers (as in Epiphanius). If not, a sufficient precedent for Helena-Ennoia's sufferings might be found in the numerous humiliations of Helen of Troy (see, e.g., Euripides Helena passim). If sexual assault by the powers is in question, then it becomes very plausible to see in Helena's fate a connection with the seduction of Eve by Ialdabaoth which is recounted in various Gnostic texts. However, in none of the Gnostic texts is the idea of humiliation particularly emphasised, and the seduction is always important for its issue, Cain and Abel, whereas there is no mention of issue in our text. If the Helena-myth were dependent at this point on this Gnostic motif, we should surely expect the fornication to have been spoken of more explicitly and some issue of the union to have been specified. In the light of the fact that the culmination of Helena's humiliation was her confinement to a Tyrian brothel and that her previous incarnations were in female bodies only, one might have expected the contumeliae to be a series of sexual assaults (by the powers, &c.); but if this had been meant it is hard to see why it should not have been explicitly stated. We incline, therefore, to the view that the contumelia motif derives from the Helen of Troy tradition and has nothing to do with sexual violation.

(xi) Helena: Recapitulation

In our detailed examination of the Helena figure in Irenaeus,

we have found nothing to undermine and much to support our contention that it represents the combination of an earlier, non-Gnostic Helena-Helen-Athene(-Isis) figure with a Gnostic Helen-Ennoia figure. The fact that important ingredients of Gnosticism (such as the figure of Sophia) were not used by the Simonians probably shows that they made little effort to try to understand Gnosticism on its own terms: they pillaged the Gnostic heritage as they had already pillaged the Christian, taking what immediately appealed to them.

## 5. Simon

### (i) The Trinitarian formula

Whereas in Irenaeus Simon is said to have claimed to have appeared among the Jews as Son, in Samaria as Father and in other nations as Holy Spirit (I. 16.1), in Epiphanius we find only a binitarian formula:

πατέρα δὲ ἔλεγεν ἑαυτὸν τοῖς Σαμαρείταις, Ἰουδαίοις  
δὲ ἔλεγεν ἑαυτὸν εἶναι τὸν υἱόν (Pan. 21. 1.3)

The Holy Spirit, according to Epiphanius, Simon identified not with himself but with Helena (Pan. 21. 2.3).

Is the Trinitarian formula a development in the interests of anti-Christian polemic of an original binitarian formula which may have arisen in Simonianism independently of Christian influence? Or is the binitarian formula only a variation, calculated to make room within the godhead for Helena, who in the Simonianism attested by Epiphanius has usurped Simon's salvific role, of a Trinitarian formula borrowed from Christianity or of pagan origin?

One thing seems clear: the Trinitarian formula as given in Irenaeus departs from the usual order of Father, Son, Spirit in order to fit the geographical sequence of Judaea, Samaria, Gentiles laid down for the Christian mission in Acts 1. 18. In its present order, then, it bears all the signs of being part of an attempt to set Simonianism up as a world religion in competition with Christianity. If a pagan formula lies behind it (and triadic formulas are, of course, common in many religions) no sign of it is evident.

Despite the fact that the binitarian formula occurs in Tertullian (De anima 34: 'Simon ...in Judaea quidem filium, in Samaria vero patrem gesserit'), it is not likely that it is older than the Trinitarian. Tertullian, we note, has 'Son' before 'Father' and is therefore probably merely, as Beyschlag contends (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 167), abbreviating the Trinitarian formula. As for Epiphanius, it is probably significant that he identifies Helena not only with the Holy Spirit but also with the Gnostic Prunikos (Pan. 21. 2.4), whom some Gnostics (e.g. the Barbelo-Gnostics: Iren. I. 27.2) equated with the Holy Spirit. It seems likely that either Epiphanius is misinformed, or he is speaking of a later version of Simonianism which had carried syncretism a stage beyond the point reached by the movement in the second century, for no other witness speaks of Prunikos in connection with Simonianism.

We take it, then, that the Simonians of the second century in applying a Trinitarian formula to Simon were consciously adopting and adapting a Christian theologoumenon. We say adapting advisedly,

for Beyschlag (op. cit., pp. 170, 71) has acutely pointed out that the Simonian claim is not that Simon is Father, Son and Spirit, but that he appeared as such: behind the Triune God, said Simonian theology, there lay a unitary super-entity, namely Simon the God. His presence in Jesus, in the Holy Spirit and even in the historical Simon was to be understood docetically.

(ii) Simon πολωνυμος

'...sustineri vocari se quodcunque eum vocant homines'.

Beyschlag has put up a good case (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 160 -64) for this motif to have entered Simonianism as a borrowing from Christian Gnosticism. He shows that most of the Gnostic texts which use the motif involve a Trinitarian formula of one sort or another, and since the Simonians themselves had a Trinitarian formula for Simon, borrowed from Christianity (and indeed the polyonymity formula follows hard on the heels of the Trinitarian in Irenaeus), it is probable, he thinks, that polyonymity was borrowed from Christian Gnosticism as an extension to Trinitarianism.

On the other hand, polyonymity was a characteristic of Zeus from long before Christian times, especially among the Stoics (references in Beyschlag, op. cit., p. 161, n.61; A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, pp. 51, 52), and since (or so we have argued) Simon was assimilated with Zeus before Simonianism became Gnostic, it seems to us to be equally likely that Simon was thought of as πολωνυμος before this happened and that indeed the very fact that Simon was already, through his association with Zeus, seen as identifiable with all other deities, facilitated the syncretistic appropriation of Christian and Gnostic theologoumena.

(iii) Simon as the 'fons et radix' of heresy

In the section of our study devoted to the testimony of Justin we have argued that this conception is probably original to Irenaeus and does not go back to the Justin Syntagma. It is, we have urged, part of Irenaeus' picture of the heretics as forming a sort of anti-Church complete with 'apostles' and 'apostolic succession'. It remains now to ask whether Irenaeus had any historical justification for making Simonianism the source (the 'root' or 'bythos' as he sarcastically calls it in I. 15, using Gnostic terms) of all heresy.

The first fruits as he calls them, ibid., to be produced by the Simonian tree were, according to Irenaeus, Menander, Saturninus and Basilides. We find it hard to accept that any of these is correctly to be seen in this way. If Menander were really Simon's successor as we are told in I. 17, why did he proclaim himself as 'the saviour sent by the invisible ones for the salvation of men', thus usurping Simon's role as saviour and distinguishing between the highest deity and the saviour? And why did Menander, Saturninus and Basilides not only have no room in their systems for Simon but also give at most a very attenuated role to Ennoia?

We may further note that Hippolytus takes a very different position from Irenaeus on this issue. For him Simonianism is a development within Gnosticism. He has Simon the successor of the Ophites, the Naassenes, the Peratae and Justin the Gnostic,



despite the fact that he identifies Simon of Gitta with the Simon of Acts (Ref. VI. 2) and is probably well aware of the Irenaeus scheme which he is clearly declining to follow.

It would seem to us therefore to be extremely doubtful whether Irenaeus can be trusted in this matter. He appears to have been led astray through his identification (taken over probably from Hegesippus) of Simon of Gitta with the earlier Simon, the confrontation in Acts 8 between Simon and Peter suggesting to him that Simon was to heresy something analogous to what Peter and the apostles were to Christianity.

(iv) Simon and Eshmun

In the twentieth century the attempt of F.C. Baur to connect the name Simon with the names of oriental deities has been continued by Lidzbarski (F: Lidzbarski, 1916, pp. 86 - 89): 'underlying all these names (sc. Simon, Eshem, Eshmun, Seimios, Semo Sancus) is  $\Omega\omega$ , name' (p.87). Although he can adduce an instance of Anath being identified with Athene and can point to the association of the names Anath and Eshem at Elephantine, no instance is quoted of the association of the names Simon and Eshem nor of the names Seimios and Eshem (the relationship of which to each other Porten declares to be 'most uncertain' (C: Porten, 1968, p. 172, no.101)). Since, like Baur, he provides no evidence for his  $\Omega\omega$  etymology, his position is very weak and we see no reason to suppose that the figure of Simon was influenced by that of any oriental deity.

(v) The Descent of Simon

Doubtless the attribution to Simon of the claim to the title 'Highest Power' rather than the 'Great Power' of Acts 8 preserves a genuine Simonian tradition identifying Simon of Gitta with the highest cosmic reality. The term ἀνωτάτη δύναμις seems not to be precisely paralleled in Gnostic texts, but Lüdemann is able to show that δύναμις in various combinations is sometimes used therein of the highest God (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p.48), so there is some plausibility in Beyschlag's supposition (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 123 -26) that the term as applied to Simon was a Gnostic borrowing. On the other hand, we find Philo speaking of God as ἀνωτάτη καὶ μεγίστη δύναμις (Vit. Mos. I. 111), so other influences apart from Gnosticism are conceivable.

Christian borrowings in the account of Simon's descent abound. Of the transfiguration and Trinitarian motifs we have already spoken. The contrast between grace and works is an obvious Pauline echo. The docetic elements in the account are undoubtedly derived from Christian Gnosis. The attribution to Simon of the role of creator, even if at one remove, may either be a Christian borrowing or may derive from his assimilation to Zeus, who is occasionally conceived as creator (e.g. Pherecydes fragm. 3; Pindar fragm. 57).

(v) Simon and soteriology

We must now essay an interpretation of four phrases connected with Simonian soteriology which have given rise to controversy:

- (a) per suam agnitionem; (b) venisse; (c) ad emendationem rerum;
- (d) solvi mundum.

(a) per suam agnitionem

W. Foerster (B: Bianchi, 1966, pp. 190 -96) has argued that 'per suam agnitionem' and the  $\theta\iota\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \iota\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \epsilon\pi\iota\gamma\gamma\acute{\omega}\sigma\epsilon\omega$  which stands in Hipp. Ref. VI. 19 and is doubtless what Irenaeus wrote, means 'by recognition of Simon'.  $\epsilon\pi\iota\gamma\gamma\acute{\omega}\sigma\iota\varsigma$  must be distinguished, he urges, from  $\gamma\gamma\acute{\omega}\sigma\iota\varsigma$  (p. 193, n.4). What is being spoken of is not the self-knowledge of which other Gnostics spoke, but the acceptance which the prophets that Celsus saw in Syria-Palestine c. 178 A.D. demanded when they said:

'I am God, or the Son of God, or a divine spirit.

I am come...Blessed is he who now worships me...

those who follow me I will keep safe for ever'

(Origen CC 7 . 9)

As Foerster writes elsewhere (B: Foerster, 1972, p.28), 'these prophets betray a self-consciousness similar to that of Simon. In addition, not only is the self-consciousness similar but also the role which they play in the drama of world-history: it is by the attitude adopted to them that the eternal destiny of men is decided'. Foerster further believes that this emphasis on recognition of a divine figure rather than on self-knowledge marks Simonianism out as an early and immature form of Gnosticism.

Lüdemann (A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 75) has taken issue with Foerster on this. He denies that in common usage there is any difference between  $\epsilon\pi\iota\gamma\gamma\acute{\omega}\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and  $\gamma\gamma\acute{\omega}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , and thinks that the absence of the recognition motif from other systems is a reason for not taking  $\epsilon\pi\iota\gamma\gamma\acute{\omega}\sigma\iota\varsigma$  to mean 'recognition' here. He also

urges that recognition implies physical presence. The main objection to Foerster's interpretation, however, he states to be the impossibility that ἰδίᾳ should mean 'of Simon'.

We find ourselves accepting Foerster's interpretation of the phrase. Although Lüdemann is correct to deny that there is any strict etymological difference between ἐπίγινωσκω and γινώσκω, we think that the context makes it clear that the sort of knowledge required is 'knowledge despite appearances to the contrary', in other words recognition or 'agnitio' as the Latin translation aptly renders the word. The point is (the 'enim' in the next sentence should alert us to read the sentence in the light of what follows) that Simon has not come in his own person but has taken on an angelic or human guise and it therefore takes faith to see in him the supreme deity.

On the lexical question, διὰ τῆς ἰδίᾳ ἐπίγινωσκω is odd Greek for either 'through knowledge of himself (Simon)' or 'through self-knowledge': we might in the former case have expected διὰ τοῦ, in the latter διὰ τῆς. What Irenaeus seemingly wrote 'should' mean 'through their own knowledge'. What he actually meant can only be decided from the context, and the context favours 'through knowledge of himself (Simon)'.

Arai in his yet unpublished paper on Simonian Gnosis accepts Lüdemann's view and argues that the Exegesis of the Soul provides a close parallel to the Simonian myth. That there are interesting parallels, we agree. We would contend, however, that the Exegesis itself provides an argument for the validity of Foerster's translation of the controversial phrase rather than Lüdemann's. The Soul in the Exegesis after her fall from heaven forgets not her

own identity but the appearance of the redeemer whom the Father sends, viz. her brother, the first-born. Her salvation consists not in her rediscovery of her own self but in her becoming able by God's grace to recognise the redeemer when he comes (133. 10 -14; 134. 30). Is not this recognition very much what is at issue in the case of the Simonians too, except that the difficulty in recognising the redeemer in this case is caused not by forgetfulness as to what the redeemer looks like but by his assumption of a disguise?

(b) Venisse

Celsus' divine prophets said, we remember, 'I am come', and invited men to worship them. The connection of 'coming' with divinities and their worship, which is of common occurrence (F: Schneider, 1964), suggests that, since Simon was proclaimed as a divinity and offered worship, 'venisse' may here mean 'came in the cult' (so B: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 80), though we would not exclude a reference therein to the historical coming of Simon too.

(c) ad emendationem rerum (Hipp. εἰς ἐπανόρθωσιν )

(d) solvi mundum (Hipp. φύσιν (?) -... τὸν κόσμον : corrupt;

1. φθείρειν ? λυθῆναι ? τὸν κόσμον ; λύσιν ... τοῦ κόσμου ?)

The combination of improvement/rectification with dissolution/destruction is paradoxical. How can the world be rectified and at the same time destroyed? Beyschlag has shown, however, that Gnosticism found the paradox perfectly tolerable: thus the Valentinians said that Jesus was born of Mary 'for the rectification (ἐπανόρθωσις) of this creation of ours' (Hipp. Ref. VI. 36.4)

but Valentinus wrote in a homily (Clem. Alex, Str. IV. 89.3)  
'When you destroy the world (κόσμον λύσητε ) without yourselves  
being destroyed, then you are lords over the whole creation and  
over all decay'. It is interesting that in commenting on this saying  
Clement uses the word ἐπανορθούμενοι (the Valentinians are,  
says Clement, boldly assailing the powers of the Creator inasmuch  
as by trying to set to rights his creation they are in effect  
making themselves superior to him: Str. IV. 91. 3) (cf. A.2:  
Beyschlag, 1974, p. 206: see the whole section, pp. 203 -10 for  
further examples). Doubtless the Gnostic idea was that the material  
world structure had to be overcome and destroyed so that the world  
could revert to ideal, non-material existence: this would be both  
an improvement and a dissolution.

Did this dual conception enter Gnosticism through Simonianism,  
or (as Beyschlag supposes) vice-versa? In the case of Simonianism  
we have a fairly simple explanation of how such a paradoxical motif  
might have occurred, namely by the grafting on to an originally  
non-Gnostic world view which did not see the material creation as  
basically bad (it only therefore needed setting right or rectifying)  
of a world-denying Gnostic conception which spoke of κατάλυσις .  
For this reason we incline to believe that the ἐπανόρθωσις - κατάλυσις  
paradox may have begun as a Simonian theologoumenon.

(vi) The historical Simon of Gitta

We may first ask, under this heading, whether Simon of Gitta  
thought of himself as a magician. Although the word 'magician'  
was often used uncritically as a term of abuse in antiquity  
(accusations of magical practices were among the mainstays of  
religious polemics (?)), it did also have an honourable connotation.

There is no doubt that the authors of the magical papyri, for instance, would have accepted the word as a description of themselves, using it to mean someone who possessed a secret knowledge which gave power over the world. That Simon, however, thought of himself in these terms is far from obvious. In the first place, although both Justin and Irenaeus describe Simon as a magician, there is no reason for thinking that they are here dependent on Simonian tradition: the section of Irenaeus which probably has most contact with Simonian tradition, I. 16.2, does not use the term. Further, if Simon saw himself, as his followers apparently did, as a docetic manifestation of a supreme divine hypostasis, he would surely have thought 'magician' too modest a description of himself. If he did not think of himself in these terms, we have no evidence to decide how he did see himself.

Was Simon a Samaritan (like the Simon of Acts, according to our reading of the facts), or was he a Samaritan? And when did he live?

Certainly Simon cannot have been an orthodox member of the Samaritan sect: his divine claims sufficiently prove that. On the other hand, if we must call him a Samaritan, as the pagan nature of Simonian theology suggests that we should, that should not be taken necessarily to rule out the possibility of any contact with the Samaritan sect. Justin Martyr was undoubtedly a Samaritan, but there are indications in his writings that he was not completely ignorant of or untouched by the religious traditions of those of his fellow-countrymen who were members of that sect (A.1.(ii): Weis, 1944) (8).

As for the date of Simon, since we incline to credit the truth of Justin's statue story, we place him in the first century (he will, we have suggested, have come to Rome a few years before 45 A.D.). Many of those who, like the present writer, distinguish between the Simon of Acts and Simon of Gitta place the latter in the second century. If Simon of Gitta were a Gnostic and if Gnosticism began in the second century, this would be reasonable enough, but (whatever may be the truth about the date of the emergence of Gnosticism) we do not believe that Simon of Gitta was a Gnostic. The mistaken identification of the Simon of Acts with Simon of Gitta will have more easily occurred if the two men were more or less contemporaries. Furthermore, if our theory of a major upheaval within Simonianism as it changed from being, in its founder's day, a pagan religion venerating Simon as Zeus and Helena as Athene to being, in Irenaeus' day, a synthetic world religion is correct, a substantial interval of time is, on the whole, likely to have elapsed between the foundation of the religion and its radical reshaping.

## 6. The Simonians

We wish now to consider whether the materials discussed so far enable us to make any assertions about the Simonians, their distribution and their background.

As for their conduct, Irenaeus I. 16.3, which we have contended is not derived from a written source but was composed by Irenaeus on the basis of oral reports, represents the Simonians as libertine in their morals and addicted to magical practices. It is doubtful whether Irenaeus will have taken any great pains



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to ensure accuracy in reporting the behaviour of a sect which he saw as responsible for all the pululating heretical groups of his day. We are reluctant, for this reason, to place much credence in this testimony. On the other hand, we are not prepared to assert, with S.J. England (A.2: England, 1940, pp. 210, 11), that the Irenaeus Simonians were Puritans! England thinks that the logic of the belief that Simon came to release the soul from its fleshly bonds, and especially from the sexuality represented by the brothel, points to this conclusion. There is no evidence, however, that the release from the brothel (unlike England we take this to be an historical event, not a theologoumenon) was interpreted in this way, and contempt for the body, as is common knowledge, can lead equally to libertinism and encratism. There is perhaps one circumstance only which favours England's position: in Irenaeus (and Justin) no suspicion of sexual irregularity attaches to the relationship of Simon and Helena themselves. As for the practice of magic, there is nothing distinctive about the terms in which Irenaeus levels this accusation against the Simonians, and the accuracy of the testimony must be very uncertain.

Whereas Irenaeus not only had access to Valentinian writings but also interviewed some Valentinians, as he tells us in the preface to book I, in the case of the Simonians it seems likely that he had no personal acquaintance with any of them and that the 'assertiones' of theirs to which he refers the reader in I. 16. 3 were to be found in Simonian literature that he had consulted. The terms in which he justifies giving an account of the Simonians ('necessarium arbitrati sumus prius referre fontem

et radicem eorum, uti sublimissimum ipsorum Bythum cognoscens, intelligas arborem, de qua defluerunt tales fructus': I.15) seems, further, to imply that the Simonians were important in his eyes for historical reasons rather than because he thought they constituted a present threat. It may even be the case that Simonianism had gone into a decline in Irenaeus' day: this would fit in well with the fact that not long afterwards we find Origen (CC 1. 57) saying that the whole world did not then contain as many as thirty Simonians. If such a decline did occur, it was followed by a considerable revival, for the religion was clearly in a flourishing state again early in the fourth century (Eus. HE 13. 6 - 8). We are, however, of the opinion that such a decline is unlikely to have happened: that a sect which was (or so we have argued) very active in Rome in Justin's day should have virtually died out within the course of three decades is scarcely credible. We think it far more probable that Irenaeus was drawing an unfounded inference from the absence of Simonians from his own locality, and that Origen was confusing the Simonians with the Dositheans, about whom he makes the same comment in 6.11, a comment the more appropriate in their case because of the importance of the number thirty in that sect (Ps Clem. Recogn. 1. 8-11; cf A.1. (vi): Chadwick, 1953, p. 53, n. 2 and 324, 25, n.2).

It seems impossible to discover where Irenaeus came upon the Simonian writings he consulted, whether in Gaul where he was bishop from c. 177 and had earlier been as a presbyter, in Rome, which he visited as a presbyter (Eus. HE 5. 4.2), in Smyrna, where in his youth he was acquainted with Polycarp (Iren. III. 3. 4) or

elsewhere (Harvey (A.1.(iii): Harvey, I, 1857, p. cliv) thinks Irenaeus was a Syrian by birth, but this is very uncertain).

Where were the second century Simonians to be found? We have seen that there was probably a flourishing community in Rome in Justin's day. It must be doubtful whether in Irenaeus' time there was a Simonian community in Gaul, from the fact that Irenaeus regarded the religion as a past catastrophe rather than a present temptation. Nor are there likely to have been many in either Palestine or Alexandria, because a few decades later Origen, who knew both places well, said there were fewer than thirty Simonians left in the world (he probably, as we have seen, confused them with the Dositheans, but this fact itself serves to shew how little they can have obtruded on his notice).

Some indications of the geographical distribution of the Simonians might perhaps be gleaned from a consideration of the varieties of Gnosticism from which they borrowed. Since we have found some evidence of Valentinian influence on Simonianism and since Valentinianism flourished chiefly in Europe (though there was also an Eastern branch: cf. Theodotus), we may very tentatively offer the suggestion that Simonianism in the late second century was a European movement. We have noted parallels between Simonianism and the doctrines of some of the Coptic texts, especially the Exegesis of the Soul, but we are not sufficiently sure of the direction of influence to postulate the existence of a Simonian community in Egypt, especially in the light of what we have said about Origen. In any case, the Coptic texts are in the main believed to be translations from the Greek and the

place of original composition is not necessarily Egypt. ( 9)

The contempt for the OT prophets attributed to the Simonians by Irenaeus, which is also found in other Gnostic sects where its presence is even harder to explain unless it be derived from Simonianism, may plausibly be suspected to be a legacy from the original Samaritan Simonians, who may have been influenced in this matter by their Samaritan fellow-countrymen who accepted the authority of the Pentateuch only.

#### 7. The powers that made the world

Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 147) sees the idea of the creation of the world by angels as a development of a Gnostic belief in creation by a demiurge who was identified with the God of the Jews and with Satan. We hold, however, that it is equally likely that the doctrine of the creator angels antedates the demiurge doctrine, for several Gnostics who are generally regarded as fairly early, Menander, Saturninus and Carpocrates, hold the doctrine of angel-creators and know nothing of a demiurge (Iren. I. 17; 18; 20). In Basilides, who taught creation by angels with Yhwh as the chief angel (Iren. I. 19. 2) we perhaps see the alternative demiurge theory emerging. This must, however, remain very conjectural, for Cerinthus, who was probably active at the end of the first century, was already teaching, it seems, 'non a primo Deo factum esse mundum...sed a virtute valde separata' (Iren. I. 21), and Cerdo, a contemporary of Basilides, taught the existence of two gods c. 140 (Iren. I. 24) (10).

The angel-doctrine cannot be said to have resulted from an

organic evolution of non-Gnostic Simonianism. There is, therefore, no reason to see it as a Simonian bequest to Gnosticism rather than the reverse.

### Recapitulation

We have seen reason to believe that the Simon who founded Simonianism was not the Samaritan Simon of Acts 8 but a first century Samaritan from Gitta who claimed identity with Zeus; his female companion he said was Athene. He arrived in Rome some time before 45 A.D. and his followers there erected to him a statue which in Claudius' reform of 45 was moved outside the city to Tiber Island. Whether in Simon's lifetime or later, a body of doctrine was elaborated centring on the figures of Simon-Zeus and Helena-Helen-Athene (-Isis), basically pagan but with Christian accretions. Simon and Helena were viewed as redeemers and perhaps as creators. Some time before 180, the Simonians, or some of them at least, effected a marriage of Simonian paganism with the anti-world doctrines of the Gnostics, being led thereto not only by the syncretistic spirit of the age but also by the fact that the figures of Ennoia and Helen of Troy were used in Gnosticism as they were also, though in rather a different way, in Simonian paganism. The ambiguity of the resultant system as to whether the world is to be improved or destroyed and as to whether salvation means comfort and succour in this world or liberation from the material universe, is the consequence of this ill-matched alliance.

Our investigations have led us to reject decisively the views of those scholars who, following in Irenaeus' footsteps, see in

Simonian Gnosis an archaic Gnostic system from which other Gnostic systems later evolved. The Gnostic Simonianism did not grow by an organic process from the earlier form of the religion; rather, the Gnostic motifs were borrowed from an already existent Gnostic movement and were superimposed in a rather maladroit way on earlier Simonian beliefs.

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### NOTES

1. Though early attestation of this tradition is not available, we do know that Isis was worshipped in Phoenicia from at least the seventh or sixth century B.C. (F: Griffiths, 1970, p. 322). By the Hellenistic period she had long been identified with the Phoenician goddess Astarte (Byblus: F: Hill, 1911, p. 59; Sidon: Oxyrh. pap. XI no. 1380, - F: Grenfell and Hunt, 1915, pp. 197, 98) and the Phoenician Astarte was a dea meretrix (E: Henrichs, 1972, p. 20) in whose temples sacral prostitutes of both sexes were employed (F: Harden, 1971, p. 94). By and large, sexual abstinence rather than excess was associated with Isis (F: Griffiths, 1970, p. 261), but Ovid *Ars amat.* 1. 77, 78 ('nec fuge linigerae Memphiticae templa iuvencae, Multas illa facit quod fuit ipsa Iovi') 'suggests that the temples of Isis were frequented by women of easy virtue' (Griffiths, ibid.; cf F: Burel, 1911, pp. 57, 58). Since Astarte was a much grosser deity than Isis, doubtless the image of the latter became debased in Phoenicia through assimilation with Astarte, especially in Tyre, a city which had as bad a reputation for prostitution as Corinth (E: Henrichs, 1972, p. 20, n. 60).

Representations of Isis as Aphrodite anasyramene (F: Dunand, I, 1973, planches XXI and XXII) may also be evidence of a connection between Isis and prostitution.

2. κεφα δὲ [κ. Ἀφροδίτη] Τυνδαρέου κόρας  
 χολωσάμενα διγάμους τε καὶ τριγάμους τίθησι  
 καὶ λιπεσάνορας (E: Page, 1962, no. 223).

3. We may note that the rehabilitation of Helen began, as D  tienne

points out (op. cit. p. 135 n.1) with the Odyssey itself:

τὴν δ' ἢ τοι ῥέξαι θεὸς ὥρσεν ἔργον ἀεικές

( 23 . 222)

Later it was said that Helen was only carrying out the orders of Zeus (not of Aphrodite as in the Odyssey passage just quoted), an idea found in the epic cycle (E: Severyns, 1928, pp. 246 -49)

and in Eustathius Homericorum IV. 2. 1488:

οὐ μέθ' Ὀμηρον...σεληναίαν ἄνθρωπον τὴν ἑλένην ἐπλάσαντο  
ὥς ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ σελήνην κόσμου πεσοῦσαν, αὐτὴν δ' ἄνω  
ἀρπαγῆναι καὶ τὴν ἐμυθεύσαντο ἐπειδὴν δὴ ἐκείνη  
αἰὲ Διὸς ἡνυσθησαν βουλαί.

(The last phrase echoes Iliad 1. 5).

4. Helen was sister to the Dioscuri, the astral deities Castor and Pollux, and is frequently to be found on coins from Phoenicia and Asia Minor standing between them either in her own person or represented by the emblem of the crescent moon (F: Hill, 1911, p.62).

In Ps Clement Recog. 2 . 9, Helena is given the name 'Luna'.

5. Further Pythagorean influence may be seen in the 'de vase in vas transmigraret' motif. The conceit that the Helen who went to Troy was not the true Helen but only an eidolon, a conceit used by Stesichorus in his Palinode (see Plato Rep. 586C) and by Euripides in his Helena, may have been in part responsible for the docetism which characterises the Simonian presentation of both Simon and Helena.

6 . If, as we have shown to be plausible, Helena was also assimilated to Isis, the description of Helena as creator-mother may betray the influence of Isiacism. 'In the early Egyptian tradition', as J.G. Griffiths observes (F: Griffiths, 1975, p.140),



'Isis is certainly a mother-goddess, that is, the mother of Horus and of the King, and even of the gods.' Isaiac iconography frequently represented her as a mother suckling a child (F: Tran Tam Tinh, 1973 passim). She was also, as we have seen, given a creative role (this conception is not confined to Apuleius and to Athenagoras Pro Christ. 112, pace Griffiths ibid.; see the Medinet-Madi hymn quoted above), and in Apuleius Met. XI. 5 her roles of mother and creator come together ('rerum naturae parens...'). Since the conjunction seems not to be paralleled elsewhere and since it is not certain that the composition of the Metamorphoses antedates the writing of the Adv. haereses (for the date of the Metamorphoses see Griffiths op. cit., pp. 7 -14), it would be unsafe to presume Isiac influence, though the possibility of it certainly cannot be ruled out.

7. If Christians were disposed to assume an adversary to be a magician unless the contrary were proved, then the same is true equally of their opponents. 'The belief, accusation or tradition that Jesus was a magician, and that he passed magical power to his apostles and to the church as a whole is...found in Judaism, gnosticism, Christian orthodoxy and heterodoxy, paganism, Islam and in Mandeism': F: Hull, 1974, p. 4. The Jews too were very commonly accused of magic: 'The Jews have devoted themselves to sorcery, of which Moses gave them the first example' (Celsus in Origen CC 1. 26).

8. We must also note that the Samaritans, for their part, were not always as rigidly separatist as they are today. Levine in his study of the large Samaritan community in Caesarea (F: Levine,

1975, ch. 6) has pointed to evidence (from Samaritan amulets in Greek as well as Hebrew lettering, rabbinic comments, and the like) that 'contrary to widespread belief, Samaritans were not untouched by religious deviation' (p. 108). Can one even be sure that there were no Samaritans who bowed the knee in the house of Zeus on Gerizim?

9. Helmbold (B: Helmbold, 1967, p. 92) argues for Syria - Palestine as the place of original composition.

10. One must also allow for the possibility that the tenth century Karaite writer Qirqasānī, in writing of a Jewish pre-Christian group of Magāriya ('cave dwellers') who said that the world was created by an angel, may preserve an authentic tradition of a Jewish sect who believed in a demiurge (C: Golb, 1960; Wolfson, 1960). On the other hand, since this group is described as believing that all creation is good, their demiurge would not have been malevolent and any connection between them and the Gnostics, such as Golb and Wolfson argue for, must appear very problematic (R.M. Grant in B: Bianchi, 1967, pp. 141 -54).

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## Chapter 5

### THE ELENCHOS/REFUTATIO OF HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME

#### 1. AUTHORSHIP.

Book 1 of the Elenchos was first published in 1701 under the title of Philosophumena (because it treats of the writings of the Greek philosophers. The use of this term to refer to the whole Elenchos, which is occasionally to be encountered, is misleading). Of the remaining books, none of which was known at that time, 2 and 3 remain lost but 4-10 have subsequently come to light in a fourteenth century MS from Mt. Athos and have appeared from 1851 onwards together with Book 1 in half a dozen editions, of which the best is that brought out by P. Wendland in 1916 (all references to the Elenchos will be to Wendland's edition).

Since Jacobi first suggested it in the mid-nineteenth century (A.1. (iv): Jacobi, 1851)<sup>(1)</sup> scholars have increasingly come to attribute the work ( the MSS of which concur, wrongly as all now agree, in ascribing it to Origen) to Hippolytus of Rome. In 1921 Legge could speak of this attribution as 'admitted on all sides' (A.1. (iv): Legge, 1921, I, p. 6). Latterly Nautin has sought to overthrow this attribution, arguing that the author was a certain Josip(p) us (A.1. (iv): Nautin, 1947), and some scholars (e.g. Salles-Dabadie and Doresse: A.1. (iv): Salles-Dabadie, 1969, p. 8: includes a useful bibliography of the controversy; B: Doresse, 1960, p. 3) have under his influence abandoned the common attribution though without accepting the alternative ascription to

Josip(p)us.

The case for the Hippolytan authorship may be briefly rehearsed. The author of the Elenchos refers in X. 30 to his having previously undertaken a summary exposition of the teachings of the heretics, which may well be an allusion to the Syntagma of thirty two heresies (the Elenchos itself treats of thirty three) from Dositheus to Noetus, ascribed to Hippolytus of Rome by Photius (he called it a βιβλιδάριον, Bibl. 121, but that need not indicate any great brevity: see A.1. (iv): Nautin, 1949, pp. 33, 34, 39). Further, the author refers in X. 32 to another earlier work of his, entitled περὶ τῆς τοῦ πάντος οὐσίας, which is alluded to by Photius, Bibl. 48, as being a refutation of Plato and the Greeks and therefore sounds very like the book Πρὸς Πλάτωνα ἡ καὶ περὶ τοῦ πάντος which is mentioned in the list of works which appears on a statue discovered in Rome in 1551 (since 1959 it has been in the Vatican Library), works which were by implication written by the person represented. That the statue is of Hippolytus, a number of circumstances conspire to suggest. Firstly, another of the works listed on the statue is called Ἀποδείξις χρόνων τοῦ πάσχα, which is the title of a book ascribed to Hippolytus by Eusebius (HE 6. 22.) The statue catalogue also mentions other works which there are grounds for believing to be Hippolytus', especially the Χρονικά (this has survived and has close links, despite some dissimilarities, with the definitely Hippolytan In Danielelem), and the περὶ χαρισμάτων ἀποστολικῆς παράδοσις (this work, the 'Apostolic Tradition', is also extant).

If the Elenchos is the work of Hippolytus and if the statue

represents Hippolytus, why is it omitted from the list of works inscribed on the statue? The statue itself, to judge from a computation of the dates of Easter for the years 222-233 engraved on it, was probably erected in or shortly after 222 and the *Elenchos* was probably written after the death of Callistus in 222 (IX. 11-13) and may well, therefore, post-date the erection of the statue. More remarkable is the fact that other works known to be by Hippolytus and to have been written before 222, such as the *Syntagma*, are omitted. Attempts to explain the omission on the hypothesis that they were in fact mentioned but that this part of the catalogue is missing (e.g. F: Daniélou and Marrou, 1964, p. 145) or that the catalogue was the work of ignorant men (A.1. (iv): Hanssens, 1959, p. 230) or that all polemical works of Hippolytus were omitted out of delicacy because of his having earlier seceded from the Church (e.g. A.1. (iv): Salmon, 1882, p. 96) are but surmise.

Against Hippolytan authorship it is urged principally that the *Elenchos* cannot have the same author as the *Contra Noetum*, which is almost universally taken to be Hippolytan (see, however, A.1. (iv): P Richard, 1948): 'the comparison,' urges Nautin, 'is decisive. The theology, the mentality, the method of refuting heresies, the attitude towards Greek philosophy, the language, the style - all is profoundly different' (A.1. (iv): Nautin, 1961, p. 180). Most scholars, however, think that Nautin has exaggerated the differences between the *Elenchos* and the *Contra Noetum* (also the differences between the *Χρονικά* and the *In Danielelem*) and believe that such differences as do exist can best be explained by supposing that Hippolytus' thought and style matured over the

years.

Nautin's Josip(p)us theory is very precarious, being based on a MS attribution of the work *Περὶ τῆς τοῦ πάντος οὐσίας* to one 'Ιωσήφ(π)ος or 'Ιωσήφ(π)ος . We would concur with the majority view of scholars that it is far more likely that we are dealing here with a conjectural and mistaken attribution to the Jewish historian Josephus than that a reliable tradition is here preserved attributing the work to an otherwise unknown Christian writer. That the attribution was based on nothing stronger than guesswork is suggested by the fact that Photius, Bibl. 48, comments that the copy which he consulted contained a second attribution (to Gaius, the Roman presbyter).

We regard it as remaining very probable that Hippolytus of Rome, the schismatic presbyter of whose secession and subsequent reconciliation and martyrdom tradition speaks, was the author of the Elenchos.

## 2. SOURCE CRITICISM of the Simonian references (VI. 7-30; X. 12)

After an introductory section, VI. 7.1 - 9.2, in which Simon of Gitta is identified with the Simon of Acts and is compared with a Libyan charlatan called Apsethos and his followers are compared with the parrots that the Libyan taught to say 'Apsethos is god', a passage which is universally taken to be the work of the author, Hippolytus launches into a long section, VI. 9.3 - 18.7, in which he frequently quotes 'Simon', a section which, as we have seen in an earlier place, is taken to reproduce either the Megale Apophasis (mentioned by name VI. 14.6 and elsewhere; hereafter known by the initials MA) or a paraphrase of, or commentary on,

it (henceforth known as C), and finally in VI. 19.1 - 20.4 Hippolytus concludes his discussion of Simonianism with a passage very reminiscent of Irenaeus' account (Helena here appears for the first time in the Elenchos account). Hippolytus also has a brief discussion of Simonianism in the Epitome, X. 12. We must now briefly consider each of these four passages from the point of view of source criticism.

VI. 7.1 - 9.2. As we have said, this passage is the author's own work. Two details only appear to have come from written sources. Since, as is clear from VI. 19.1 - 20.4, he knew the text of Irenaeus (Photius even says that Hippolytus claimed to be a disciple of Irenaeus: Bibl. 121), we need look no further than the Adv. haer. for the source of the identification of the Simon of Acts with Simon of Gitta (VI. 7.1). The title *ὁ ἐστὺς, ὁ τὰς σιγηόμενος* (VI. 9.1) is clearly derived from the source(s) used in VI. 9.3 - 18.7, where it occurs frequently.

VI. 9.3 - 18.7. The traditional view of this passage as consisting largely of quotations from the MA can scarcely withstand Frickel's criticisms (pace Salles-Dabadie, who ignores rather than refutes Frickel's points). We have in this passage three types of material: passages from the MA commentary, quotations from the MA itself, and comments by Hippolytus. The demarcation line between MA and C is not always clear.

VI. 19.1 - 20.4. The dependence of Hippolytus in this passage on Irenaeus is clear enough (the correspondences are very close indeed in some cases), but the Hippolytan account diverges from the Irenaeian at a number of points. The fact that Hippolytus always gives Helena the title *Epinoia* rather than the Irenaeian

Ennoia constitutes no case for his dependence in this passage on a second source, since Epinoia is the term used by MA and C. However, some of the other divergences do, as we shall see, suggest that Hippolytus had access to other traditions.

X. 12. The Epitome account is based mainly on C. We shall have to examine later the provenance of those few details that are not derived from C.

We shall now proceed to analyse in some detail first the fragments of the MA preserved in the text, next the quotations from C, then the passage in which Hippolytus draws on Irenaeus, VI. 19.1 - 20.4, and finally the Epitome, X. 12.

### 3. THE MEGALE APOPHASIS (MA)

Since we do not always agree with Frickel on what is from the MA and what from C, we have found it convenient to reproduce (Appendix A) the Wendland text with our attributions marked on it, and (Appendix B) notes justifying our attributions (and also giving our interpretation of obscurities in the text where this is germane to our purpose).

The doctrines contained in the MA fragments we would summarise as follows. The ultimate cosmic reality can be variously denominated as the Great Power, the Root of All, Silence, the Fire, the Father, the Seventh Power and the  $\epsilon\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma, \epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma, \epsilon\tau\eta\epsilon\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ . From this first principle, which is androgynous, proceed three pairs, syzgies, of roots or offshoots, one male and one female in each case: Great Power/Nous and Great Conception/Epinoia; Phone and Onoma; Logismos and Enthuresis. The first principle is present in man and in all things potentially, and man is conceived of as



a cosmic tree whose trunk exists for the sake of producing fruit before it is itself destroyed, an image which shows man's destiny to be thought of as the acquisition of (intellectual, spiritual) maturity, so that the flesh (good though it be) may ultimately be discarded and man united to the Great Power.

Are there any indications in the MA fragments of its date and provenance?

We may first observe that the connection of this document with any form of Simonianism that we have so far examined is at best tenuous. Simon is here no redeemer figure but simply a proclaimer of a secret doctrine (hidden in the 'treasure-house', VI. 9.4) and Helena is not so much as mentioned. Although, as in both Irenaeian Simonianism and in other forms of Gnosticism, man aspires to leave the material world, the latter is not here seen as evil or as a prison-house; rather, the material world is the place where one has the opportunity to grow to maturity (exeikonizesthai) and thus qualify for the immaterial realm. It would seem inherently unlikely that the thought system of the MA evolved (in at most four decades!) from the Simonianism attested by Irenaeus. It is far more likely that it represents a different system altogether. But more on this topic later.

#### Philosophical ideas in the MA

(i) Pythagorean influences have been pointed to by many scholars. Thus England (A.2: England, 1940, p. 229, n.1) notes that the basic conception of a monad which develops into a dyad, and of a bisexuality which is inherent in all things, are characteristic of Pythagoreanism (cf. Hipp. Ref. VI. 23). We note further that in the version of

the MA quotation τοῦτο τὸ γράμμα, κτλ. , VI. 9.4, which occurs in Ref. V. 9.5 we find reference to the Pythagorean idea of the *ἐνιγμή ἀκέριστος* (A.2: Frickel, 1968, pp. 198-201), as also in VI. 34. 6 (C)

(ii) It is tempting to derive the MA concept of the Hestos from Philo, or at any rate from Hellenistic Judaism, since Philo uses the term frequently. As applied to God Hestos in Philo (e.g. De post Caini 23; 27; De somn. I. 241) means 'immutable'. It is possible for man too by the divine logos to become hestos: thus Moses is privileged to share this title (De conf. ling. 30-31). As Philo says in De post Caini 28, 'the Existent One who moves and turns all things else is not himself subject to movement and turning; further, he makes the worthy man share in the repose which constitutes his own true nature'. The parallel with the MA is only partial; in the MA man, and indeed all the universe, has by nature the Hestos dwelling within, whereas in Philo to become hestos man (for he alone is eligible) has to leave behind his own original nature. Moreover, the divinity of the MA is definitely not immutable (on the contrary, it is involved in constant movement and activity: δύναμις μέν... αὐτὴν γεννώσα, αὐτὴν εὐξοῦσα, αὐτὴν ἰσχυροῦσα, αὐτὴν εὐρίσκουσα VI. 17.3). We would, for this reason, with Kippenberg (D: Kippenberg, 1961, pp. 347-349, n. 136) decline to posit direct dependence for the use of the term Hestos on Philo (we argue below for a closer connection in this particular with Samaritanism).

The closest parallels are in fact not between Philo and the MA but between Philo and C. Both, in particular, have a predilection for allegorical exegesis of the Pentateuch. Both, for instance, take Moses to be the same as the Logos (see Appendix B on Ref. VI.

15.3) and both interpret the bitter waters of Marah, Ex. 15.23-25, as symbolic of the trials and tribulations of life (Ref. VI. 15.3; Philo De Congr. 163. There is a rabbinic parallel in Ex. R. 43.3). However, there are also major differences between the thought of Philo and that of C: thus Philo locates the image of God, or rather of the Logos, in man's soul only, while for C, as for the MA, the body of man too, indeed the whole of the universe, is an image of the uncreated Father (cf. A.2: Salles Dabadie, 1969, p. 97).

(iii) In the monism of the MA, in its impersonalism and pantheism, may be described clear affinities with Stoicism (cf. e.g. A.2: England, 1940, p. 233). Spanneut observes (F:Spanneut, 1957, p. 46) that Stoicism breathes a different atmosphere from Gnosticism:

Stoicism remains relatively optimistic before the rational, unified world. The world is penetrated by God, who is its immanent and universal cause. This causality extends to man, who, by his knowledge, the product of his senses, finds it again in the clear mirror that is the universe.

The affinity of the system of the MA to Stoicism, thus described, is evident. This suggests that it will have been from Stoicism, rather than from any of the other systems that invoked this conception, that the MA derived its belief that the ultimate reality has the nature of fire. Salles-Dabadie, however, aptly points to an important difference between the two systems, in that in Stoicism after the fire destroys the created world, it is then reconstructed, and this process is repeated time and again; in the MA, on the other hand, the conception is eschatological and the material world is destroyed only once (A.1. (iv): Salles-Dabadie, 1968, p.81).

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In the light of this fact, Samaritanism, which spoke of a cosmic fire (vid. infra) but shared with the MA a biblical outlook on eschatology, may be a more likely source for the MA's fire doctrine (of course Samaritanism may not itself be free from Stoical influence).

Salles-Dabadie suggests (op. cit., p. 79) that the MA's doctrine of two powers, Nous and Epinoia, is based on the Stoic teaching of the materia (inert, passive matter) and causa/ratio (the principle that gives form to all). Since Epinoia is nowhere in the MA given the attributes of inert matter, we do not find this suggestion very compelling.

(iv) The partial similarities we have observed between the MA, Pythagoreanism, Philonism, and Stoicism, can be paralleled also in the case of other movements. Thus the Hermetic movement in the first and second centuries A.D. taught, like the MA, the existence of a triad (God, Hyle and Pneuma in Hermetic theology), attributed bisexuality to the divinity, and made much play with terms such as Logos, Nous, Fire and Dunameis. Again, the Middle Platonists, who flourished in the same period, had a triad of hypostases made up of Supreme Mind, Second Mind (the Creator) and the World Soul, and saw the great business of life to be the return to the monad. Numenius of Apamea, in the second century, predicated stasis of God (δηλονότι ὁ μὲν πρῶτος θεὸς ἑστὶ ἐστῶς : Des Places, fr. 15 1.2; cf. fr. 4a 11. 5, 29). Moreover there are significant parallels between the MA and the Chaldean Oracles (probably second century), which give a place of importance to such concepts as Silence, Fire, Father, Nous, Paradise, and Dunamis. Finally we may note that Valentinianism also has a row of syzygies, fifteen in all, some of the members of which have the same names as some

of the members of the MA syzygies.

Since so many of the systems of thought to which the ideas of the MA have closest affinity date probably from the second century, this tends to make it likely that the MA is a product of that century. It is impossible, however, to be more precise because the state of our knowledge about the thought of the second century, a period when nearly every system of thought that enjoyed a vogue was profoundly syncretistic, leaves it very uncertain in which direction the lines of influence proceeded among the various movements.

#### Samaritan influences in the MA

We note firstly that in VI. 18.3 the *μεγάλη δύναμις* which with *ἐπίνοια μεγάλη* makes up the first syzygy is stated to be male. This might be because it is identified with *νοῦς* or because it is possibly an abstraction based on the historical Simon, but we think it more likely to be because *μεγάλη δύναμις* translates *חַיִּי (ה) גָּדוֹל*, which is masculine. This Hebrew term is, as we have seen when discussing Acts 8, an extremely common Samaritan periphrasis for the divinity.

The plausibility of the suggestion (which, as far as we know, has not been made before) is supported by the fact that a number of other expressions found in the MA occur as important terms in Samaritan literature, as the following examples from the Memar Marqah (MM) will show:

Root    *ג פ י*    *ג פ י*

MM IV. 5    'The great prophet taught us that Creation was founded on an origin ( *ג פ י* ) and that it was the matter of the Primordial Silence ( *כ ר י ה ג א ט ח ק נ* ) to which it returns'

MM I. 2 'I am who I am, who was and who will be,  
a root (רע) without beginning'.

MM IV. 3 'Moses stood at the very foundations of  
Creation (רע' בראשית) and he  
knew its mystery'.

#### Silence

MM IV. 4 'He is the One who existed above the abyss  
of the Primeval Silence'.

(הוא קעמט על כריה דאשטוקה)

cf. IV. 5 above. (For Jewish parallels see C: Schaller,  
1961, pp. 104-107).

#### Fire (אש)

MM IV. 2 'Fire is part and parcel of all created  
things, since at the Creation it was an  
element for everything'.

MM II. 10 'Fire is the origin by which everything is  
controlled and made to exist'.

#### Treasure house

MM I. 3; III. 1, 5, 9, 10; V.1

#### Hidden and revealed things

MM II. 12; IV. 1, 4, 10 (cf. D: Trotter, 1964, p. 10:

Trotter says of the expression that it is a 'Samaritan cliché').

We have indicated already that we believe that the MA's use  
of the term Hestos derives from Samaritanism. In Samaritan literature  
אעפ is found in three separate connections:

- (i) Used of God, אעפ (like the Philonic  $\epsilon\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ ) denotes  
immutability:

MM IV. 4 'He [God] is the Ancient One who has no  
beginning. He is the One who existed

( $\text{ק'א'ב'ר } \times \text{ו'ק}$ ) above the abyss of the Primeval Silence'.

\*Cowley 23, 12 : 'Since He is the Power which stands  
( $\text{א'ב'ר}$ ) above the Great Silence'.

(\*Cowley, here and below, refers to D: Cowley, 1909)

(ii) With reference to Moses,  $\text{א'ב'ר}$  means that he ascends to heaven through a mystical experience (cf. D.1: Isser, 1973, p. 274):

MM IV. 12 'Where is there the like of Moses, to whom  
the Lord said, "Stand by me now"?'

MM IV. 5 'See how the great prophet stood ( $\text{א'ב'ר } \times \text{ו'ק}$ )  
and began reproving the world'.

(iii) It is, however, in the third Samaritan usage of the term that we, with Kippenberg (D: Kippenberg, 1961, pp. 347-349, n. 136), see the closest parallel with the MA expression Hestos. This usage characterises God, men or angels as 'living':

Cowley 53, 27 : 'The gathering of the living ( $\text{א'א'ב'ר}$ )  
above and of the dead beneath'.

Cowley 27, 18 ' [God] lives ( $\text{א'ב'ר}$ ) eternally, he long  
endures; living ( $\text{א'א'ב'ר}$ ) and dead are  
under his dominion'.

MM I. 17; IV. 95, 112.

It is easier to derive the doctrine of the MA from Samaritanism, which treats men as being of their very nature  $\text{א'א'ב'ר}$ , than from Philo, for whom a man becomes hestos only insofar as he exchanges his own for the divine nature. The threefold title Hestos, stas, stesomenos is admittedly unattested in Samaritan literature (or anywhere else outside the MA and C); we believe, however, that it can more readily be supposed to have been coined through an

understanding of the Samaritan use of the word than in any other way.

It is, of course, true that all our extant Samaritan literature, apart from the text of the Pentateuch, postdates the MA, so the direction of influence could conceivably have been the opposite to that which we have been positing. We find it extremely unlikely, however, that the whole Samaritan tradition should have borrowed some of its key terms from a document as far removed from orthodox Samaritan theology as the MA is.

If, as the evidence adduced would tend to suggest, the author of the MA was a Samaritan, he was clearly a very eclectic one (so England: A.2: England, 1940, p. 75), being as influenced by the pagan thought-world of his day as by his ancestral religion. Might not he have been instead a gentile who was influenced by Samaritan thinking? This seems very unlikely, for his speech betrays him. Not only does he have a very poor command of Greek (witness, inter alia, the barbarism of the title Hestos, stas, stesomenos) but at least once he may be detected in the use of 'a characteristically Semitic idiom' (A.2: Salles-Dabadie, 1969, p. 45: ὁ μὲν οὖν λέγει ὁ λέγει : VI. 18. 2).

#### Christian influences in the MA

There are no quotations from or certain allusions to the New Testament in the MA fragments (though one may wonder whether in the title Hestos, stas, stesomenos one does not catch an echo of the equally barbarous phrase found at Rev. 1.4 and 8 ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ᾄων καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος). Given the sparsity of these fragments and the fact that C has a number of such quotations and allusions, we cannot rule out (pace Schmithals and Salles-Dabadie: A.2: Schmithals



1972, p. 160; A.1. (iv): Salles-Dabadie, 1969, p. 43 n.1) the possibility of Christian influence. It would in fact be strange if the sort of eclectic thinker that the author clearly was should have completely ignored Christianity.

#### The Bisexual motif in the MA

The notion that man was originally bisexual is widely attested in the ancient world. Perhaps the most celebrated locus for the motif is Plato Symp. 17, 18. 191B. Philo, although he derides Plato's myth (Vita contemp. 63) himself speaks of the first (ideal) man as οὗτ' ἴππευ οὕτε ἀνδρ' (De opif. mundi 134; cf. 151-152.), a conception which may have been influenced by the Platonic myth. The motif was also, at least by the fourth century A.D., not unknown in rabbinic Judaism, as the following quotation shows:

R. Jeremiah b. Leazar said: When the Holy one, blessed be He, created Adam, He created him an hermaphrodite, for it is said, "Male and female created He them and called their name Adam". (Gen. 5.2). R. Samuel b. Nahman said: When the Lord created Adam He created him double-faced, then He split him and made him of two backs, one back on this side and one back on the other side.

Gen. R. 8.1 (Soncino transl.); cf. TB

Erub. 18a, Ket. 8a, Ber. 81a.

The idea of hermaphrodite gods is known in the pagan religions of Europe, such as the Pythagorean, the Hermetic and the Chaldean (F: Carcopino, 1942, p. 284 n.2; B: Doresse, 1959, pp. 95, 155-161; F: Lewy, 1956, p. 82) and is especially common in oriental religions (F: Delacourt, 1961, p. xiii). Bisexuality is commonly attributed

to both gods and men in Gnosticism: see the references to the Naassenes and to the Gospels of Thomas and Philip in B: Doresse, 1959, pp. 95, 155-161; cf. Exc. ex Theod. 21. 1-3, Iren. I.18.2).

It is tempting to offer a psychological explanation of the widespread occurrence of this motif. Thus Marie Delcourt (op. cit., p. 67) speaks of

the speculations on cosmogony which, at the end of Antiquity, interpret a common aspiration towards unity, a dream of regeneration and eternal life, an attempt too to reconcile the idea of a God who is necessarily perfect with a reality which is not.

She invokes with approval in this connection the name of Jung. Whether or not this line of interpretation is valid, the fact that the motif was so widely diffused in the second century of our era must make it impracticable to assign a single source for its use in the MA.

#### The MA and Gnosticism

We have already mentioned similarities between the MA and Valentinian Gnosticism. We may further note that Doresse (B: Doresse, 1960, pp. 329-332), having drawn attention to affinities between what he regards as Hippolytus' summary of the MA and two Coptic treatises from Nag Hammadi, viz. the Treatise on the Triple Epiphany, on the Protennoia of Threefold Form, and The Sense of Understanding, the Thought of the Great Power, has gone so far as to suggest that the former might in fact be identical with the MA. Since it is now widely accepted as a result of Frickel's researches that Hippolytus does not preserve a précis of the MA

but literal quotations from it embedded in passages taken from a Paraphrase or Commentary, Doresse's bold suggestion is not likely to be revived, for not only do the MA quotations not occur in the Triple Protennoia (as we may call the Nag Hammadi tract for brevity's sake) but it is difficult to reconcile the thought of the quotations with the thought of the Triple Protennoia. There is no room in the MA for the three monads (Father, Mother, Son) who in the Triple Protennoia proceed from the Word that proceeds from the Thought. Nor is the idea of putting on the person of Jesus compatible with the thinking of the MA. Nevertheless, there are striking similarities of expression between the two works; thus the Triple Protennoia makes use of terms such as Silence, *ἔκων*, *καρπός*, Voice, Word, Root, Thought, and of concepts such as self-engendering, that are reminiscent of the MA. That there is some connection between the two is fairly evident, but the nature and direction of the influence must remain at present quite uncertain. Even the place of the Triple Protennoia within Gnosticism is as yet totally unclear; there are considerable differences of interpretation implicit in the two translations that have so far appeared, and while its German translators (B: Schenke, 1974) place it within the Sethian group, its French translator (B: Janssens, 1974) places it within the Barbelognostic; again, the Berliner Arbeitskreis regard the present text as a Christianising of a non-Christian text, but Prof. R. McL Wilson (unpublished paper, Oxford Patristic Congress, 13th Sept. 1975) has suggested that it may well represent a partial de-Christianising of a Christian text. To attempt to use the Triple Protennoia at present to try to solve the problems of the MA would

be to proceed per obscurum in obscurius.

On parallels between the MA and the Nag Hammadi tractate Bronte, which may or may not be Gnostic, see Chapter 7.12 infra.

Is the MA itself Gnostic? Most scholars believe so, whether they regard it as an early example of a Gnostic text (as do Schmithals and Salles-Dabadie; also Frickel, who sees in it a Grundschrift for Gnosis: A.1. (iv): Frickel, 1968 [1] ) or (as do Haenchen and the majority of scholars) as a latish, partly de-Gnostified specimen. For our part we see no good reason to call a book which does not see matter as evil but rather as a pointer to a higher realm of reality, Gnostic. We cannot see (pace Haenchen, #.2: Haenchen, 1952, p. 338) in the MA system a weakening of the dualism of the Gnostic myth proclaimed by the Simonians of whom Irenaeus wrote. Nor do we see any reason to suppose, pace Frickel, that Gnosticism evolved out of the MA system: there is a basic implausibility in the idea of a religion of cosmic pessimism evolving from one that exudes the spirit of cosmic optimism. In fine, the MA does not speak to us in the accents of any sort of Gnosticism, whether undeveloped and 'archaic' or advanced and 'demythologised'.

#### How Simonian is the MA?

The fact that Hippolytus in the early third century believed the MA to be Simonian scarcely settles the matter very conclusively. The group from which the book emanated was clearly far more Semitic than were the Simonians of whom either Justin or Irenaeus speaks. Further, they believed the world was basically good, they did not connect salvation with the historical Simon and Helena, and in fact they seem to have had nothing at all in common with the Simonians. They spoke of Epinoia, rather than Ennoia, and this Epi-

noia, unlike Ennoia, did not need to be rescued from durance vile. We have little doubt that they were a group of men and women of Samaritan extraction who tried to combine the religion of their fathers with the pagan ideas in vogue in their day and probably with Christian ideas too. They probably issued their Apophasis in the name of 'Simon' because Acts 8 associates with the Simon of whom it speaks the phrase 'the Great Power' which played an important part in their thinking (in both cases it was derived from Samaritan usage). With the Samarian Simon of Gitta they had nothing to do; the Simon they are connected with, in a very loose way, is the Samaritan Simon of Acts.

Our confidence that the MA system cannot without straining all credibility be integrated into the history of Simonianism is confirmed not only by the fact that those scholars who believe, as most do, in its being Simonian, cannot agree among themselves whether Irenaeus Simonianism evolved from the MA system or vice versa but also by the fact that whether they take the MA to represent an early or a late version of the Simonian religion they argue so tendentiously as to invalidate their case. This may be illustrated by reference to two classic proponents of the Simonianism of the MA, Haenchen and Schmithals, the former of whom takes the MA system to be a late, demythologised version of the religion while the latter takes it to be its foundation document.

Haenchen (see Chapter 1, sub anno 1952) has to admit that the MA bears no trace of the persons of Simon and Helena, and that the mythological framework of Irenaeus Simonianism is completely absent from the MA. He is able to defend his thesis

that the MA system developed out of Gnostic Simonianism attested by Irenaeus only by calling the MA system a 'philosophical Gnosis' and regarding it as a demythologised version of the 'mythological Gnosis' of the Irenaeian system. But this looks too much like sleight of hand. What is this 'philosophical Gnosis'? It amounts to a way of escaping from the contingent and the transitory by developing, without benefit of the services of any divine agent, the potentiality for fulfilment that is latent in all things. If this is Gnosis, it is certainly a very different Gnosis from that of Irenaeian Simonianism, and it seems to us that for a religion that originally had taught the necessity, through the offices of a god in human form, of redemption from a world created by and misruled by evil angels to have developed into one that did not speak of creation or redemption at all but argued the need, through a process of self-cultivation, for union with the supreme reality latently active in all things, would be more a metamorphosis than a matter of organic growth and evolution, more a conversion from one dogmatic framework to another than a development of doctrine. Haenchen does not, in fact, offer any reasons at all for thinking the MA system Simonian; rather, he begs the question and concentrates on trying to show how it could have developed out of the Simonianism attested by Irenaeus.

Schmithals (see Chapter 1, sub anno 1956) has argued for his view that the MA represents an archaic, pre-Irenaeian Simonianism in even more tendentious terms. The former of his two principal arguments for the priority of the MA over the Irenaeian system is, as we saw in Chapter 1, that Simon is a proclaimer in the MA and

the object of proclamation in Irenaeus Simonianism, and that whereas in the early Christian centuries proclaimers often became transformed into proclaimed ones, the reverse is never found. This is a valid argument if the MA is Simonian but, as we shall see, Schmithals offers little evidence, and that unconvincing, for believing that it is. When he further argues for the antiquity of the MA system on the ground that it lacks a redeemer figure and that late Gnostic movements, unlike early ones, seldom if ever do so, he is begging the question of the Gnosticism of the MA. If the MA is Gnostic and Simonian, Schmithals' arguments have force in undermining the rival position of Haenchen, but being unpersuaded that it is either we find ourselves unmoved by them.

We are anxious not to become entangled in the exercise, which tends very rapidly to become fruitless and stultifying, of attempting to define Gnosticism, but we would observe that even by Schmithals' own definition the MA is not unequivocally Gnostic. By Gnosticism Schmithals says (A.2: Schmithals, 1971 [1], p. 30) he means

that religious movement which teaches man to understand himself as a piece of divine substance. Although he has fallen, through a disastrous fate, into captivity to an alien world and its demonic rulers, he may be certain of liberation from that captivity because he possesses the awareness of his inalienable divine being.

The world of the MA is not ruled by demonic powers, nor is the 'cosmological dualism' which Schmithals (ibid.) takes to be one

of the principal 'motifs in which this Gnosticism is objectified' evident in the MA, which tends rather (as Schmithals himself allows, vid. infra) towards a monistic view of the universe. Schmithals' attempt to find another Gnostic motif, that of redemption, in the MA (Schmithals, op. cit., pp. 39-40) is very unconvincing. Simon is, he says, the speaker in the MA, and his object is to help others to achieve the self-fulfilment that he has himself achieved:

If a man by virtue of his Dynamis leads other men to the actualization of their Dynamis-Self, this one man is thus the typically Gnostic "redeemed redeemer" who, in that he "redeems" the  $\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  of which he also is a part, is himself "redeemed". Thus it is said of the  $\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  that it "seeks itself, finds itself". Moreover, it therefore is not accidental that in the traditions about him Simon does not appear alone but in a circle of so-called pupils who make the same claim without thereby competing with him.

To take up Schmithals' last point first, it is true that in the Church Fathers we find supposed companions or successors of Simon who make for themselves similar claims to his; notably Menander ('quicquid se Simon dixerat, hoc se Menander esse dicebat': Ps Tert. Adv Haer. 1), but rather than argue, against the plain sense of the patristic texts, that neither for Simon nor for Menander was a unique role claimed, we would acknowledge the inconsistency in what the Fathers say and explain it as



deriving from Irenaeus' idea of the heretics forming an anti-Church with their own system of apostolic succession, the effect of which was to turn Simon and Menander, who will have been rivals each claiming a unique role for himself, into master and disciple respectively.

But to turn to the more substantive claim in the quotation from Schmithals, namely that the speaker presents himself in the MA as helping others to achieve the redemption he has won for himself, this is totally without foundation. The speaker says nothing at all about himself, and we are far from sure, in fact, that the Apophasis is presented as a message from a human being at all: the words (the colophon?) quoted at VI. 18.2, ὑμῖν οὖν λέγω, ἃ λέγω καὶ γράφω ἃ γράφω, when taken together with VI. 9.4, ἀπόφασις φωνῆς καὶ ὀνόματος, may, we suggest, be intended to convey the idea that the MA is a message from the two divine 'offshoots' from the divine reality, Voice and Name. This is uncertain, but even if the MA is intended to be thought of as the composition of a human being, the ideas of the redemption of that human being and of his subsequent redemption of others are equally absent.

We may note that Schmithals allows that in two respects the Gnostic thinking of the MA is defective. He supposes that the system was originally more typically Gnostic but became modified because of Jewish influences (Schmithals, op. cit., p. 42):

The system of the "Great Proclamation" does not represent a premythological form of Gnosticism but one that has been demythologised to a certain extent... The elimination of the

cosmological dualism and the softening of the anthropological as well as the transformation of the pneumatic being into a possibility is in my judgement characteristic of Jewish influence.

Schmithals appears to believe that the first century Simon modified and demythologised an existing form of Gnosticism by purging it of cosmological dualism and of the idea that the pneumatic is bound to be saved and by presenting himself as helping others, through sharing with them an account of his own redemption, to achieve their own redemption. A later generation of Simonians will have elevated Simon into a unique redeemer-figure and remythologised the religion, putting back, for instance the cosmological dualism that Simon had eliminated. That such a process could have occurred, we would not wish to deny, but the involved process of demythologization and remythologisation for which Schmithals argues seems rather implausible, and his whole theory stands or falls by the question whether or not Gnosticism is pre-Christian in origin, on which, as is a matter of common knowledge, scholars remain very divided. We may note that Schmithals' case is weakened by the fact that he feels obliged to say that in its Hippolytan form the MA belongs to the second century, because of reliance on the NT and Galen, and because he perceives that it is not a unitary work in all respects (Schmithals, op. cit., p.40). One wonders whether in the light of Frickel's subsequent work Schmithals would wish now to maintain that the MA, as distinct from C (which alone quotes the NT and echoes Galen), is a first

century product after all.

At best Schmithals only presents us with grounds for thinking that the MA system will precede the Irenaeus if it is Simonian. Its Simonianism is rather taken for granted than proved, the only argument adduced being (*ibid.*) that 'all its terminology betrays its closeness to' Irenaeus Simonianism. But is the terminology really so close? We think not. The Thought motif is common to the MA and to Irenaeus Simonianism, but in the former case the term used is Megale Epinoia, in the latter Prote Ennoia, and the two have very different roles. Both systems make great play with the term Power, but this was a very common motif in the early Christian period (in Judaism, Samaritanism, the Chaldean Oracles, &c.). 'Standing One' is used in the MA of the ultimate reality and in Simonianism of Simon, but in the former case it is not predicated of a human being and occurs only as part of a triadic formula, and in the case of Simonianism its use is attested only in Clement of Alexandria (see Chapter 7. 6 *infra*) and in the Ps Clementines, so it may not have been an original element in Gnostic Simonianism; further, we have argued that the MA derived the term from Samaritanism, and we shall see in Chapter 7 that Clement understood the Simonians to take it in a Philonic sense. In fine, the verbal similarities between the two systems are not close enough to create any presumption of interdependence.

Of Schmithals' theory that early Simonianism used the word 'Christ' to signify humanity as redeemed, preserving a pre-Christian Jewish Gnostic conception, we would observe only that on Schmithals' own admission this remarkable theory is 'a hypothesis, nothing

more' (Schmithals, op. cit., p. 75). Though 'Christ' is used in connection with Simon in some sources (e.g. Hipp. Ref. VI. 9.1; 20. 3) even Schmithals does not claim that these passages preserve anything of the putative pre-Christian Gnostic connotation (though, oddly enough, he does think that Hipp. Ref. VI. 19.6, where the word is not used, but it is only said that Simon was believed to have appeared to the gentiles as the Holy Spirit, preserves an echo of this alleged usage). All the non-Simonian texts Schmithals quotes in which 'Christ' is used collectively may reflect Pauline usage.

#### 4. THE COMMENTARY ON THE MEGALE APOPHASIS (C)

We must now devote a little space to an examination of the Commentary, seeking in particular to discover whether its thinking differs materially from that of the MA itself.

Frickel is of the opinion that the Commentary merely echoes the ideas of the MA, though clothing them in more philosophical language. Barbara Aland, on the other hand (A.1. (iv): Aland, 1973), believes that whereas the Gnosticism of the MA is uncertain the Commentator is decidedly Gnostic in outlook.

In VI. 18.2-7 Haenchen speaks of the imagery becoming confused (A.2: Haenchen, 1952, p. 334). Aland suggests that if one takes VI. 18. 4b seq. to come not from the MA but from C (see Appendix B. ad loc.) the confusion disappears. The MA speaks of Epinoia as female, whereas in C it has become androgynous; the MA says of Dunamis and Epinoia that they  $\delta\upsilon\tau\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\iota\chi\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota$  whereas C uses this verb of the relationship between male and female elements

within Epinoia. What the shift in usage signifies is evident, Aland contends, from VI. 18.6, where in the words ἀνέκρυψε τὸν πατέρα ἐν ἑαυτῇ C takes up the MA theme of hiddenness and gives it a moral connotation, Epinoia being thought of as a fallen entity similar to the angels in Irenaeus' Simonian account, with her concealment of the Father standing in parallel to Irenaeus' angels' imprisonment of Ennoia. All this, Aland thinks, bespeaks a Gnostic viewpoint.

Aland is right, we believe, to attribute VI. 18. 4b seq. to C, but mistaken in her exegesis of the passage. Any idea that Epinoia has fallen or that her concealment of the Father within herself is irregular, is totally absent from the passage. The phrase οὐδὲν διαφέρει δύναμις ἐπινοίας shows sufficiently clearly that the passage is concerned with complementarity rather than with opposition. As Salles-Dabadie perceives (op. cit. p.51), the confusion in the passage is due simply to the fact that the author did not have a 'metaphysical head'. He wished to stress two notions, the Aristotelian doctrine about the divinity, αὐτὸν ἄρα νοεῖ, εἴπερ ἐστὶ τὸ κρατίστου, καὶ ἔστιν ἡ νόησις νοήσεως νόησις (Met. XII. 9, 1074b, 34) and the idea that the androgynous principle pervades the whole universe. Being incapable of using abstract terms in an orderly, systematic way, the Commentator has multiplied images, constantly adding fresh ones to qualify or develop the implications of ones that he, or the author of the MA, has previously employed.

The MA having spoken of an interval of boundless air, an interval without beginning or end, which separates the male

dunamis from the female epinoia, which is in all probability no more than a graphic way of locating one in heaven and the other on earth, the Commentator was worried that the 'interval' might be thought of as devoid of divine activity and therefore had the Father, the Hestos, the boundless Power, operating within the interval to sustain all finite things, as if the interval were a spatial reality. He was also anxious to explain how the μεγάλη δύναμις and the ἐπίνοια proceeded from the Father, and obliquely invoked Aristotelianism to his aid: the Father, who is himself δύναμις, has a thought of himself and thus becomes an object of knowledge, and this knowledge (ἐπίνοια), since it is knowledge of him who is δύναμις, contains or conceals within itself the Father/δύναμις, and is therefore itself androgynous. This line of thought involves a formal, but only a formal, contradiction between the MA and C on whether ἐπίνοια is female or male-female. It also in effect ignores the existence of the μεγάλη δύναμις. However, we believe that one misreads the Commentator's intentions if one takes him to be offering an alternative understanding of the world to that of the MA. In neither the MA nor C are μεγάλη δύναμις, ἐπίνοια and the like to be taken as hypostases; they are but images (visions, Salles-Dabadie frequently calls them), and it is to the doctrine behind the imagery that one should look. In his exposition of the androgynous principle C is at one with the MA. His exploration of the nature of the procession of the 'roots' from the Father, with the help of Aristotelian thinking, represents an extension to, but no conflict with, the thought of the MA, to which the

Commentator remains faithful. We see no grounds, therefore, for taking C, with Aland, as a Gnostified version of the MA. If the MA is Gnostic, so is C; if not, not.

In VI. 12.1, where C says that the MA teaches that all parts of the Fire, visible and invisible alike, have *φρόνησις* and equal *γνώμη* (equal with each other, or with the Fire?), although this doctrine cannot be explicitly found in extant MA quotations (unless the phrase *φρόνησιν ... καὶ γνώμην ἴσην* is itself, as Wendland supposes, from the MA), there is no reason to suspect the Commentator of being unfaithful to the thought of the MA (on the obscure passage VI.11, see notes *ad loc.*, in Appendix B). Given the affinity of thought already noticed between the MA and Stoicism, such a doctrine could have easily been derived by the author of the MA from what has been described as

the dynamic vitalism of the Stoics, who saw the universe as a single living organism held together, enlivened and ensouled, by the Divine Fire which was the fullness both of life and intelligence.

(E: Armstrong, 1953, p. 20).

Alternatively, the author of the MA may have been echoing the teaching of Xenocrates, a Platonist of the Old Academy, of whom Clement of Alexandria (Str. V. 13) says:

καθόλου γ' οὖν τὴν περὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔννοιαν Ξενοκράτης ὁ  
Καλχρηδόνιος οὐκ ἀπελπίσει καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀλόγοις ζῴσι.

We have noted earlier that C shares with Philo a predilection for the allegorical interpretation of the Pentateuch. C goes beyond Philo in attaching salvific value to a similar exegesis

of Homer and other pagan Greek literature (VI. 16.1 ἀρκεῖ τὸ λεχθὲν ὑπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν πρὸς ἐπίγνωσιν τῶν ὅλων), but, to judge from the space given to each, it was the Pentateuch that was considered the more important. The allegorical interpretation of the names of the Pentateuchal books as referring to the senses is of special interest to us, in that it has no parallel in Philo, nor, to the best of our knowledge, elsewhere. Frickel (A.1. (iv): Frickel, 1972 [3] ) takes the allegory to be original to the Commentator. We shall argue (Appendix B ad loc.) that the five books were originally taken to refer respectively to Sight, Taste, Smell, Hearing, [Touch] (not Sight, Hearing Smell, Taste, [Touch] ) and we therefore think it likely that the allegory was not original to C: rather, C took it over and re-arranged the order of the connotations to bring them into line with the order presupposed in the preceding allegory of the four rivers. If we are right in this, it is natural to suppose that it was from the MA itself that the Commentator derived the allegory in its original form.

Two other allegories occur in the text of C: that of the development and birth of the human embryo (VI. 14.7-11) and that of the rivers of Paradise (VI. 15.1). Whereas Frickel believes the second to have been derived from a Gnostic source (op. cit., pp. 446-449), our contention (see Appendix B ad loc.) is that this is uncertain; in its present form it is certainly not Gnostic in its teaching. Although the two allegories again involve an extension to the thinking of the MA, neither represents a shift in a Gnostic, or indeed any other, direction.

Our conclusion is that the thought of C remains faithful to that of the text that he is paraphrasing. To the degree that he



extends the MA's thinking by invoking philosophical and medical terminology he is merely taking one step further in the syncretism that is already an unmistakable characteristic of the MA itself.

In our notes we shall point to Semitic turns of expression in C (see on VI. 14.2-4a, VI. 17. 2c, VI. 17.4-7) which, taken together with the evidence of content, strongly suggest that C was a member of the same Samaritan circles as the author of the MA. Of the date of C, we can say no more than that it must fall between the MA (which we have not been able to date any more exactly than to place it somewhere in the course of the second century) and Hippolytus. Dependence on Galen (c. 129-199 A.D.) is suggested by parallels in VI. 14 and 15 (see Appendix B ad loc.), which would give a date for C in the second half of the second century, or possibly in the early years of the third. England argues that the NT quotations (in the MA, but as a result of Frickel's work they all turn out to come from C) reflect a developed form of the NT Canon and therefore require a late second century dating at the earliest (A.2: England, 1940, p. 72), but we are unconvinced that knowledge of as wide a range of books as is here indicated (Matthew or Luke; 1 Peter; 1 Corinthians) would be unlikely before the debate over the Canon was concluded.

England further argues (A.2: England, 1940, pp. 251-156) that speculative Simonianism (his name for the sect from which the MA emanated) attached salvific importance to sexual practices, both normal and perverted, seeing therein a sacrament of impregnation by the divine Logos, and that they sought to achieve a mystical ascent to the divine Monad through an allegorical under-

standing of the Pentateuch. We shall, to conclude our discussion of C, summarise and evaluate England's evidence for this very bold contention.

In VI. 10.2 the enigmatic reference to 'the word of the Lord which is begotten in the mouth, both  $\rho\acute{\eta}\mu\alpha$  and  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ , there being no other place where begetting is accomplished', is taken by England to allude to oral sexual intercourse. VI. 17.7, which speaks of the Flaming Sword, otherwise the Logos, which turns to semen and milk, and of 'the place of the Lord in which the Logos is generated', refers, England suggests, to normal sexual commerce. England fails to notice that his interpretation of the second text requires us to take it as contradicting the assertion of the earlier one about there being no place of begetting apart from the mouth. We believe England's exegesis of the texts to be far-fetched. True, his argument that since man is not, unlike the Monad and the offshoots, hermaphrodite, but is divided into two sexes, the union of the sexes may have been seen as a way of ascending to the androgynous deity (p. 245), is not unattractive, but it is completely speculative, since it is nowhere stated that sexual practices have spiritual significance, and the two texts quoted are quite susceptible of alternative exegesis. In VI. 10.2 the meaning may be that one cannot become a believer unless an evangelist sow the seed and that the mouth of the evangelist is the only place whence this word can proceed. In VI. 17.7 we note first that the text is corrupt and secondly that even if we emend the MS reading (see Salles-Dabadie, op. cit., p. 34) from  $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\rho\iota\omicron\nu \tau\acute{o} \tau\omicron\upsilon$  to  $\kappa\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon \tau\acute{o} \tau\omicron\upsilon$ , the latter can as readily mean 'a proper place' as 'the place of the Lord'; the most straight-

forward way to take the passage is to suppose the author to be saying that the divine Logos enters the human body through semen or milk, depending on the sex of the person, and works within him or her from the appropriate place, so that the begetting of children by the male of the species, and the feeding of them by the female, is effected by the divine principle working within physical substances.

As for the allegorical understanding of the Pentateuch, of which we have spoken already, England stands on firmer ground, though we shall see (Appendix B ad loc.) that his attempts to find in VI. 15-16 references to mystery rites are unconvincing.

From this examination of the Commentary, we conclude that it emanated from the same sect as the MA itself. Since the OT references in C are not all Pentateuchal (VI. 10.1, 2: Isaiah, 5.7; 40.6-7), we would infer that by the time of C the sect included perhaps ex-Jews or ex-Christians as well as ex-Samaritans. The Commentary shows the same eclectic attitude to material from outside the OT as the MA, subjecting the writings of Greek poets and philosophers to the same allegorical exegesis as the text of the OT. Perhaps some of the members of the sect may have been Gentiles by this time, but the presence of several Semitisms in the text (see Appendix B on VI. 14.2 and 3; 17.2c; 17.4-7) and the poor knowledge of Greek evinced (see Appendix B on VI. 18.4-7) shows that the Commentator himself was scarcely one of them.

Is there anything to connect the Commentary with the Simonian Gnostics? Haenchen (A.2: Haenchen, 1952, p. 333) would connect  $\epsilon\chi\omega\upsilon\gamma\alpha\rho\ \epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\chi\upsilon\tau\omega\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\nu$  (the Father contained

the Great Thought in Himself), VI. 18.5, with the Zeus-Athene motif that was used by the Simonian Gnostics, seeing in it a reference to the tradition that Athene (as Prote Ennoia of Zeus) sprang from her father's head. Were there any other indications of a connection between C and the Simonian Gnostics, this suggestion might carry some weight, despite the fact that we are concerned with ἐννοια μεγάλη here, not with πρώτη ἐννοια, but there are none.

5. HIPPOLYTUS AND IRENAEUS: Ref. VI. 19, 20.

With these two chapters we find ourselves back in the familiar world of the Simonian Gnostics. Ennoia has become Epinoia (through the influence of the MA and the Commentary) but otherwise the system of thought is scarcely to be distinguished from the form of Simonian Gnosticism attested by Irenaeus, and much of the language and layout is so close to Irenaeus' Simonian account that direct dependence on the latter writer is certain. Whether Hippolytus had other sources, and whether he had personal knowledge of Simonian Gnostics, are questions to which we shall seek answers in the discussion that follows.

If we eliminate from VI. 19 and 20 those elements which are common (bating insignificant variants) to Hippolytus and Irenaeus (viz. the passages underlined in the text reproduced in Appendix A), we arrive at the following points as peculiar to Hippolytus:

- (i) Simon fabricated his theological system as a cover for his infatuation with Helena.
- (ii) The Simonians allegorised the accounts of Helen and the torch and of the Wooden Horse of Troy.
- (iii) Helena 'disturbed the powers in the world by reason

of her unsurpassable beauty'.

- (iv) The Simonians promoted sexual licence, using such slogans as, 'It matters not where you sow the seed, so long as you sow it'.
- (v) Anyone who used the names 'Simon' and 'Helena' instead of the titles 'Lord' and 'Lady' was excommunicated.
- (vi) Simon had a contest with Peter in Rome.
- (vii) Simon thereafter left Rome and taught sitting under a plane tree.
- (viii) Simon died by premature burial in an attempt to prove that he could rise on the third day.
- (ix) The double occurrence of the identification of Helena with the lost sheep. The second time the wording agrees with that of Irenaeus and Luke in speaking of the sheep as ἀπολωλός, but on the first occasion Hippolytus uses the Matthaean πλανώμενον (or rather the perfect form πεπλανημένον).
- (x) In VI. 19.7 Hippolytus adds the words ἕως νῦν to a reference to the fact that those who believe in Simon and Helena ignored the prophets, which is otherwise lifted bodily from Irenaeus.

As to point (i), the critical reader may well ask why, if the Simonians made a virtue of promiscuity, as Irenaeus and (iv) above assert, should Simon have been anxious to disguise a liaison with Helena, and will conclude that this assertion bears all the signs of a tart Hippolytan embellishment.

(ii) may well be a conjecture of Hippolytus based on the Irenaeian tradition that the Simonians identified Helena with

Helen of Troy. On the other hand, the fact that Hippolytus alludes to two specific episodes from the Homeric story suggests that he may be retailing particulars that he has, by written or oral transmission, received from someone else.

(iii) The nonpareil beauty of Helen was a commonplace of ancient literature (although Hippolytus' actual phrase τὸ ἀνυπερβλήτων αὐτῆς κάλλος is not attested elsewhere). It is possible that Hippolytus is contradicting Irenaeus at this point by implying that the angels were lusting after Helena (as in Epiphanius) rather than that they were jealous of her. The context, however, indicates that Hippolytus is not here talking about the angels (in VI. 19.3 he speaks of them, having them incarnate Helena in a variety of forms, though he does not mention the motive given by Irenaeus, φθόνος), but about human beings. What he is saying is, we suggest, that in her various incarnations Helena through her beauty stirred up trouble among the powers-that-be in the world - such as, in the examples quoted, the armies of Greece and Troy. The purpose of the κάλλος theme is to characterise Helena as an inveterate trouble-maker. Whether it is of Hippolytus' own devising from a written or oral source must be quite uncertain.

(iv) The quotation of specific slogans allegedly used by the Simonians must create a presumption that Hippolytus is here basing himself on something more than conjecture or surmise.

(v) This detail is also rather circumstantial and is again probably based on more than an eisegesis of the text of Irenaeus.

(vi) The assertion that Simon had an encounter with Peter in Rome is hardly likely to have been concocted by Hippolytus,

though whether he will have had it from a written or an oral source must remain quite uncertain. What is clear is that the story is most unlikely to be true. It is evidently intended as a sequel to the encounter in Acts 8 (although in our view the Simon of Acts 8 is not Simon of Gitta): note the mention of apostles in the plural, despite the fact that only Peter is named - this, we suggest, is due to the presence of John alongside of Peter in Acts 8.

By the time that Hippolytus was writing, the *Acta Petr.* (? 180 -90 A.D., : cf. F: Hennecke, II, 1974, p. 275) will have seen the light of day. This document also represents Simon as having a contest with the apostle Peter in Rome and thereafter leaving the city (for Aricia and Terracina in this case) and soon after this dying. Some scholars (e.g. Schmidt and Beyschlag) believe that Hippolytus must have been influenced by this account (A.1.(vi): Schmidt, 1903, p. 104; A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 19, 20 n.25). Our view is that Hippolytus may have been totally unacquainted with the *Acta Petr.*: its scene is certainly set in Rome, where Hippolytus lived, but Rome is only one of several candidates for its place of composition (Hennecke, *ibid.*); apart from the details mentioned above, the narratives have nothing in common (they have, for instance, totally different accounts of Simon's death).

We do not propose to submit the *Acta Petr.* to a detailed examination since it is common ground among scholars that neither in intention nor in fact is it a witness to the history of Simonianism. The Simon of this work is a mere bogeyman (cf. A.2: Beyschlag, 1974,

p. 67) and 'the whole emphasis...rests on the constantly reiterated fact that Simon is nothing but a magician, an evil wizard' (Hennecke, op. cit., p. 272). Though it frequently mentions Simon, the book is equally uninterested in his teaching and in his character: he serves merely as an ἄγγελος τοῦ διαβόλου (33 (3)) whose series of defeats at Peter's hands have the edifying function of encouraging the Christian reader to believe in God's victory over Satan. If any historical traditions about Simon of Gitta were used, they have been irretrievably lost in the jungle of didactic fiction.

The Acta Petr., like the other Conflict narratives, places the Roman encounter of Peter and Simon in the principate of Nero. As England observes (A.2: England, 1940, p. 109), this doubtless results from a conflation of the Justin statue tradition, the tradition of Peter's martyrdom in Rome under Nero, and the Acts 8 narrative. The Conflict traditions cannot be traced back beyond the latter part of the second century and there is no good ground for supposing that Peter and Simon of Gitta ever met.

(vii) The statement that Simon left Rome (for Gitta? The MS is defective: τ...τη , for which Hilgenfeld plausibly suggested that one should read τῇ Γίττῃ ) and sat teaching under a plane tree seems to have no polemical basis; probably Hippolytus will have had it from a written or oral source, perhaps a Simonian one.

(viii) That Simon had himself buried alive because he feared exposure of his trickeries and had decided to risk all on an attempt to raise himself from the dead on the third day, is obviously a derisive Christian story and probably lacks any



foundation in fact, inasmuch as Simonianism could scarcely have outlived its founder had his departure been so bathetic.

(ix) The double mention of the lost sheep motif suggests to us that Hippolytus had a second written source apart from Irenaeus.

(x) Hippolytus' gratuitous insertion of *ὡς νῦν* into a passage taken straight from Irenaeus must indicate that there were Simonians active in his own day; very probably he will have had some contact with them, or at least will have been acquainted with some Simonian literature.

We conclude from this analysis that Hippolytus, apart from the text of Irenaeus, had access to other Christian accounts of Simonianism (perhaps including, we may conjecture, the Syntagma of Justin) and may very well have had some personal knowledge of Simonians or of Simonian writings.

#### 6. THE EPITOME: Ref. X. 12 (2)

The elements in the Epitome which are not present in either the MA fragments or the Commentary are very few: πάνσοφος...στοιχεῖα...αὐτὸν δὲ εἶναι, ὁ Σίμων λέγει τὸν ἐσθλὸν, σάντα, σθησόμενον, ὅντα δύναμιν τὴν ὑπὲρ τὰ πάντα.

The first two phrases are presumably the handiwork of Hippolytus himself, and the assertion that the author of the MA identified himself with the Hestos is unsupported by the MA itself and is probably an unwarranted conjecture on the part of the Christian presbyter. The phrase δύναμιν τὴν ὑπὲρ τὰ πάντα (cf. VI. 19.4) goes back to Irenaeus.

## 7. HISTORICAL CONCLUSIONS

(i) Our investigations have led us to believe that the MA and the Commentary on it used by Hippolytus were both products of an eclectic sect composed mainly of ex-Samaritans which flourished in the second century and probably claimed descent, fictitiously, from the Simon of Acts 8. This sect affirmed the goodness of the material universe (which their contemporaries the Gnostics vigorously denied) and spoke of a divine principle permeating all things, hidden or manifest, and which in man, if it were fostered until he reached his potential, would unite him with the divine Monad, the Father. Every element in their religious system can be paralleled elsewhere in religions and philosophies of the second century, but the synthesis was their own; it constituted a unique world religion. We do not know where the sectaries lived (it may have been any city with a sizeable Samaritan population, e.g. Caesarea, Alexandria or Rome) but the sect seems to have been very short-lived, for after Hippolytus we never hear of it again.

(ii) It is possible that Hippolytus was right to suppose that the Simonian Gnostics of his day used the MA, attracted by the fact that it bore the name of (a) Simon. If so, however, they must have found it hard to reconcile its teachings with their own. On the whole, it is more likely that Hippolytus was in error on this matter.

(iii) As for the Simonian Gnostics, we learn from Hippolytus that they existed in his day and that they were at least reputed to

be licentious in their morals. Since he does not confine himself to generalised allegations but quotes slogans that he says they used, we suspect that he had reliable information on this matter. The traditions that Simon and Helena were regarded with such awe that their devotees were permitted to refer to them only by honorific titles, and that Simon taught under a plane tree, have also a prima facie case for acceptance as historical.

(iv) Of the historical Simon of Gitta Hippolytus preserves no independent traditions.

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FOOTNOTES

(1) A number of writers (e.g. Legge, A.2: Legge, I, 1915, p.5; D'Alès, A.1. (iv): D'Alès, 1906, p. xxv n.3) wrongly give 1852 as the date of Jacobi's article.

(2) Frickel has argued from an examination of the Epitome as a whole that it did not come about as a précis of the corpus of the Elenchos, but is independent of it and comes from a separate source; it may, he thinks, have originally stood in an older writing of Hippolytus (A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], pp.56 -74). On this point Beyschlag, who is in most respects very much opposed to Frickel's views, agrees with him (A.1.(iv): Beyschlag, 1970, col. 669).

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APPENDIX A:

the text of Ref. VI. 9 - 20, X. 12 in Wendland's edition.

sigla: MA = Megale Apophasis

C = Commentary/Paraphrase

H = Hippolytan composition

I = Irenaeus

- 1 ὅτι οὕτως ἡγήτησαν Σίμωνα τὸν μέγαν ἀπεικάζοντες τῶν Ἀβελ ὁ  
τάχων, ἀνθρώπων γεννημένων οὕτως θεῶν. εἰ δὲ ἔχει τὰ τῆς εἰκότος  
ἀκριβὲς καὶ πέπονθεν ὁ μέγας πάθος τι παρατλήσαντες Ἀνδρόν, ἐπι-  
2 ῥησάμενον μετεδώκεν τοῦ Σίμωνος τοῦς υἱετακούς, ὅτι Χριστός  
οὐκ ἦν Σίμων ὁ ἐστὼς, σίγας, στήσαντες, ἀλλ' ἀνθρώπος ἦν ἐκ  
σπέρματος, γέννημα γυναικός, ἐξ αἱμάτων καὶ ἐπιθυμίας σαρκικῆς  
καθέπερ καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ γεννημένοι καὶ ὅτι τινὲς οὕτως ἔχει,  
3 προοίοντος τοῦ λόγου ῥηδίων ἐπιδείξομεν. λέγει δὲ ὁ Σίμων μετα-  
φράζων τὸν νόμον Μωϋσέως ἀνοήτως τε καὶ κακοτέχνως. Μωσέως  
γὰρ λέγοντος, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς πῦρ γλέγον ἐστὶ καὶ κατακαίσκει, δε- 10  
ξάμενος τὸ λεχθέν ἐκ Μωσέως οὐκ ὀρθῶς, πῦρ εἶναι τῶν ὅλων  
λέγει τὴν ἐσχέρην, οὐ νοήσας τὸ εἰρημένον, ὅτι θεὸς οὐ πῦρ, ἀλλὰ πῦρ  
γλέγον καὶ κατακαίσκει, οὐκ αὐτὸν διασπών μόνον τὸν νόμον Μω-  
4 σέως, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν σκοτεινὸν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ τὸν ἄσπερον.  
δε εἶναι δύναμιν ὁ Σίμων προσεργόρκει τῶν ὅλων τὴν ἐσχέρην, λέγων 15  
οὕτως. | τοῦτο τὸ γράμμα ἀποφάσκει φωνῆς καὶ οὐκ αὐτῶς ἐξ ἐπι-  
νοίας τῆς μεγάλης δυνάμεως τῆς ἀπεργάνου. διὸ ἔστι ἐσφραγισμένον.  
κακῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκκαλεσάμενοι, κείμενον ἐν τῷ οἰκητήριον, οὐ ἡ ῥίζα  
5 τῶν ὅλων τεθεμελιώταται. | οἰκητήριον δὲ λέγει εἶναι τὸν ἀνθρώπον  
τοῦτον τὸν ἐξ αἱμάτων γεννημένον, καὶ κατοικεῖν ἐν αὐτῷ τὴν 20  
ἀπεργάνου δύναμιν, ἣν ῥίζαν εἶναι τῶν ὅλων φησὶν. | ἔστι δὲ ἡ ἀπέ-  
ργαντος δύναμις. τὸ πῦρ, κατὰ τὸν Σίμωνα οὐδὲν ἄλλου, καθάπερ  
6 οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπλᾶ λέγοντες εἶναι τὰ τέσσαρα στοιχεῖα | καὶ τὸ πῦρ  
ἀπλοῦν εἶναι νενομήσαν, ἀλλὰ γὰρ εἶναι [τῇ] τοῦ πνεύματος διπλῆν τινα  
τὴν φύσιν, καὶ τῆς διπλῆς ταύτης καλεῖ τὸ μὲν τι κορυπτόν, τὸ δὲ τι 25  
φανερὸν. κεκρυφθῆναι δὲ τὰ κορυπτά ἐν τοῖς φανερῶς τοῦ πνεύματος, καὶ  
τὰ φανερὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐπὶ τῶν κορυπτῶν γηγενῆναι. ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο,  
ὅπερ Ἀριστοτέλης δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ καλεῖ ἡ Πλάτων νοητὸν καὶ

α?)

- αἰσθητόν. καὶ τὸ μὲν φανερόν τοῦ πνεύματος πάντα ἔχει ἐν αὐτῷ οὐα 7  
ἐν τις ἐπινοήσῃ ἢ καὶ λάθῃ παραλίπῶν τῶν ὁρατῶν. τὸ δὲ κορυπτόν  
πάν ὅ τι ἐννοήσῃ τις νοητὸν καὶ πνευρὸς τὴν αἰσθητὴν ἢ καὶ  
παραλείπει μὴ διανοηθείς, καθόλου δὲ ἔστιν εἶπερ, πάντων τῶν 8  
ὅντων αἰσθητῶν τε καὶ νοητῶν, ὧν ἐκείνος κρυπτόν καὶ φανερόν.  
προσεργόρκει, ἔστι θησαυρὸς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ὑπεροφάνιον, οἷοι δὲ ἰσχυρὸν  
μέγα ὡς (τὸ) δι' ὁρίον βλεπόμενον τῶν Νεβουχοδονόσορ, ἐξ οὗ πάντα 9  
ὡς τρέφεται. καὶ τὸ μὲν φανερόν εἶναι τοῦ πνεύματος νομίζει τὸ 9  
πρόκειον, τοὺς κλάδους, τὰ φύλλα, τὸν ἔξωθεν αὐτῷ περικείμενον  
φύλλον. | ἀπαντα, φησί, ταῦτα τοῦ μεγάλου δένδρου ἀνεφθέρτα ἐκ 10  
τῆς πυφάγου τοῦ πνεύματος ἐφραίνεται φλογός. | ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ δέν- 10  
δρου ἐκ ἐξοικονισθῆναι καὶ τὴν αὐτοῦ μορφήν ἀπολάβῃ, εἰς ἀπο-  
θήκην τίθεται, οὐκ εἰς τὸ πῦρ. γέγονε μὲν γὰρ, φησὶν, ὁ καρπός,  
ἵνα εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην τεθῇ, τὸ δὲ ἄγρυον, ἵνα παραδοθῇ τῷ πνεύ, 15  
ὅπερ ἐστὶ πρόκειον, οὐκ αὐτοῦ γάρ ἐκ αὐτοῦ καρποῦ γεγεννημένον.  
10. καὶ τοῦτο ἔστι, φησί, τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐν τῇ γράφῃ. οὐ γὰρ 1  
ἀπαιτῶν κορυπτόν Σαβαῶθ οἶκος τοῦ ἱερῆς ἐστὶ, καὶ ἀνθρώπος τοῦ  
ἱουδα νεόφρονος | ἡγενημένον. εἰ δὲ ἀνθρώπος τοῦ ἱουδα νεόφρονος 16  
ἡγενημένον, δέδωκεται, φησὶν, ὅτι ἔξωλον οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἀλλ' ἡ ἀνθρώ- 20  
πος ἐστίν. ἀλλὰ περὶ τῆς ἐκκρίσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ διακρίσεως ἱκανῶς, 2  
φησὶν, ἐφάρκην ἡ γράφῃ, καὶ πρὸς διδασκαλίαν ἐρεκεῖ τοῖς ἐξοικονομή-  
νοῖς τὸ λεχθέν. ὅτι πάντα οὗς λόγους, καὶ πάντα δόξα σαρκὸς ὡς  
ἀνθρώπος λόγους. ἐξηράνθη ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἀνθρώπος αὐτοῦ ἐξέπεσε. τὸ 25  
δὲ ἥμα κορυπτόν μὲν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἥμα δὲ, φησὶν, ἐστὶ κορυπτόν  
25 τὸ ἐν στόματι γεννώμενον ἥμα καὶ λόγος, ἀλλὰ δὲ ἡ κορυπτόν γενέσεως  
οὐκ ἔστι.

11. τοιοῦτος δὲ ὄντος, ὡς δι' ὀλίγων εἰπεῖν, κατὰ τὸν Σίμωνα  
τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ πάντων τῶν ὄντων ὁρατῶν καὶ ἐσφραγισμένων, ὧν αὐτὸς  
ἐννοῶν καὶ (ἀν)ήκων, ἀνθρώπων καὶ (ἀν)θρώπων ἐν τῇ ἀποφάσει

πΑ



τὸ ἐπιφρονόμενον ἐπ' αὐτῷ τοῦ ὕδατος· ὃ ἐν μὴ ἐξαικονισθῇ, μετὰ τοῦ  
κόσμου ἀπολείπεται, δύναται μέλειν νόνον καὶ μὴ ἐνεργεῖς γενόμενον —  
τοῦτο ἔστι. φησί, τὸ εἰρημένον· εἴτε μὴ ὅτε τῷ κόσμῳ κατακριθῶ-  
μεν· —· ἐν δὲ ἐξαικονισθῇ καὶ γένηται ἀπὸ στικτῆς ἀμερίστου, ὥς  
γέγραπται ἐν τῇ Ἀποκάλυψι· τὸ μικρὸν μέγα γενήσεται. | τὸ δὲ μέγα 5  
ἔσται εἰς τὸν ἄπειρον αἰῶνα καὶ ἀπαράλλεκτον, τὸ μὴ κέτι γινόμενον.  
| πῶς οὖν καὶ τίνα τρόπον, φησί, πλάσσει τὸν ἀνθρώπον ὁ θεός; ἐν  
παραδείσῳ, ὅπως γὰρ αὐτῷ δοκεῖ. ἔστω. φησί, παρόδεικτος ἡ μήτρα.  
καὶ ὅτι τοῦτο ἔστιν ἀληθὲς ἡ γραφὴ διδάξει ὅτε λέγει· ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ  
πλάσσειν οὗ ἐν μήτρᾳ μητρός σου· καὶ τοῦτο γὰρ οὗτω θέλει γε- 10  
γῆσθαι. τὸν παρόδεικτον, φησί, ἀληθινῶν ὁ Μωσῆς τὴν μήτραν  
ἐποίησεν, εἴτερο δὲ τῷ λόγῳ πιστεύειν. εἰ δὲ πλάσσει ὁ θεός ἐν μή-  
τρᾳ μητρός τὸν ἀνθρώπον, τουτέστιν ἐν παραδείσῳ, ὥς ἔφη, ἔστω  
παρόδεικτος ἡ μήτρα. Ἐδὲμ δὲ τὸ γόριον, ὅταν εἰς ἐκπορευόμενος ἐξ  
Ἐδὲμ ποτίζῃ τὸν παρόδεικτον· ὁ οὐραλός. οὗτος. φησί, ἀφ' οὗ  
ῥεται ὁ οὐραλός· εἰς τέσσαρας ἀρχάς· ἐκτέρωθεν γὰρ τοῦ ὁμα- 15  
λινὸς δύο εἰσὶν ἀρτηρίαι περιαιτταμέναι, ὅμοιοι πνεύματος, καὶ δύο  
φλέβες, ὅμοιοι αἵματος. ἐπειδὴν δέ, φησὶν, ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἐδὲμ χορίου  
ἐκπορευόμενος ὁ οὐραλός ἐμφυῖ τῷ γενομένῳ κατὰ τὸ ἐπιγέστορον,  
εἰ ὅταν ὁ κοινὸς | πάντες προσηγορεύουσιν ὁμαλόν \* \* αἱ δὲ δύο φλέβες, 20  
δι' ὧν ἡμεῖς καὶ γέρεται ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἐδὲμ τοῦ χορίου τὸ αἷμα, κατὰ τὰς  
10 καλονόμενας πύλας τοῦ ἥπατος, αἵτινες τὸ γεννόμενον τρέφουσιν· αἱ  
ἐρτηρίαι, αἷς ἔφημεν ὅμοιοις εἶναι πνεύματος, ἐκτέρωθεν περιαιττα-  
σται τὴν κούτην κατὰ τὸ πλατὺ ὅστωεν, πρὸς τὴν μέγαν συνάπτου-  
σαν ἀρτηρίαν, τὴν κατὰ ῥάγην καλουμένην ἀορτήν, καὶ οὕτως διὰ τὰς  
τῶν παρασθιζόντων ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν ὁδεύσαν τὸ πνεῦμα κίνησιν ἐργά- 15  
11 ῥεται τῶν ἐμβρύων. πλαττόμενον γὰρ τὸ βρέφος ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ

οὕτε τῷ στόματι τροφήν λαμβάνει οὕτε τοῖς ῥισίν ἀναπνέει· ἐν ὑγρῷ  
γὰρ ὑπάρχοντι αὐτῷ παρὰ πόδας ἢ ὁ θάνατος εἰ ἀπέπνευσεν· ἐπε-  
σπίατο γὰρ ἐν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑγρῶν καὶ ἐφθόγη. ἀλλὰ γὰρ ὅλον περιέ-  
σφηνται τῷ καλουμένῳ χιτῶνι ἐμπίον, τρέφεται δὲ δι' ὁμφαλὸν καὶ  
5 διὰ τῆς (ἀορτῆς τῆς) κατὰ ῥάγην, ὥς ἔφη, τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος οὐ-  
σίαν λαμβάνει.  
15 Ὁ οὖν ποτεῖός, φησὶν, ὁ ἐκπορευόμενος ἐξ Ἐδὲμ εἰς τέσσαρας  
ἀφ' οὗς εἰς ἀρχάς, ὅμοιους τέσσαρας, τουτέστιν εἰς τέσσαρας αὐθιγὰς  
τοῦ γεννωμένου, ὅρασιν, [ἐκόντων] ὁσφρησάν, γένον καὶ ἀήνην. ταύτας  
10 γὰρ ἔχει μορὰς τὰς αὐθιγὰς ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ πλάσσειν τὸν πει-  
δίον. οὗτος, φησὶν, ἔστιν ὁ νοῦς, ὃν ἔθηκε Μωσῆς, καὶ πρὸς τοῦτον  
αὐτὸν τὸν νόμον γέγραπται τῶν βιβλίων ἕκαστον, ὥς (αἱ) ἐπιγραφαὶ  
δηλοῦσι. τὸ πρῶτον βιβλίον Γένεσις ἦρκει, φησί, πρὸς γνώσιν τῶν 2  
ἔργων ἢ ἐπιγραφῇ τοῦ βιβλίου. αὕτη γὰρ, φησὶν, ἔστιν ἡ Γένεσις  
ἔργων, εἰς ἣν ἀφ' οὗς εἰς ποταμοῦ σχίσαι ἢ μετ' ἐθείδη γὰρ ὁ κόσμος  
15 ὅρασις. εἰς ἣν ἀφ' οὗς εἰς ποταμοῦ δευτέρου ἔξοδος· ἔδει γὰρ τὸ γεννηθέν, 3  
τὴν Ἐρμυθρῶν | διοδεύσαν θάλασσαν, ἐλθὲν ἐπὶ τὴν ἔρημον — ἦν δὲ  
φρῶν δὲ λέγει, φησὶ, τὸ αἷμα —, καὶ γεύσασθαι πικρὸν ὕδωρ. πικρὸν  
γὰρ, φησὶν, ἔστι τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ μετὰ τὴν Ἐρμυθρῶν θάλασσαν, ὅπερ ἔστιν  
20 ὁδὸς τῆς κατὰ τὸν βίον γνώσεως τῶν ἐπιτόκων ὁδεύομένη καὶ πι-  
κρῶν. σφραγίσαν δὲ ἀπὸ Μωσέως, τουτέστι τοῦ λόγου, τὸ πικρὸν 4  
ἐκείνο γίνεταί γλυκύ. καὶ ὅτι ταῦτ', οὕτως ἔχει, κοινῇ πάντων ἔστιν  
ἀκούσαι κατὰ τοὺς ποιητὰς λεγόντων·

ῥίγη μὲν μέλαν (ἔσκε), γίλλεττι δὲ εἰζελον ἔνθως·  
μῶλε δὲ μιν καλέουσι θεοί· χαλεπὸν δὲ τ' ὀρύσσειν  
ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι· θεοὶ δὲ τε πάντα δύνανται.

16. Ἄρα, φησί, (τὸ) λεγθῆν ὑπὸ τῶν ἔθνων πρὸς ἐπίγνωσιν τῶν 1  
ἔργων τοῖς ἔχουσιν ἀκούς (τῆς ἀκροῆς) τοῦτου γὰρ, φησὶν, ὁ γεύσασθαι  
τοῦ κερποῦ ὑπὸ τῆς κίρκης οὐκ ἀπεθρησινῆ μορῆς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς



ἡδὴ τεθνησκόμενος τῇ δυνάμει χρώμενος τοῦ τοιοῦτου καρποῦ εἰς  
 τὸν πρῶτον κεῖνον τὸν ἴδιον αὐτῶν ἀνέπλασε καὶ ἀνετίθετο καὶ  
 ἀνεκατέτατο χροακτῆρα· πιστός δὲ ἦν καὶ ἀγαπώμενος ὑπὸ τῆς  
 φαιμακίδος ἐκείνης δια τὸν γαλακτώδη καὶ θειὸν ἐκείνον καρπὸν,  
 φησὶν, εὐρίσκειται. Αὐτῶν δὲ ὁμοίως τὸ τρίτον βιβλίον, ὅπερ ἐστὶν  
 ἡ συσφηγία (ἢ) ἀναπνοή. Θυσιῶν γὰρ ἐστὶ καὶ προσφορῶν ὅλων  
 ἐκεῖνο τὸ βιβλίον. ὅπου δὲ ἐστὶ θυσία, ὁσμή τις ἐκωδίας ἀπὸ τῆς  
 θυσίας διὰ τῶν θυσιῶν γίνεται· περὶ ἣν ἐκωδία ὁσφρησὶν εἶναι  
 3 δ( . )· οἶον. Ἀριστοῖ τοῦ τέταρτον τῶν βιβλίων· γεῦσιν λέγει, ὅπου  
 λόγος ἐνεργεῖ· διὰ γὰρ τοῦ λαλεῖν πάντα ἀριθμοῦ τάξις καλεῖται. 10  
 f. 64r Δευτερονομίον δέ, φησὶν, ἐστὶ πρὸς | τὴν ἀφῆν τοῦ πειρασμένου παι-  
 4 δίου ἐπιγεγραμμένον. ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡ ἀφῆ τα ὑπὸ τῶν ἁλλων αὐτοῦ-  
 σεων ὁραθέντα θύοις ἀνακαταλείνεται καὶ βεβαίαι, ἀλλήρον ἢ θερ-  
 μὸν ἢ γλίσχρον δοκιμάσας, οὕτως τὸ πείρατον βιβλίον τοῦ γόμου  
 ἀνακαταλείνεται ἐστὶ τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ γραμμένων τεσσάρων.

5 Πάντα οὖν, φησὶ, τὰ ἀγεννήτα ἐστὶν ἐν ἡμῖν δυνάμει, οὐκ ἐνε-  
 ργείας, ὡς ἡ γραμματικὴ ἢ γεωμετρικὴ. ἔαν οὖν τύγῃ τοῦ λόγου τοῦ  
 προσήκοντος καὶ διδωκαλίας καὶ στρεφίσσεται τὸ πικρὸν εἰς γλυκύ,  
 τουτέστιν· καὶ ἐξέλθῃ εἰς δόξα καὶ εἰ μάχεται εἰς ἔρωτα, οὐκ  
 ἔσται ἄγρια καὶ ξύλα τὰ γεννώμενα (ἀφανισόμενα) πυρὶ, ἀλλὰ καρ-  
 6 πὸς τέλος ἐξαικονισμένος, ὡς ἔφη, ἴσος καὶ ὁμοῖος τῇ ἀγεννήτῳ  
 καὶ ἀπεράτῳ δυνάμει. ἔαν δὲ μείνῃ δένδρον μόνον, καρπὸν μὴ  
 ποιοῦν, (ἢ) ἐξαικονισμένον ἀφανίζεται. ἐγγὺς γὰρ πους, φησὶν, ἢ  
 ἀξίνῃ παρὶ τὰς ῥίζας τοῦ δένδρου· πᾶν δένδρον, φησὶ, μὴ ποιοῦν  
 καρπὸν καὶ οὐκ ἐκκόπτεται καὶ εἰς πρὸ βάλλεται·

25

17. ἔστιν οὖν κατὰ τὸν Σίμωνος τὸ μακάριον καὶ ἄφρατον  
 κεῖνον ἐν παντὶ κεκρυμμένον δυνάμει, οὐκ ἐνεργείᾳ, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὁ  
 ἰσθὺς, σῆς, στήσος· ἐστὶς· ἄνω ἐν τῇ ἀγεννήτῳ δυνάμει, σῆς

κάτω ἐν τῇ ῥοῇ τῶν ὑδάτων ἐν εἰκόνι γεννηθείς, στήσος· ἄνω  
 παρὰ τὴν μακαρίαν ἀφράτον δυνάμιν, ἐκ ἐξαικονισθῆ· τρεῖς γὰρ, 2  
 φησὶν, εἰδὼν ἰσθῶτες, καὶ ἄνω τοῦ τρεῖς εἶναι ἰσθῶτες· αἰώνας οὐ  
 κοσμεῖται ὁ (ἐ)γεννητός ὁ κατ' αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ ὕδατος φερόμενος, ὁ  
 5 καὶ, ὁμοίως ἀναπεπασμένος τέλειος ἐπου(ράνιος), κατ' οὐδεμίαν  
 ἐπίνοιαν ἐνδεέστερος τῆς ἀγεννήτου δυνάμεως γενόμενος. | τοῦτ' ἐστὶν f. 64v  
 ὁ λέγουσιν· ἐγὼ καὶ σὺ ἐν, πρὸ ἐμοῦ σὺ, τὸ μετὰ σὲ ἐγώ, αὐτῇ, 3  
 φησὶν, ἐστὶ δυνάμεις μία, διηρημένη ἄνω κάτω, αὐτὴν γεννῶσα, αὐτὴν  
 ἀνέχουσα, αὐτὴν ἐκτρέφουσα, αὐτὴν ἐνδύσκουσα, αὐτῆς μήτηρ οὖσα, αὐτῆς  
 10 πατήρ, αὐτῆς ἀδελφὴ, αὐτῆς συζυγός, αὐτῆς θυγάτηρ, αὐτῆς υἱός,  
 μήτηρ πατήρ, ἐν, οὐσα ῥίζα τῶν ὅλων.

Καὶ οὕτω, φησὶν, ἀπὸ πυρός ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς γενέσεως ἐστὶ τῶν γεν- 4  
 νωμένων, τοιοῦτον κατανόει τινὰ τρόπον. πάντων, ὅσων γένεσις  
 ἐστὶν, ἀπὸ πυρός ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας τῆς γενέσεως γίνεται. τοι-  
 15 γαρὸν πυροῦσθαι τὸ ἐπιθυμεῖν τῆς μεταβλητῆς γενέσεως ὀνομάζεται.  
 ἐν δὲ ὃν τὸ πῦρ τροπᾶς στρέφεται δύο. στρέφεται γὰρ, φησὶν, ἐν 5  
 τῷ ἐνδρὶ τὸ αἶμα, καὶ θερμὸν καὶ ξανθὸν ὡς πῦρ τυπούμενον, εἰς  
 σπέρμα, ἐν δὲ τῇ γυναικὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τοῦτο αἶμα εἰς γάλα. καὶ γίνεται  
 ἡ τοῦ ἄρρενος τροπὴ γένεσις, ἡ δὲ τῆς θηλείας τροπὴ τροφὴ τῷ  
 20 γεννωμένῳ. αὐτῇ, φησὶν, ἐστὶν ἡ φλογὶν ῥομφαία ἡ στρεφόμενη.  
 φυλίσσασιν τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς. στρέφεται γὰρ τὸ αἶμα 6  
 εἰς σπέρμα καὶ γάλα, καὶ γίνεται ἡ δυνάμεις αὐτῇ μήτηρ καὶ πατήρ,  
 πατήρ τῶν γινωμένων καὶ αὐξήσεις τῶν τρεφομένων, ἀπορροαίς, ἐν-  
 τέρεσις· φυλίσσεται δέ, φησὶ, τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς· διὰ τῆς στρεφόμε-  
 25 νης φλογὶν ῥομφαίας, ὡς εἰρήκαμεν, ἡ δυνάμεις ἡ ἐξοδὸς ἡ ἐξ αὐτῆς, 7  
 ἡ πάντας ἐχούσα, ἡ ἐν ταῖς ἐξ κατακειμένη· δυνάμεων. ἔαν γὰρ μὴ 7  
 στρέφηται ἡ φλογὶν ῥομφαία, φθαρήσεται καὶ ἀπολείται τὸ καλὸν f. 65r  
 ἐκεῖνο ξύλον· ἔαν δὲ στρέφηται εἰς σπέρμα καὶ γάλα, ὁ δυνάμει ἐν  
 τοῖς κατακειμένοις λόγον τοῦ προσήκοντος καὶ τόπου κυρίου, ἐν ᾧ

γεννᾶται λόγος, τυχὼν, ἀρξάμενος ὡς ἀπὸ σπινθήρος ἐλαχίστου παρ-  
τελῶς μεγαλυνθῆναι καὶ αὐξήσκει καὶ ἔσται δυναμὶς ἀπείρατος,  
ἀπρόελλατος. (ὡς καὶ ὁμοία) εἰδὼν ἀπαράλλακτῶ μηκέτι γινόμενῶ  
εἰς τὸν ἀπέραντον αἰῶνα.]

18. Γέγονεν οὖν ὁμολογούμενος κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον τοῖς  
ἀσκήτοισι Σίμων θεός, ὥσπερ ὁ Μίθης ἐκίνος ὁ καὶ Ἀφροδίτη γεννητός,  
μὲν καὶ παθής, ὅταν ἢ ἐν δυνάμει, ἀπαθὴς δὲ ἐκ γεννητοῦ, ὅταν  
ἐξαικονισθῇ καὶ γενομένου τέλειος ἐξέλθῃ τῶν δυνάμεων τῶν πρῶ-  
των δύο, τουτέστιν οὐρανῶ καὶ γῆς. λέγει γὰρ Σίμων διακριθὲν  
πρὸς τοῦτον ἐν τῇ Ἀποκάλυψιν οὕτως. ἡμῖν οὖν λέγω ἃ λέγω καὶ 10

γράψω ἃ γράψω, τὸ γράμμα τοῦτο· δύο εἰσι παραγραφαὶ τῶν ὅλων  
αἰώνων, μήτε ἀρχὴν μήτε πέρας ἔχουσαι, ἀπὸ μᾶς ἤϊης, ἣτις ἐστὶ  
3 δύναμις σιγῆς ἀρετῆς, ἀκατάληπτος· ὡς ἡ μῆα φαίνεται ἀνοδὲν, ἣτις  
ἐστὶ μεγάλη δύναμις, νοῦς τῶν ὅλων, διέπων τὰ πάντα, ἀόρατος, ἣ δὲ  
ἔτερα κάτωθεν· ἐπίνοια μεγάλη, θήλεια, γεννώσα τὰ πάντα. ἔνθεν 15  
ἀλλήλους ἀντιστοιχοῦντες συζῆσαν ἔχουσι, καὶ τὸ μέσον διάστημα  
4 ἡμετέρων αἰῶνα ἀκατάληπτον, μήτε ἀρχὴν μήτε πέρας ἔχοντα.] ἐν

δὲ τούτῳ πατήρ ὁ βεστᾶσθων πάντα καὶ τρέφων τὰ ἔργα καὶ πέρας  
ἔχοντα. οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἱστώς, οὗτος, σκηνομήτορ, ὃν ἀρσενόθλης

65ν δύναιμις κατὰ τὴν | προῦπερχομένην δύναιμι ἀπέρωντος, ἣτις οὗτ' 20

ἀρχὴν οὐτε πέρας ἔχει, ἐν μονότητι οὐσα· ἀπὸ γὰρ ταύτης προελ-  
5 θούσα ἢ ἐν μονότητι ἐπίνοια ἐκέρχεται δύο, κακίστος ἢ εἰς ἔχων  
γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ αὐτὴν ἢν μόνα, σὺ μέντοι πρῶτος. καίπερ προῦπερχο-  
νων, φανείς δὲ αὐτῷ ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο δεύτερος. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ πατήρ 25

6 ἐκλήθη, πρὶν αὐτὴν αὐτὸν ὀνομάσαι πατέρα. ὥς οὖν αὐτός ἐκείνῳ  
ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ προσερχομένην ἐφανερώσαν ἐκείνῳ τὴν ἰδίαν ἐπίνοιαν, οὕτως  
καὶ ἡ φανερώσα ἐπίνοια οὐκ ἐποίησεν, ἀλλὰ ἰδοὺσα αὐτὸν ἐνέκρυψε  
τὸν πατέρα ἐν αὐτῇ, τουτέστι τὴν δύναιμι, καὶ ἔστιν ἀρσενόθλης  
δύναιμις καὶ ἐπίνοια· ὅθεν ἀλλήλους ἀντιστοιχοῦσιν — οὐδὲν γὰρ δια-

φέρει δύναμις ἐπίνοιας — ἐν ὄντες· ἐκ μὲν τῶν ἄνω εὐρίσκεται δύ-  
7 ναιμις, ἐκ δὲ τῶν κάτω ἐπίνοια. ἔστιν οὖν οὕτως καὶ τὸ φανέν ἀπ'  
αὐτῶν· ἐν ὅν δύο εὐρίσκεται, ἀρσενόθλης ἔχων τὴν θήλειαν ἐν  
ἐαυτῷ. οὕτως ἐστὶ νοῦς ἐν ἐπινόει, ἀρξάμενος ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, ἐν ὄντες  
5 δύο εὐρίσκονται.]

19. Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ὁ Σίμων ἐφενερῶν οὐ μόνον τὰ Μωσέως κα-  
1 κοτεχνήσεις εἰς ὃ ἐβούλετο μεθρησθήναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τῶν ποιητῶν.  
καὶ γὰρ τὸν δούρειον ἔπικον ἀλληγορεῖ καὶ τὴν Ἑλένην αἶμα τῇ λαμ-  
πάδι καὶ ἄλλα πλείστα ὅσα μεταφ(ων τῇ) τε αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ἐπινόιας  
10 πλαστολογεῖ. εἰπέ τε ταύτην τὸ πρῶτον τὸ πεπλανημένον, ἣτις 2

αἰεὶ καταγινόμενη ἐν γυναιξὶν ἐτάσσσε | τὰς ἐν κόσμῳ δυνάμεις διὰ τὸ 1. 66ν  
τὸ ἀνυπερβλήτον αὐτῆς κάλλος· ὅθεν καὶ ὁ Ἰσώκλος πόλεμος δι' αὐ-  
τὴν γέγενηται. ἐν γὰρ τῇ κατ' ἐκείνον καιρὸν γενομένῃ Ἑλένῃ ἐνώ-  
κησεν [ἐν αὐτῇ] ἡ ἐπίνοια, καὶ οὕτως πασῶν ἐπιδικαζομένων αὐτῆς  
15 τῶν ἐξουσιῶν, στάσις καὶ πόλεμος ἐπαύετο ἐν οἷς ἐφάνη ἔθνεσιν.  
οὕτως γοῦν τὸν Στρησίχορον διὰ τῶν ἔπων λοιδόρησεντα αὐτὴν τὰς 3

ὄψεις τερπιδῆναι· αὐδὶς δὲ μεταμεληθέντος αὐτοῦ καὶ ῥαφειαντος· 1

τὰς παλαιφάδας ἐν εἰς ἑμνήσεν αὐτὴν, ἀναβλέψαι· μετεσσωμεστουμένην  
(δὲ) ἐπὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων καὶ τῶν κατω ἔξουσίων, οἱ καὶ τὸν κόσμον,  
φησὶν, ἐποίησαν, ὑπέστησαν ἐπὶ τέλους ἐν Ἰερῶ τῆς φουκῆς πολὺ  
στῆναι, ἢ κατελθὼν εὐρεν. ἐπὶ γὰρ τὴν ταύτης πρῶτην ζητήσιν  
ἐρη παρεγγονέναι, ὅπως ὑψήται αὐτὴν τῶν δεσμιῶν· ἣν λυτρώσα-  
μενος αἶμα ἐαυτοῦ περιῆγε, φάσκων τοῦτο εἶναι τὸ ἀπολωλὸς τοῦ-

βικτον, ἐαυτὸν δὲ λέγων τὴν ἑκὼν πάντα δύναμιν εἶναι. ὁ δὲ ψυχρὸς  
ἐρασθεὶς τοῦ γενεῖον τούτου, Ἐλένης καλονμένης, ἀνηνόμενος εἶχε,  
5 καὶ τοὺς μεθ' ἧς αἰδούμενος τοῦτον τὸν μῦθον ἔλασεν. οἱ δὲ αὖθις

μνηταὶ τοῦ πλάτου καὶ Σίμωνος μάγον γινόμενοι τὰ ὅμοια δοῶν, 10  
ἀλογίστως γάσκοντες οἶον μίγνυσθαι, λέγοντες· πᾶσα γῆ γῆ, καὶ οὐ  
διαφέρει τοῦ τις στείρει, πλὴν ἵνα στείρῃ, ἀλλὰ καὶ μακαρίζουσιν  
ἐαυτοὺς ἐπὶ τῇ (ξενῇ) μίξει, ταύτην εἶναι λέγοντες τὴν τελείαν ἀγέ-  
πην, καὶ τὸ ἅγιος εἶναι. . . λλη . ος ἀμωδῆσεται· | οὐ γὰρ μὴ κρα-  
τέσθαι αὐτοὺς ἔτι τινὶ νομιζομένῳ κακῷ, λελύτρωται γὰρ. τὴν 15.

δὲ Ἐλένην λυτρωσάμενος οὕτως τοῖς ἀνθρώποις σώτησίαν παρέχε 1

διὰ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιγνώσεως. κακῶς γὰρ διοικούντων τῶν ἀγγέλων 6  
τὸν κόσμον διὰ τὸ φιλαρχεῖν αὐτοὺς, εἰς ἐπαυρόθωσαν ἐληλυθέναι  
αὐτὸν ἔρη μεταμορφωμένον καὶ ἐξομοιωμένον ταῖς ἀρχαῖς καὶ ταῖς  
ἔξουσίαις καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις, ὡς καὶ ἐνθρονον φαινέσθαι αὐτὸν μὴ  
5 οὐτα ἀνθρώπων, καὶ παθεῖν δὲ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ [καὶ] δεδοχηέναι μὴ  
πεπονθότα, ἀλλὰ φαιέντα Ἰουδαίους μὲν ὡς υἱόν, ἐν δὲ τῇ Σαμαρείᾳ  
ὡς πατέρα, ἐν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν ὡς πατέρα ἄγιον, ὑπομένειν  
δὲ αὐτὸν καλεῖσθαι ὅτι ἂν ὀνόματι καλῶν βούλονται οἱ ἀνθρώποι.

τοὺς δὲ προφήτας ἀπὸ τῶν κοσμοποιῶν ἀγγέλων ἐμπνευσθέντας ἐλ-  
10 ρηκέναι τὰς προφητείας· διὸ μὴ φρονοῦντων αὐτῶν τοὺς εἰς τὸν Σί-  
μωνα καὶ τὴν Ἐλένην πεπιστευκότας ἕως νῦν, πρῶσσειν τε ὅσα βού-  
λονται ὡς ἐλεεινέρους· καὶ γὰρ τὴν αὐτοῦ χάριν σφῆσθαι αὐτοὺς  
φάσκουσι. μηδὲνα γὰρ εἶναι αὐτῶν διζῆς ἐλ πρᾶξει τις κακῶς· οὐ γὰρ 8

ἔστι φῦσι κακῶν ἀλλὰ θείῃ. ἔθεντο γὰρ, φησὶν, οἱ ἀγγελοι οἱ τὸν  
κόσμον ποιήσαντες ὅσα ἐβούλυντο, διὰ τῶν τοιούτων λόγων δουλοῦν  
νομίζοντες τοὺς αὐτῶν ἀκούοντας· | φθίσειν δὲ αὐθις λέγουσι τὸν  
4 7 κόσμον ἐπὶ λυτρώσει τῶν ἰδίων ἀνθρώπων.

1 20. Οἱ οὖν τούτου μαθηταὶ μελείας ἐπιτελοῦσι καὶ ἐπισκοπῶς  
ἐπίλτες τε καὶ ἐρωγίμα καὶ τοὺς λεγόμενους οὐκιστοποιούς δαίμονας  
ε 67r | ἐπιτέμποναι πῶς το ταράσσων οὐς βούλονται· ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰδόντες  
τοὺς λεγόμενους ὠκυδῶν, εἰκόνα τε τοῦ Σίμωνος ἔχουσιν εἰς Δίος  
μοῦσῃν καὶ τῆς Ἑλένης ἐν μοῦσῃ ἑθνήας, καὶ ταύτας προσκυνοῦσι, 5  
2 τὸν μὲν καλοῦντες κυρίον, τὴν δὲ κυρίαν. εἰ δὲ τις οὐσίῃσι καλέσει  
παρ' αὐτοῖς ἰδὼν τὰς εἰκόνας ἢ Σίμωνος ἢ Ἑλένης, ἀπόβλητος  
γίνεται, ὥς ἀγροῶν τὰ μυστήρια. οὗτος ὁ Σίμων πολλοὺς πλεονῶν  
ἐν τῇ Σαμαρείᾳ μελείας ἐπὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἠλέγχετο, καὶ ἐκείνους  
γενόμενος, καθὼς ἐν ταῖς Μοῖσαις γέγραπται, ὅστερον ἀπεδοκίμασεν 10  
ταῦτά ἐπεχείρησεν· ἕως καὶ τῆς Ρώμης ἐπιδημήσας ἀνέτευσε τοῖς  
ἀποστόλοις· πρὸς ὃν πολλὰ Πέτρος ἀντιπαύσθη μελείας· πλε-  
3 νῶντα πολλοὺς. οὗτος ἐπὶ τέλει ἐλθὼν ἐν τ... τη, ἐπὶ πλάτειον  
καθεζόμενος ἐδίδασκε. καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ ἐγγὺς τοῦ ἐλέγχεσθαι γινόμενος  
διὰ τὸ ἐγγρομίζειν, ἔφη, ὅτι εἰ προσθείη ξῶν, ἀναστήσεται τῇ τρίτῃ 15  
ἡμέρᾳ. καὶ δι' αὐτὸν καλέσας ὁρμήναι ἐπὶ τῶν μαθητῶν ἐκέλευσε  
προσθῆναι. οἱ μὲν οὖν τὸ προστάξιν ἐποίησαν, ὁ δὲ ἀπέμεινεν ἕως  
4 πῦν· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ὁ Χριστός. οὗτος δὲ καὶ ὁ κατὰ τὸν Σίμωνα μῦθος,  
ἂν' οὐ Οὐαλεντίνος τὰς ἐφορμὰς λαβὼν ἄλλοις οὐσίμοι καλεῖται. ὁ γὰρ  
Νοῦς καὶ ἡ ἡγήθαι καὶ λόγος καὶ Ζωὴ καὶ Ἀνθρώπος καὶ Ἰσχυρὴ 20  
σία, οἱ Οὐαλεντίνου αἰῶνες, ὁμολογουμένως εἰδὼν αἱ Σίμωνος ἕξ ἦσαν,  
Νοῦς, Ἐπίνοια, Φωνὴ, Ὀνομα, Λογισμός καὶ Ἐνθῆμις. ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ  
ἐκινῶς ἡμῖν δοκεῖ ἐκτεθεῖσθαι τὴν Σίμωνος μεθοποιάν, ἴδωμεν τί  
λέγει καὶ Οὐαλεντίνος.

1 67v 21. | Ἔστι μὲν οὖν ἡ Οὐαλεντίνου αἰθερίας Πυθαγορείαν ἔχουσα 25  
καὶ Πλατωνικὴν τὴν ἐπιδόειν. καὶ γὰρ Πλάτων ὅλως ἐν τῷ Τιμαίῳ

λέγονται τέλειον θεόν (ὄν) ἐκ [τῆς] τῶν ἐδάτων καὶ τῆς τοῦ πνεύ-  
ματος εὐωδίας καὶ φωτός λαμπρότος γεγονέναι, καὶ εἶναι γέννημα  
θ·η·λίας, νοῦν· τὸν ἀνοθεν πατριῆρα κατὰ ἀναμεμημένον οὖν τοῖς  
πνευστογράτοις σόματος σπεύδεν [καὶ γεγενῆναι] ἐκφυγόντα πορεύεσθαι  
καὶ τὴν λύσιν οὐχ εὐρίσκειν διὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι δέσιν. διὸ ἐβόα 5  
10 ἐκ τῆς τῶν ἐδάτων μίξεως κατὰ τὸν ψαλμοδόν, ὡς λέγουσι. πᾶσα  
οὖν ἡ φύσις τοῦ ἀνω φωτός ἐστιν, ὅπως φύσεται τὸν κάτω σπιν-  
θῆρα ἀπὸ τοῦ κάτω πατρὸς, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐπεγείροντος βρεθρὸν καὶ τάρραχον  
καὶ ἐν τῷ νοῦν (νῦν) ποιήσαντος οὐκ ὄντα ἐν τῷ, φάσκουσιν. (ἴδιον·  
ὄν) ἰδόντα τὸν τέλειον λόγον τοῦ ἀνοθεν φωτός αὐτὸν ἀπομορ- 10  
φώσαντα εἶδει ἄφως κεχωρημέναι ἐν μήτρᾳ, ἕνα τὸν νοῦν ἐκείνον,  
11 τὸν ἐκ τοῦ φωτός σπινθῆρα, ἀνελθεῖν δυνήθη· καὶ τοῦτο εἶναι τὸ  
εἰρημένον· ὡς ἐν μορφή θ·ε·οῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ὑπαρχμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ  
· ε· 128· εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ἀλλ' ἐν τὸν ἐκείνως μορφήν οὐλοῦ | λαβὼν·<sup>c</sup> καὶ  
ταύτην εἶναι τὴν (δουλειάν) μορφήν οἱ κακοδόκιμοις θέλουσι καὶ 15  
πολυτή(μον)ες Σηθαιοί. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν καὶ οὗτοι λέγουσιν.

H

1 12. | Ὁ δὲ πένθος Σίμων οὕτως λέγει· ἀπείραντον εἶναι δύναμιν,

ταύτην ὀλζωμα τῶν ὄλων εἶναι. ἔστι δέ, φησὶν, ἡ ἀπείραντος δύναμις·  
τὸ πῦρ, κατ' αὐτὸν οὐδὲν ἀπλοῦν, καθάπερ οἱ πολλοὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ λέγοντες,  
εἶναι τὰ [δὲ] τέσσαρα στοιχεῖα καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἀπλοῦν εἶναι νεοποίησιν,  
ἀλλ' εἶναι τοῦ πυρός τὴν φύσιν διπλὴν, καὶ τῆς διπλῆς ταύτης καλεῖ  
5 τὸ μὲν τι κορυπτόν, τὸ δὲ φανερόν· κεκρυφθῆναι δὲ τὰ κορυπτά ἐν τοῖς  
φανεροῖς τοῦ πυρός, καὶ τὰ φανερά τοῦ πυρός ὑπὸ τῶν κορυπτῶν  
γεγονῆναι. πάντα δέ, φησὶ, νεομίσται τὰ μέρη τοῦ πυρός ὅρατα 2  
καὶ ὁρατα φρονήσιν ἔχειν. γέγονεν οὖν, φασὶν, ὁ κόσμος ὁ γέννητός  
ἐκ τοῦ ἐγεννήτου πυρός. ἠρξάτο δέ, φησὶν, οὕτως γίνεσθαι, ἔξ ὧς  
10 τὰς πρώτας τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς γενέσεως ὁ γέννητός ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ  
πυρός ἐκείνου λαβὼν· ταύτας γὰρ ὧς γέγονέναι κατὰ συνήθειαν  
ἀπὸ τοῦ πυρός, ἄστωας καλεῖ Νόον καὶ Ἰππίνον, φωνήν καὶ Ὀνομα,  
Λογισμὸν καὶ Ἐνθύμησιν. εἶναι δὲ ἐν ταῖς ἔξ ὧς ἀρχαῖς οὐκ τὴν ἀπεί- 3  
ραντον δύναμιν (δυνάμει, οὐκ ἐνεργείᾳ· ἦν τὰ ἀπείραντον δύνανται)  
15 εἶναι φησὶ τὸν ἰστώτα πάντα σπινθῆρα. ὅς (ἐάν μιν) ἐξεκονισθῇ  
ἐν ταῖς ἔξ δυνάμεσιν, ἔσται οὐσία, δυνάμει, μετέθει, ἀποτέλεισται  
μία καὶ (ἡ) αὐτὴ τῇ ἀγεννήτῳ καὶ ἀπεργάτῳ δυνάμει, οὐδὲν ὅλων  
ἔχουσα ἐνδεέστερον ἐκείνης τῆς ἀγεννήτου καὶ ἀπεργάτου καὶ  
ἀπεργάντου δυνάμεως· ἐάν δὲ μείνῃ δυνάμει μόνον ἐν ταῖς ἔξ δυνάμεσι 4  
20 καὶ μὴ ἐξεκονισθῇ, ἀφανίζεται, φησὶ, καὶ ἀπόλλυται οὕτως ὡς ἡ  
δύναμις ἡ γραμματικὴ ἡ γεωμετρικὴ (ἐν) ἀνθρώπου ψυχῇ ὑπερβύσασα  
μὴ προσλαβοῦσα τεχνίτην τὸν διδάσκοντα. αὐτὸν δὲ εἶναι ὁ Σίμων  
λέγει. τὸν ἰστώτα πάντα σπινθῆρα πορεύμενον, ὅντα δυνάμιν τὴν ὑπὲρ τὰ  
πάντα. ταῦτα τοῖνον καὶ ὁ Σίμων!

25 13. Ὁ δὲ Οὐδελεντίος καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς τούτου σχολῆς εἶναι λέ- 1  
γοναι τὴν τοῦ παντός ἀρχὴν Πατέρα, καὶ ἐναντίᾳ δὲ δόξῃ προσφέ-  
ρονται. | οἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν μόνον εἶναι καὶ γεννητίζον, οἱ δὲ ε· 128·

APPENDIX B: Notes, source-critical and exegetical

VI. 9. 1 - 4a. Definitely from H: note the rancour.

VI. 9. 4b. Clearly from the MA.

Frickel (A.l. (iv): 1968[2], pp. 144 n. 3; 184 -88) has argued with some plausibility that 'The Great Power' was the title for the supreme cosmic principle used by the MA and that 'The Boundless Power' is C's alternative (which makes the meaning more specific without falsifying it: p. 187): the Naassene version (cf. V. 9. 5) of this fragment of the MA omits τῆς ἀπεράντου, and C fifteen times uses 'The Boundless Power' never 'The Great Power'.

Whether Hippolytus possessed a copy of the MA from which he is here quoting, or whether he found the passage already cited by the Commentary, is unclear.

In what sense is the gramma hidden? Salles-Dabadi (op. cit., p. 70) sees here a reference to the idea of a Gnostic élite. We would suggest rather that the meaning is that the book represents a primordial revelation hidden away until manifested in the fullness of time, after the manner of an apocalypse. If this is so, like Dan. 12. 4 it will have formed the colophon of the book rather than, as is commonly supposed, its title or incipit. One advantage of this view is that in this case the technical terms will not have been as cryptic to the reader as Salles-Dabadie supposes: they will already have been explained in the corpus of the work.

VI. 9. 6a. Cf. VI. 9. 1, 2: οὐκ ἦν Σίμων ὁ ἑστώς... ἀλλὰ ἄνθρωπος ἦν ἐκ σπέρματος, γέννημα γυναικός, ἐξ αἱμάτων καὶ ἐπιθυμίας σαρκικῆς καθάπερ καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ γεγενημένος.

Salles-Dabadie (op. cit., p. 15 n.1) is surely wrong to regard this sentence as a displaced fragment of the MA which really refers to mankind as the dwelling-place of the divinity but has been mistakenly understood by Hippolytus to allude to Simon. The parallel quoted above, which like the present text contains an allusion to Jn. 1. 13, shows the sentence to be the work of Hippolytus, who is observing that although his disciples take Simon to be a god he is in fact a man of flesh and blood.

VI. 9. 5b - 9a. From C: summarising formulas, such as καθόλου δὲ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν (cf. VI. 11. 1 ὡς δὲ ὀλίγων εἰπεῖν ), reveal the hand of the Commentator (cf. A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], pp. 98 - 129).

It is possible that the idea of the twofold nature of fire, part hidden part manifest. (9. 5b), may owe something to the less abstruse notion that fire is both a creative and a destructive agent, which is a commonplace of Stoic and patristic thought (F: Granfield, 1970, I, pp. 277 - 88: Unnik; C: Simonetti, 1972). Perhaps the twofold nature of fire as conceived by the Stoics and others has, under the influence of Samaritanism (in which, as we have seen, the disjunction Hidden: Manifest is extremely common), given way to the notion of fire being part hidden part visible.

Hippolytus, Ref. VI. 32. 8, tells us that the Valentinians also believed that fire has a twofold nature. Unfortunately a lacuna in the text prevents our knowing what the Valentinian distinction was.

C here glosses 'hidden and visible' by the Aristotelian 'potentially and actually' and the Platonic 'intelligible and

sensible'. The use of the Platonic distinction probably represents C's extension of the thought of the MA, but there may have been a precedent in the MA itself for the use of the Aristotelian distinction, which C makes frequent use of (e.g. 12. 2; 14. 6; 16. 5; 17. 1; cf. A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], p. 122 n. 6).

VI. 9. 9b - 10. 2. The Commentary here seems to incorporate one short quotation from the MA, 9. 9b. *καὶ τοῦτο ἐστὶ* , in 10. 1, is a fairly reliable indication that 10. 1 - 2 is the work of the Commentator (it is a 'stereotyped formula of explication': A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], p. 178).

The MA speaks of a great cosmic tree (cf. the Naassene almond tree *Amygdalus*: Hipp. Ref. V. 9. 1; the tree of the Zohar, vid. C. 2: Scholem, 1965, p. 46; and the winged tree bearing earth's embroidered robe spoken of by the early Greek philosopher Pherecydes; vid. E: West, 1971, pp. 27 and 55, which suggests that the image of the cosmic tree is of oriental provenance). This tree grows downwards, presumably from the root (=Fire) in the heavens. The Commentator elaborates on the idea, relating it, rather irrelevantly, to Nebuchadrezzar's tree (of which the fruit was destroyed and only the stump left). We suspect that in 10b, where the comparison of stem with the chaff is absurd and the position of the *ὅπερ* clause awkward, C has taken up a phrase from the MA and tampered with it.

We venture to suggest that the MA had some such form of words as

τὸ δὲ πρέμνον, ὅπερ ἐστὶν οὐχ αὐτοῦ χάριν ἀλλὰ τοῦ  
καρποῦ γεγενημένον, ἵνα παραδοθῇ τῷ πύρι...

C has altered the sentence under the influence of Mt. 3. 12 and Lk. 3. 17.



Hilgenfeld, as Merx observed (A.3.(i): Merx, 1911, p. 235), pointed out long ago that the form in which Is. 40. 6 - 8 is quoted is influenced by 1 Peter 1. 24:

LXX	1 Pet.	C
πάντα δόξα ἀνθρώπου	δόξα αὐτῆς	δόξα σαρκός
τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα τοῦ Θεοῦ	τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου	τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα κυρίου

VI. 11. 1 - 12. 4. Clearly from C (so Frickel). Note the summarising formula in 11. 1. In 12. 1 the combination of φησὶν and ἐνόμιζε is powerful evidence that Hippolytus is quoting a document which is based on the MA rather than himself (at this point at least) directly using the MA. In 12. 3 and 4 we have, in the parallel sentence construction ἐὰν μὲν ... ἐὰν δὲ, another example of a favourite usage of C (cf. A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], p.151 n.4).

The MS text of the middle section of 11. 1 (Wendland p. 137 l.29, 138 ll. 1 and 2) is 'so corrupt as to be unintelligible' (A.2: Haenchen, 1952, p. 323), or almost. The antitheses ἐν ἡρώων καὶ ἀνῆχων, ἀριθμητῶν καὶ ἀναρίθμων (conjecturally restored, but fairly certain) may or may not be quoted from the MA (depending on whether one should retain the MS reading ὧν αὐτὸς or emend it with Schneidewin and Cruice to ὡσαύτως, as Salles-Dabadie does); τελείων νοερῶν looks as if it ought to be another antithesis, but is not, and we favour reading, with Schneidewin and Cruice, τέλειον νοερὸν and deleting οὕτως ὡς (dittography: in the MS οὕτως ὡς φησιν Ἐμπεδοκλῆς stands exactly below this phrase), which necessitates the choice of ὡσαύτως in the previous line (ὧν αὐτὸς will be a corruption, caused by ὧν ἐκείνος in 9.8):

'such being the nature of the fire, according to Simon, and of all existent things, visible and invisible, likewise sounding and unsounding, numerable and innumerable, in the Megale Apophasis he uses the term "perfect, intelligent" of each of the things which on endless occasions can endlessly think (or, be thought of) and decide and act'.

We thus follow Salles-Dabadie (op. cit., p. 17 n. 12 and n. 13), except that we do not delete ἀνείπων (it may, as he supposes, be a mistake for which the copyist has rightly substituted ἀπειράκις but without expunging the word emended, but one cannot be sure).

The thought of this passage, even after emendation, remains very uncertain. The basic idea would seem to be that fire, or the Logos, as a perfect and intelligent principle permeates all things whether hidden or manifest. The point of the use of the Empedocles quotation will lie in the second line: insofar, C takes Empedocles to mean, as one understands anything it is because of the connaturality of the divine fire within oneself with the divine fire in the object of one's knowledge.

12. 1 has already been discussed.

12. 2. The names of the roots are clearly quoted from the MA. Schmithals has offered a plausible explanation of the function of these syzygies within the MA system: 'The first pair apparently designates the Dynamis as such...the second pair refers to the summons which comes to man to actualize himself...the third pair denotes then the insight, the thought, the will of the man who

accepts the call and follows it' (A.2: Schmithals, 1971, p.38 n.43.

We do not, of course, agree with Schmithals in regarding this framework as Gnostic).

VI. 13. The Commentator here takes up the titles of the components of the syzygies and identifies Nous and Epinoia with Heaven and Earth, Phone and Onoma with Sun and Moon and Logismos and Enthumesis with Air and Water.

VI. 14. 1. From H: note the polemical tone (cf. A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1972 [1], p. 414 n.1).

VI. 14. 2 - 4a. From C. The verb λέγωσι (big) is most readily explained, we believe, as a Semitism, being equivalent to אָמַרְתָּ / אָמַרְתָּ (e.g. Dan. 3. 4), 'it is said', 'it is written'. We find it remarkable that, to the best of our knowledge, this suggestion has not been advanced hitherto.

VI. 14. 4b. A quotation from the MA, as the preceding words show.

VI. 14. 5a, b. From C, except for the words παρ' αὐτοῖς, which is a typically Hippolytan insertion (cf. Frickel, op.cit., p. 414 n.2).

VI. 14. 5c. Probably a quotation from the MA, which C proceeds in the following verses to elaborate on.

VI. 14. 6. From C (note the characteristic ἐν [μὲν] ... ἐν δὲ cf. A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], p. 151 n.4), except for the phrase that is explicitly quoted from the MA.

On the distinction between κατ' εἰκόνα and κατ' ὁμοίωσιν (VI. 14. 5 and 6) see C.1: Giblet, 1949; F: Merki, 1952, p. 45; F: Crouzel, 1956; F: Wilson, 1957; A.1.(v): Strecker, 1958, pp.205,06; A.1. (iv): Salles-Dabadie, 1969, pp.62, 63; A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1972

[1]. A careful consideration of this issue is called for.

Salles-Dabadie, in common with many critics, regards both phrases as referring to the invisible, spiritual part of man. Man is created κατ' εἰκόνα with regard to his point of departure, καὶ ὁμοίωσιν with regard to his objective, inasmuch as he begins life as an εἰκὼν and, if the εἰκὼν grows to perfection, achieves ὁμοίωσις with the Father. In favour of this interpretation he is able to point out that the divine πνεῦμα is also said to be an εἰκὼν of the boundless Power at VI. 14. 4 and in 17. 2 is described as 'the perfect heavenly being who is re-created according to the likeness, who becomes not a whit inferior to the unoriginate Power'. Such an interpretation, however, seems to be unsatisfactory on several counts: firstly it involves taking κατὰ in two different senses ('as an image...with a view to likeness'), it implies that C is not interested in man's physical make-up (Salles-Dabadie says as much, op. cit. p. 62), which the passage that follows shows to be untrue, and lastly it does not do justice to the statement that man is created 'double'.

Gen. 1. 26, where the phrase κατ' εἰκόνα καὶ καὶ ὁμοίωσιν occurs, was much discussed by Jewish and Christian writers. Thus Philo used the text frequently (always of the soul, or of part of it: (e.g. De opif. mundi. 69), except in De opif. mundi 146, where the body is called a visible εἰκὼν ) but seems never to have distinguished between the meaning of the two terms. The only pre-Hippolytan authors, except for Gnostics (on whom, vid. infra), who seem to have made such a distinction were Irenaeus (V.6.1, 16, 1, &c), who taught that all men possess the divine εἰκὼν in themselves,

in their physical as well as their spiritual nature, but that *ὁμοίωσις* was lost by the Fall and is restored to believers by Christ through the Spirit, and Clement of Alexandria (Str. II. 102. 6, 131. 6, &c; Paed. I. 98. 2 - 3), who similarly says that men were created only *κατ' εἰκόνα* (in mind and reason, but not in body: Clement parts company here with Irenaeus) but can through Christ acquire *ὁμοίωσις*. Since C thinks all men are created 'double', his understanding of Gen. 1. 26 can scarcely be that of Irenaeus or Clement.

Frickel argues persuasively that the twofold nature of man for C corresponds to the twofold nature of the Seventh Power, the Spirit, which has both a hidden and a visible part (if it had been purely invisible, it would not have been described as *τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ πάντα ἔχον ἐν ἑαυτῷ*). The two terms therefore describe man under the double aspect of the visible and the invisible components of his nature. This interpretation seems to us to fit the context admirably. Just as in *πνεῦμα* there is a sensible aspect (wind, air, breath) and an invisible (spirit), so also is man twofold in his nature and he is dependent on both the sensible aspects of *πνεῦμα* (as the passage that follows makes clear) and the invisible, if he is to grow to maturity (*ἐξ εἰκὸν ἰσοθαλ*).

We note that the Valentinians are also said to have made a distinction between *εἰκὼν* and *ὁμοίωσις*, in that according to them the hylics were created *κατ' εἰκόνα* but the psychics (Exc. ex Theod. 50. 1 - 3; 54. 2) or the pneumatics (Clem. Alex. Str. IV. 13)

καθ' ὁμοίωσιν . . Different as this understanding is from C's, to the extent that they associated the εἰκών with the physical body and ὁμοίωσις with a higher reality (as does the Gospel of Thomas logion 84, according to Gärtner's interpretation, B: Gärtner, 1961, pp. 204, 05, though the passage is anything but clear and Wilson's alternative exegesis, B: Wilson, 1960, p. 108, according to which 'man on earth possesses only the likeness; the image is his heavenly counterpart, the pattern on which he was made', has much to commend it), the thinking of the Valentinians may have in part resembled his. The same may be said of Ps. Cl. Hom. 10. 6 and 11. 4, where it is taught that all men have the divine image in their bodies and that believers, men of pure soul, possess also the divine likeness; it is interesting to note that the Homilist further seems like C to use the Circe story, for he says, 10.6, that those who act like irrational animals forfeit their human soul and become like swine.

It seems from all this to be clear that there existed in certain circles in the second century and later an understanding that in Gen. 1. 26 κατ' εἰκόνα meant something different from and less than καθ' ὁμοίωσιν . It would seem likely that this understanding was of Christian origin, for Clement of Alexandria says, Str. II. 22. 5, that his Christian teachers (τινὲς τῶν ἡμετέρων) had taught him to distinguish between the meaning of the two expressions (in the sense that all men by birth possessed the εἰκών, but ὁμοίωσις was to be acquired only later, by virtue of τελείωσις). Writers differed from one another on the precise meaning to be given to the two terms, depending on their theology. Some, like Irenaeus, taught that the

εἰκόν was to be found in man in his entirety. Others said it subsisted only in the soul (so Clement of Alexandria and Origen: we see here the influence no doubt of Philo). A third position was that the εἰκόν existed specifically in the physical body, and it is this view that the Commentator, the Valentinians and the Homilist subscribed to (if Origen is to be believed, *Selecta in Genesim* ad l. 26, PG 12 col. 93A, in his attribution to Melito of Sardis of the doctrine that God is corporeal and man his image in a physical sense, Melito too may have been dependent on this tradition, but it is difficult to square what Origen says with the evidence of the Paschal Homily (especially section 56) and the fragments (especially XIII and XIV): see F, Perler, 1966, p.13 n.1; p. 90; F: Bonner, 1940, pp. 27 - 28). Inasmuch as the Homilist, like C, uses the Circe story, it is unlikely that C, the Valentinians and the Homilist are completely independent of each other in this matter, but the precise nature of the relationship must remain uncertain. Since there is no reason to think that the Homilist used the Commentary, it seems simplest to suppose that all three parties were influenced by a common source now lost. What is important for our purpose, in the light of the controversy as to whether the MA and C are Gnostic, is to note that there is no reason to suppose that the notion is of Gnostic provenance. Ultimately it will doubtless derive from Plato, who taught that sensible objects are εἰκόνας of intelligible models (e.g. *Tim.* 92 C), that the soul of man, by virtue of its αὐτὴν ἑαυτοῦ or οἰκεῖωσις, or suchlike, to the world of ideas (e.g. *Phaedo* 79 B - D: *Rep.*

490 B; Leg. IV. 716 C, D; Tim. 41 B, C, 90 A; Phaedr. 252 E -253 B) is able, after shedding the body, to achieve  $\delta\mu\omega\iota\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$   $\theta\epsilon\omega$  (e.g. Theaet. 176 A, B; Rep. X. 613 A; cf. Leg IV. 716 B, Phaedr. 252 D).

Salles-Dabadie tentatively (op. cit., p. 63) mentions the possibility of another line of interpretation, according to which the idea of the twofold nature of man would be a reference to the principle of bisexuality which is so important in both the MA and C. This had earlier been suggested, though Salles-Dabadie seems unaware of the fact, by Legge (A.2: Legge, I, 1915, p. 189), but Legge made the passage describe 'not the man of this world as we know him, but the Heavenly or Archetypal Man who remained in the World above', but this does not fit the context at all. We note that Salles-Dabadie has apparently overlooked a fact which might provide some support for his suggestion, namely that of the two nouns in the Genesis phrase  $\alpha\delta\alpha\mu$  is masculine,  $\hbar\omega\alpha$  feminine. Could it be that the Commentator was asserting that the two sexes mirror forth the divinity in a different way from each other, the male as God's 'image', the female as the 'likeness'? The idea is possible, but in the absence of evidence in the text to support it, it is safer to follow Frickel's alternative line of interpretation. VI. 14. 7 - 14. 11. We agree with Frickel (A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1972 [3]) in attributing this passage to C. The Commentator here takes up the MA's  $\epsilon\pi\lambda\alpha\sigma\epsilon$ , VI. 14. 5, and proceeds to give an extended commentary on the statement that God created man in paradise 'double', 'in the image and in the likeness'. True to



the doctrine of the MA that man contains two natures, both instinct with the divine principle, of which his material nature is the εἰκῶν, his immaterial the ὁμοίωσις, he proceeds to describe as he understands it the process of the formation of man in the womb. This description is at once an account of his physical origin and of his spiritual, for the divine Logos was thought of as working through both physical and spiritual processes (thus the arteries were the channels of both air and spirit, both meanings being conveyed by the word πνεῦμα, as also by its Hebrew equivalent נֶפֶשׁ with which the sectaries will probably have been at least equally familiar).

The medical details agree fairly well in substance with Galen In Hipp. De alimentis V: E: Kühn, XV 1828, p. 387. They are probably lifted wholesale from a medical tract (cf. Frickel, op. cit., p. 430 n. 13: note use of the New Attic form πλαττόμενον).

VI. 15. 1 - 16. 6. This passage contains two allegories, in which we again, with Frickel (ibid.), see the handiwork of C. Arising out of the MA's discussion of two Genesis texts, 1. 26. and 2. 10, C takes occasion to explain that the four rivers of Gen. 2 represent the four senses of the unborn child, and that these senses are further to be linked to the symbolical meaning of the titles of the books of the Pentateuch. Frickel believes that the first allegory was derived from Gnostic circles, and the second elaborated by the Commentator himself; we here, as will appear, do not altogether agree with him.

#### The Paradise streams

Gen. 2. 10 says 'there was a river flowing from Eden to water

the garden, and when it left the garden it branched into four streams...Pishon...Gihon...Tigris...Euphrates'. This passage was first interpreted allegorically by Philo, who saw therein the origin of the four principal virtues from Wisdom as their source (Leg. all. I. 63 - 67; De post. Caini 127 - 29; De somn. II. 242, 43). The Genesis text was frequently quoted by Gnostics, who interpreted it in a number of different allegorical ways. Thus the Peratae identified the River with the cosmic serpent and with the wise word of Eve (Hipp. Ref.V. 16. 9) and Justin the Gnostic saw in the four streams four groups of three angels each who patrol the world (Ref. V. 26. 4). Much closer to the Commentator's interpretation is that provided by the Naassenes, who are said to have identified Paradise with the human head, the Eden river with the brain and the four streams with the four sense organs of the head, viz. eyes, ears, nose and mouth (Ref. V. 9. 15 - 18). Irenaeus' attribution to the Marcosians (I. 18. 1) of the belief that sight, hearing, smell and taste have their origin in the brain, in a passage in which he is speaking of their interpretation of the OT, probably implies that they linked this belief with Gen. 2. 10, though the text is not explicitly mentioned. Doubtless both the Naassenes and the Marcosians were influenced by Galen's doctrine that 'in the head there are four sense organs: eyes, ears, nose and tongue; and all have the origin of their power to record sense impressions in the brain' (De usu partium VIII. 6. E: Kühn; III, 1822, p. 639).

There are, as Frickel has observed, two peculiarities about C's allegory. Firstly he does not really explain what the Eden river stands for, and secondly he is ambiguous as to whether there are four senses or five (VI. 15. 1). This confusion is most

economically explained by the hypothesis that he is adapting a pre-existent allegory about the brain and the four sense organs in the head and trying to reconcile it with the Paradise-Womb allegory and the Pentateuch-Senses allegory. The Eden river should signify the brain, but to have said so would have conflicted with C's own conception of Paradise as the womb (not the head) and his desire to speak of the growth of the embryo therein, and the restriction of the senses to four (the professed reason for excluding one, namely that the embryo has only four, is very weak) is clearly dictated by the fact that the allegory which C is using as his raw material was concerned only with the head and its four sense organs, not with the whole body. The Commentator has taken over a head-allegory and converted it into a womb-allegory, with only a modicum of success.

The fact that Gnostics used Galen's account to speak of the role of the senses in both the physical and the spiritual life does not, pace Frickel, make the motif itself a Gnostic one. Whether C borrowed the motif from the Gnostics, or whether C and the Gnostics obtained it from another source, is uncertain; what is clear is that there is nothing inherently Gnostic in the idea.

#### The Pentateuchal books

An attempt is here made, VI. 15. 1 - 16.4, to relate the four streams issuing from the Eden river to the titles of the books of the Pentateuch. The four streams correspond, C says, to the four senses of the unborn child, and he then proceeds to enumerate five: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch (these are the traditional

five senses in the order used by Aristotle (e.g. *De anima* 424 b. 23) and Galen [or ps. Galen] (*Definitiones medicae* 116. E: Kühn, XIX, 1830 p. 379)). Wendland supports the deletion of hearing on the ground that it is not explicitly discussed. England (A.2: England 1940, p. 258) also proposes that hearing is to be left out of the reckoning (his reason, that it is not specified because it is all-important, strikes us as a little too paradoxical for credibility). We would rather, with Frickel (*op. cit.*, p. 449), explain the confusion by supposing that C, having taken over the idea (ultimately from Galen?) of the four sense organs in the head and having associated them with the four Paradise streams, wished further to connect them with the books of the Pentateuch and, needing a fifth sense to correspond with Deuteronomy, had to turn to the alternative listing of five senses in the body as a whole.

However, Frickel's contention that the Pentateuch allegory was original to C we find unconvincing for two reasons:

(1) Why, if Frickel is right, should it ever have occurred to C to associate four senses with five books? On the face of it, such a procedure would have been rather inept. We would suggest that a clue may be found in a strange phrase of Philaster (*De haer.* VII. 1):

Isti [Samaritani] legem accipiunt Mosi, id est  
quattuor solum libros.

Isser (D.1: Isser, 1973, p. 88) treats this passage as symptomatic of the carelessness of Philaster, but we find this unconvincing (if Philaster did not know that there were five books of Moses, he must have been the first literate Christian before the days of universal state education to be ignorant of the fact). We suggest

rather that Philaster here testifies to the existence of a Samaritan tradition according to which instead of speaking of the five books, as the Samaritans, like the Jews and Christians, very commonly did, one could refer to the four books, Deuteronomy being thought of as an extended summary of the other four rather than as a separate book. If our Samaritan Commentator was conversant with this tradition, the idea of connecting the four streams with the four books will have occurred to him very naturally. It does not follow from this that references to Deuteronomy or to the sense of touch in C are redactional (as Frickel indeed observes, the literary analysis of the texts militates against this): Deuteronomy was included in the list but outside the numerical reckoning because it was thought of as, in C's term, an ἀνακεφαλαιώσιν, corresponding to the sense of touch, which was listed with the other four senses but again not counted on the ground that it was a recapitulation of the other senses (there was the authority of Aristotle for the idea that touch is at once the primary sense, De part. animal. 434 b. 10 - 25, and the most complex - in that 'more than any other sense it seems to be correlated with several different categories of objects and to recognize more than one type of contrasts, such as hot and cold, solid and fluid,' op. cit. 647 a. 16 - 19).

(2) As the text now stands, Genesis is associated with sight, Exodus with hearing, Leviticus with smell, Numbers with taste and Deuteronomy with touch. The reason for the first link is fairly evident: 'because the cosmos was first contemplated by sight' is probably a reference to Gen. 1. 31 ('God saw all he had made'), unless perhaps the name אֱלֹהִים is taken by a false

etymology to be derived from  $\eta\chi\gamma$  . Exodus, although more space is given to it than any of the other books, is only very loosely connected (VI. 16. 1) with the sense which it is seemingly thought to signify, namely hearing, and the reference to the tasting of the bitter waters suggests that the book will originally have been associated with the sense of taste. The connection of Leviticus with smell, because of that book's preoccupation with sacrificial rites, is completely apt. Numbers, on the other hand, is associated with taste but no reason is given and the text is very suspect. The phrases in VI. 16. 3  $\acute{o}\pi\omicron\upsilon\ \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota$  and  $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \lambda\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$  strongly suggest that the sense in question will originally have been that of hearing, on the ground that the book was full of speeches. Deuteronomy, as we have seen, was appropriately connected with touch by way of the idea of  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\kappa\epsilon\phi\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\iota\omega\varsigma\iota\varsigma$  . We conclude from all this that Exodus and Numbers originally referred to taste and hearing respectively and that the senses were changed around in order to get them in the traditional order attested by Aristotle and Galen, an order doubtless based on the position of the organs concerned, starting with the eyes at the top of the head and moving downwards.

If this analysis is correct, it will follow that the Commentator did not himself devise the allegory; he merely took it, probably from the MA, and adapted it in a somewhat maladroit way.

We shall now examine a little more closely the original significance of each title as reconstructed above.

Genesis, or sight, is also glossed by the word Gnosis by

Salles-Dabadie, England and others, on the strength of VI. 15.

2: ἥρκει πρὸς γινῶσιν τῶν ὅλων ἡ ἐπιγραφὴ τοῦ βιβλίου

but this is to read too much into this phrase, which means no more than that the title suffices for one's understanding of the whole book. Gnosis, as a technical term for a special form of (Gnostic) knowledge is not in point. What is required for spiritual growth is the use of one's sense of sight in order to proceed from the visible to the invisible, from the αἰσθητά to the νοητά, a process made possible for all men, not merely for a Gnostic élite, by the fact that the divine Logos permeates the material universe.

Exodus is associated with taste. The author is not, in this case, so much seeking to show how one may use the sense of taste to proceed from the αἰσθητά to the νοητά (perhaps this task was too much for him) as to offer a metaphorical interpretation of the Exodus story as indicating that the path to perfection leads through blood (symbolised by the redness of the Red Sea) and toil (symbolised by the bitterness of the waters of Marah). It further, he says - identifying the Logos with the Homeric moly (vid. infra) - enables him to perfect in himself the divine λόγος so that he may not be a beast but a spark of the divine fire that grows until it is rejoined to the primal fire itself. The tribulations that the author has most immediately in mind (he is still thinking, theoretically at least, of the embryo) are those of birth.

The symbolical interpretation of moly, the plant given to

Odysseus by Hermes (Od. 10. 304 seq.) to protect him against the wiles of Circe, has a pre-history, according to which it symbolised λόγος or φρόνησις and carried undertones of the difficulties of life which the man who possessed these qualities would be able to overcome (E: Buffière, 1956, p. 292; 1962, p. 80). The Commentator is clearly drawing on this tradition and identifying the moly with Moses and the Logos (VI. 15. 3. Μωσέως, τούτέστι τοῦ λόγου cf. Philo De congr. 170 ὁ προφήτης λόγος, ὄνομα Μωσῆς, similarly De migrat. Abrahami 151; note, however, with England (op. cit., p. 258), that Philo also describes Aaron and Melchisedek in similar terms: Leg. all. III. 45; 82; 103). The doctrine of εἰκονίζεσθαι is also linked with the idea of Circe's transformation of Odysseus' companions into the form of animals. The Logos, we are by implication told, can both prevent one from losing one's true form and, if one has already lost it, can restore it (in Homer, however, the salve that undid Circe's spell was different from the moly: Od. 10. 392 φάρμακον ἄλλο ). The Commentator may here be adapting a Pythagorean tradition of interpreting the Circe story in terms of metempsychosis, for we find an elaborate exegesis of it along these lines in Porphyry (E: Wachsmuth, 1884, p. 1046). England (op. cit., p. 263 n.9) very pertinently points to a Christian parallel to our text in Clem. Al. Str. VII. 95. 1 - 3, where those who reject the Church's teaching are likened to Circe's beasts; Clement adds that by listening to the Scriptures and God's truth they may be changed back and become in fact deified.



What can be the burden of the sentence beginning  $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$   $\delta\epsilon$   $\acute{\alpha}\nu\eta\rho$ , VI. 16. 2? Stead, who translates it 'the man is found faithful and beloved by that witch, because of that milky, divine fruit' (C: Foerster, I, 1972, p. 257), seems to take it to mean that it is the very possession of the divine Logos by man that exposes him to the threat of being ensnared by Circe (who represents perhaps any distraction from the great purpose of life; 'Frau Welt' Haenchen aptly calls her, A.2: Haenchen, 1952, p. 329). If this interpretation is correct, the sentence will contain a reference to the fact that Circe was moved by admiration of Odysseus (because, through the possession of the moly, he was able to withstand her spell) to invite him to her bed: Od. 10. 333 - 35.

A different interpretation seems to be implied by Macmahon's translation, 'But a faithful man, and beloved by that sorceress, is discovered through that milk-like and divine fruit' (A.1.(iv): Macmahon, 1877, p. 206). England, who gives a similar rendering (op. cit., p. 246), says that the idea is that the lapsed are of two sorts, those who are capable of salvation (the faithful ones, those who possess the Logos) and those who are not. This Gnosticising interpretation is suspect both because the distinction it implies has nothing corresponding to it in the Circe story (all who had been turned into animals were restored to human shape; also, none were beloved by Circe except Odysseus, who alone possessed the moly) and also because the idea that some men are incapable of fulfilling their potentiality for  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$  -  $\zeta\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  is unattested elsewhere in either the MA or C. We therefore opt for Stead's interpretation.

The origin of the Leviticus - smell association is clear enough, but its significance for the initiate is more controversial. England suggests (op. cit., p. 264) that there may be a covert allusion to some cultic ceremony akin to Levitical sacrifices used by the sect, but this is mere conjecture. In the same way he wishes (op. cit., p. 258) to restrict hearing, which is associated with the book of Numbers, to hearing of the proclamation or apophysis of the sect, but again there is nothing in the text to support this. The idea surely is that anything one smells or hears can, inasmuch as the divine Logos inheres in all material objects, reveal hidden, spiritual realities (though one wonders whether the Commentator really thought the unborn baby, of whom alone he professes here to be speaking, could take much advantage of these opportunities).

We have already seen why the book of Deuteronomy and the sense of touch are linked together.

VI. 17. 1 - 2b. From C - except for  $\kappa\alpha\tau' \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ , an insertion by Hippolytus (A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1972 [1], p.414 n.2); likewise perhaps  $\kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha} \tau\omicron\nu \Sigma\acute{\iota}\mu\omega\nu\alpha$ ?

The three  $\epsilon\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$  (the idea may reflect an allegorical interpretation of the three men who stood before Abraham, Gen. 18.2, but the influence of Christian Trinitarianism is also evident) are presumably the supreme deity together with Nous and Epinoia. It seems likely that  $\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$  here is used to characterize an entity not a period of time (pace Salles-Dabadie, op. cit., p. 55, who thinks the passage means that without the existence of three ages one could not speak of the Hestos, stas, stesomenos).

VI. 17. 2c. *Λέγουσιν* is again a Semitism, we suggest, meaning 'it is said, written' (cf. VI. 14. 2 and 3); here, however, the reference is not to Scripture but to the MA.

Epiphanius Pan. 26. 3. 1 quotes from a libertine Gnostic source a sentence similar to *ἐγὼ καὶ σὺ ἐν, πρὸ ἐμοῦ σύ, τὸ μετὰ σὲ ἐγώ*, viz. *ἐγὼ σὺ καὶ σὺ ἐγώ, καὶ ὅπου ἐὰν ᾦς, ἐγὼ ἐκεῖ εἰμι, καὶ ἐν ᾧ πασὶν εἰμι ἐσπαρμένος καὶ ὅθεν ἐὰν θέλῃς συλλέγεις με, ἐμὲ δὲ συλλέγων ἑαυτὸν συλλέγεις*.

VI. 17. 3. Clearly a quotation from the MA, as its hymnic style indicates (A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], p. 147). Is it quoted by C or by Hippolytus? Surely *τοῦτ' ἔστιν* settles the matter, for this phrase is 'a stereotyped formula and thereby a criterion whereby the hand of the Commentator can with assurance be recognised' (A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], p. 179; cf. pp. 35 - 39).

VI. 17. 4-7. All is from C. (In 17. 7 we have once again the characteristic *ἐὰν [μὲν]...ἐὰν δὲ* construction: cf. 12. 3, 12. 4, 14. 6, 16. 5 - 6).

The fiery sword of Gen. 3.25 (LXX; MT 3. 24) is given a symbolic interpretation by Philo too, who in Cher. 28 and 30 sees in it the divine Logos, but C's understanding of it is very different.

Legge (A.2: Legge, II, 1915, p. 67 n. 3) suggested that behind this passage there may lie an identification of the fiery sword with the two-edged axe which is found as a divine emblem in a variety of religions and may have served to characterize certain gods as double-natured, sc. hermaphrodite. This is an attractive conjecture, though nothing more than that.

It has not, so far as we know, been remarked before that although C quotes the text in the LXX version his interpretation of the 'turning' of the sword presupposes a knowledge of the Hebrew text:  $\sigma\tau\rho\acute{\epsilon}\varphi\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  cannot mean 'to turn into', 'to be transformed into', whereas the niphal and hithpael of  $\text{פָּרַח}$  can bear this meaning.

For the notion that blood and milk are of the same substance, see Clem. Al. Paed. I. VI. 41, 44, 45 and 50.

VI. 18. 1a. From Hippolytus, as the polemical tone and the reference to Apsethos (cf. VI. 7-8) indicate.

VI. 18.1b. From C, as the  $\acute{\sigma}\tau\alpha\nu \dots \acute{\sigma}\tau\alpha\nu$  construction shows (cf. A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], p. 151 n. 4).

VI. 18. 2a. Possibly from H, in which case he is trying to show that the Commentary which he has been citing agrees with the doctrine of 'Simon' as explicitly set out in the MA, from which he then, as in 18. 2b-3, quotes. But there are two objections to this, firstly that we have found no convincing evidence that Hippolytus had access to a copy of the MA (see on VI. 9. 4b and 17.3) and secondly that, as we shall argue, VI. 18. 4 - 6 is an expansion of the MA text by C.

VI. 18. 4 - 7. Frickel (A.1.(iv): Frickel, 1968 [2], p. 202) believes this continues the MA quotation, but Barbara Aland (A.1.(iv): Aland, 1973, pp. 414-15) puts up a good case for attributing it to C: not only are there formalistic pointers to a commentary genre (e.g. verse 6 picks up  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\iota\chi\omicron\upsilon\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$  from verse 3 and  $\acute{\omicron}\tilde{\upsilon}\tau\omicron\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota\nu$  in verse 4 reminds one of similar uses of demonstratives in C) but the imagery is not in complete harmony with

that of the MA fragment (e.g. Epinoia is here androgynous, whereas there it was female).

What does ἐποίησεν mean in 18. 6? Stead (C: Foerster, I, 1972, p. 260) translates

So then just as he, by bringing himself forth  
from himself, disclosed to himself his own  
conception, so the conception that appeared  
did not make (him), but on seeing him  
concealed the Father within herself.

Why, we may ask, should anyone have been tempted to suppose that Epinoia did make the Father? Salles-Dabadie (op. cit. p. 39) follows Macmahon (A.1.(iv)† Macmahon, 1877, p. 210) in supposing that the author wishes to deny that Epinoia proceeded to create the world. But again we must object that there is no reason why the reader should have entertained this suspicion. We would suggest that the meaning is rather

Whereas the Father, by bringing himself forth from  
himself disclosed to himself his own conception,  
the conception that appeared did not do this but  
on seeing him concealed the Father in herself.

(? so Haenchen: '....so hat die erscheinende Epinoia nicht getan. Sondern...': A.2: Haenchen, 1952, p. 335). The reader might well have expected the process of self-knowing begun by the Father to have been continued by Epinoia but in fact, the Commentator is saying, the object of her knowledge is not herself but the Father.

There is a further ambiguity in the phrase τὸ φανεῖν ἅπ' αὐτῶν (18. 7). We see no reason, pace Haenchen (ibid.), to limit the meaning to man. The very vagueness of the phrase suggests that the

author has the whole universe in mind.

The two ambiguities we have just examined support Salles-Dabadie's oft-repeated assertion that our author had no great familiarity with the Greek language.

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## Chapter 6

### THE HIPPOLYTAN 'SYNTAGMA TRADITION'

#### 1. HIPPOLYTUS' SYNTAGMA

We shall begin this section of our study by summarising the process by which there has arisen a scholarly consensus of belief that the lost Syntagma of Hippolytus was used by the Ps Tertullian (*Libellus adversus omnes haereses*, or *De praescriptione*: early third century), St. Epiphanius (*Panarion*, c. 377) and Philaster of Brescia (*Diversarum hereseon liber*, or *Liber de Haeresibus*, c. 385). We have found particularly helpful in this task the discussion by P. Nautin in A.1. (iv): Nautin, 1949, pp. 22-39. (Note, however, a misprint on p. 31, l. 13: for 'le pseudo-Tertullien' read 'Epiphane'.)

Photius (Bibl. 121) says Hippolytus wrote a Syntagma of thirty two heresies beginning with the Dositheans and ending with Noetus and the Noetians. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of this statement: it sounds very much as if Photius had seen a copy of the Syntagma.

Lipsius in his discussion of the sources of Epiphanius' *Panarion* (A.2. (vi): Lipsius, 1865) noted that Ps Tertullian, Epiphanius and Philaster agreed in the order in which they listed four pre-Christian heresies (Ps Tertullian has only the four, the others more) and that in the case of the post-Christian heresies Epiphanius and Philaster agreed with each other in those instances

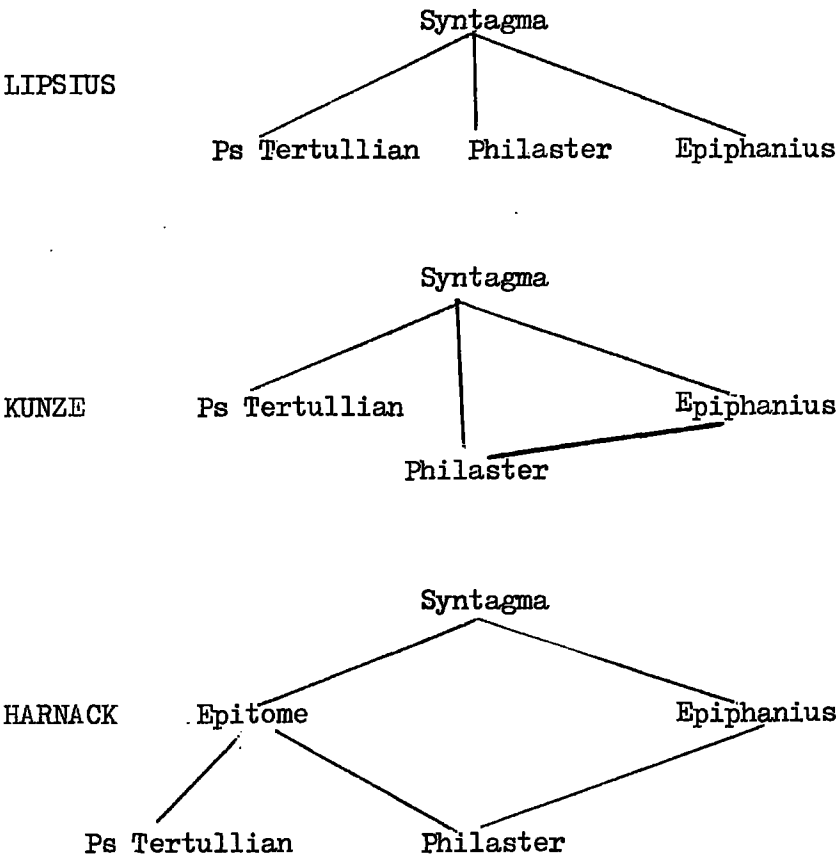
where both agreed with Ps Tertullian and where they disagreed with Ps Tertullian they diverged also from each other. Lipsius was led by these considerations to posit a Grundschrift (G) (Lipsius, op. cit., pp. 4-32). G could not itself be Ps Tertullian, for the latter's accounts were very brief and the concordances between Epiphanius and Philaster often went beyond anything contained in Ps Tertullian. An analysis of the heresies common to Epiphanius and Philaster (also to Ps Tertullian, except for the substitution of Praxeas, a disciple of Noetus, for Noetus himself) revealed that G contained thirty two heresies, beginning with Dositheus and ending with Noetus; it could therefore be taken to be identical with the lost Syntagma of Hippolytus (Lipsius, op. cit., pp. 33-39).

Lipsius sought further (op. cit., pp. 40-43) to establish the date of the Syntagma. The Contra Noetum was used by Epiphanius in his discussion of the Noetians, in a section deriving from G, and would have been the conclusion of the Syntagma. The Contra Noetum spoke of the excommunication of Noetus by priests of Smyrna who at the time of writing were already by implication dead (they are called *νεκροί*). The excommunication will, Lipsius thought, have occurred after 170 since Irenaeus who at this time departed for Gaul, knew nothing of the heretic Noetus. Praxeas and Epigonus, disciples of Noetus, arrived in Rome, probably after Noetus' excommunication, in the pontificate of Eleuther(i)os. A date not too long after the excommunication, but long enough to allow for the death of the Smyrnaean priests, was indicated - perhaps 190-195. Hippolytus did not know of Praxeas and Epigonus, and will therefore not have been writing in Rome,

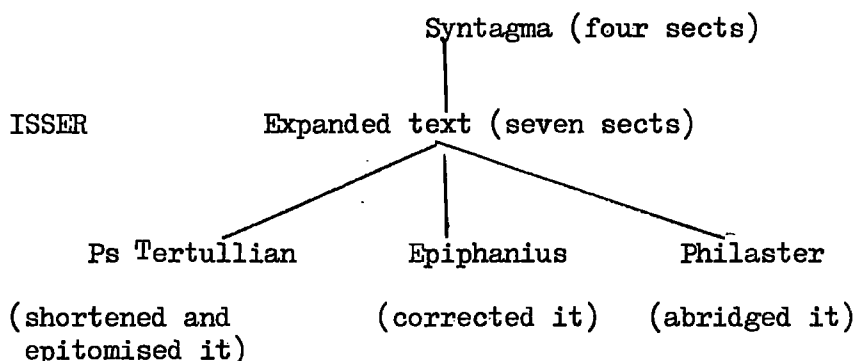


but rather in Asia.

Harnack was initially cautious about Lipsius' thesis (A.1: Harnack, 1873 and 1874), but after Lipsius had deployed his arguments further (A.1: Lipsius, 1875), though with the modification in his position that he now placed the writing of the Syntagma in Rome not in Asia, Harnack came to concur with him (F: Harnack, I, 2. Bd., 1893, pp. 119, 623; he wished, though, to date the Syntagma rather later than Lipsius had done), as also did Hilgenfeld (A.2: Hilgenfeld, 1884, repr. 1963, p. 14) and Kunze (A.1: Kunze, 1894, p. 45). Kunze, however, disagreed with Lipsius over the precise interrelationships of the four documents and Harnack latterly came to disagree with both Kunze and Lipsius on this matter (F: Harnack, II, 2. Bd., 1904, p. 222; 1921, p. 21\* n.3). Their views may be summarised in tabular form:



Latterly Isser, while accepting the thrust of Lipsius' argumentation, has contended that at least so far as the accounts of the pre-Christian heresies go, Ps Tertullian, Epiphanius and Philaster worked not from the text of the Syntagma itself but from an early expansion of it (D.1: Isser, 1973, pp. 100-106):



The question whether the Contra Noetum, which, as we have seen, provides some of the evidence for Lipsius' dating of the Syntagma, was originally part of the Syntagma, has never been conclusively settled. Some have argued against this proposition on the grounds of length, others (most recently Lüdemann: A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, p. 35) on grounds of genre, but the majority view appears to favour Lipsius (see summary in Nautin, op. cit., pp. 32-39).

Cerfaux (A.2: Cerfaux, [1925,26], 1962) in his study of Simonianism relied heavily on Lipsius' views. He noted Harnack's belief that Ps Tertullian and Philaster knew only an epitome of the Syntagma and that Philaster used Epiphanius. He was of the opinion that at least as far as the Simon material went Philaster seemed to be independent of Epiphanius (op. cit., [1925] p. 493, n. 2) whose diffuse style had exercised no influence on him (op. cit., p. 501). Cerfaux proceeded to offer a detailed conjectural restoration of the Syntagma account of Simon and the Simonians.

The basic contention of Lipsius that Ps Tertullian, Epiphanius and Philaster used the Syntagma of Hippolytus seems to rest on very strong foundations. We have, however, come to the conclusion (shared with Lüdemann, A.2: Lüdemann, 1975, pp. 30-33) that Kunze and Harnack were right to argue that Philaster used Epiphanius (though without being influenced by his prolix style) and therefore that it is not safe to attribute to Hippolytus statements found in Philaster and Epiphanius but absent from the earliest of the three vehicles of the Syntagma tradition, Ps Tertullian (A.1: Kunze, 1894, p. 48). In the case of Simon, the account preserved in Ps Tertullian is so short that unfortunately very, very little of what the Syntagma had to say about him and his followers can be recovered with any confidence.

What are the grounds for asserting Philaster's dependence on Epiphanius rather than, with Lipsius (A.1. (vi): Lipsius, 1865, pp. 14-32), tracing concordances between the two back to the Syntagma? Kunze (op. cit., pp. 46-48) has pointed out that Epiphanius and Philaster have very similar accounts of peculiar groups of heretics not mentioned by Ps Tertullian, viz. the Stratioci (Epiph. Pan. 26. 3. 10, 11; Phil. 57), the Pepuziani, the Ascodrogitas and the Passalorynchitae (Epiph. Pan. 48. 14; 19. 2; Phil. 49, 74). Further, in the account of Basilides' doctrine Ps Tertullian gives a more credible version, which agrees with that of Irenaeus, while Epiphanius and Philaster bring the Basilidean doctrines that Jesus was not crucified and that martyrdom was unacceptable into an implausible association (to the effect that Basilides taught that one should not accept martyrdom since that

meant dying for a Christ who did not die). 'If this confusion had stood in the Syntagma', says Kunze (op. cit., p. 57), 'it cannot be conceived by what means Ps Tertullian should alone have so well mended it'. Yet again, through a careful analysis of the accounts of Cerinthus, Kunze is able to show that when after speaking of Cerinthus in the singular Epiphanius adds (28. 5)  
 χρῶται γὰρ τῷ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγελίῳ, τὸν δὲ  
 Πάυλον ἁθετοῦσι διὰ τὸ μὴ πείθεσθαι τῇ περιτομῇ  
 he is wrongly predicating of Cerinthus statements which Irenaeus had made (I. 22) about the Ebionites (hence the plural) immediately after his account of Cerinthus (I. 21). In this mistake Philaster follows Epiphanius, as also in giving Cerinthus a Jewish orientation; in both these respects Epiphanius and Philaster are at variance with the earliest witness to the text of the Hippolytan Syntagma, Ps Tertullian, and there can be no doubt that Philaster has used, and been misled by, Epiphanius (Kunze, op. cit., pp. 62-67).

Applying to the Simonian testimonies the norm of interpretation proposed by Kunze, 'ubicunque Philastrum a Pseudeotertulliano discrepantem cum solo Epiphanio convenire videmus, talia non protinus Hippolyto attribuenda sunt' (op. cit., p. 48), we find that two statements only can be said with complete assurance to derive from the Syntagma, viz. (i) that Simon said that the world had been made by angels and (ii) that he, Simon, only seemed to suffer. Since these doctrines are already ascribed to the Simonians by Irenaeus, what we have been able to salvage of Hippolytus' Syntagma has not, alas, contributed very much to the progress of our investigations.

We shall now proceed to examine the text of, in turn, Ps

Tertullian, Epiphanius and Philaster to see if any of their statements, whether or not derived from the Syntagma, may contain reliable testimony to the history and beliefs of the Simonians.

## 2. PS TERTULLIAN

Ps Tertullian's exiguous account of Simon and the Simonians contains the following motifs: (i) In Acts Simon is justly punished by Peter; (ii) He said he was the supreme God; (iii) He said the world was created by his angels; (iv) Simon was believed to have descended in order to search for a wandering daemon, to wit Wisdom (reading with Kroymann 'ad daemonem se oberrantem, qui esset sapientia, descendisse quaerendum' in place of the unintelligible MS readings 'a daemone se (ob)errante...' and 'ac daemone...'); (v) He seemed to suffer among the Jews 'in phantasmate dei'.

The only one of these motifs which might possibly preserve a tradition that we have not come upon before is (iv). The identification of Helena (not mentioned by name in Ps Tertullian) with Wisdom is, as we have already said, found also in Ps Clement (Recog. 2. 12; Hom. 2. 25). Whether Simonianism as it developed came to identify Helena-Ennoia with the Sophia of the other Gnostic systems, or whether Ps Tertullian and Ps Clement, following perhaps a common source, wrongly made the identification, must for lack of evidence to decide the issue remain uncertain.

## 3. EPIPHANIUS

Epiphanius' account of Simon and Simonianism is characteristic of this 'honest but credulous and narrow-minded zealot for church orthodoxy' (A.1. (vi): Lipsius, 1880, p. 152). It is long, abusive

and rambling, much of it being no doubt an embellishment (?) of Acts, Irenaeus and the Hippolytan Syntagma. We shall, in order to confine our treatment within the limits of relevance to the inquiry in hand, content ourselves with listing and examining those statements that have a prima facie reason for being thought to derive from sources other than Acts and Irenaeus.

The possible independent motifs would appear to be as follows (all quotations are in our own translation)<sup>F</sup>

- (i) 'Gitthon, a city in Samaria, now a village'.
- (ii) 'His harlot of a partner he dared to say was the Holy Spirit'.
- (iii) 'Simon said: "In each heaven I changed my form according to the form of those in each heaven, that I might escape the notice of my angelic powers and come down to Ennoia (the same as is called Prounikos and Holy Spirit), through whom I created the angels and the angels created the world"!
- (iv) '[Simon said:] "This same person it was who in the time of the Greeks and the Trojans both before the world was created and afterwards made on high the things that are of the same form as the world above, through the invisible powers. She it is who is with me now; for her have I come. She herself was awaiting my coming, for she is the Ennoia who in Homer is called Helen. For this reason Homer is constrained to portray her as standing on a tower and revealing by means of a torch the plan against the Phrygians. And through the gleaming, as I said, she characterized the revelation of the light above." '
- (v) '[Simon said:] "Just as the Phrygians by drawing it [the Wooden Horse] along in ignorance drew destruction upon themselves, so the nations, men, that is, devoid of knowledge of me [or, of



was derived from one or other of the powers; all were the work not of God but of 'the Left Power'.

(xiii) Simon fell and died in the midst of the city of the Romans.

Of the above, the following have complete or partial parallels in Philaster: (viii) (the concupiscence and detention motifs), (ix) and (xiii). They might perhaps go back to the Hippolytan Syntagma, though this, as we have seen, cannot be proved or presumed, since they have no parallels in Ps Tertullian.

We propose now to examine each of these motifs in turn in order to attempt to assess, so far as may be, its provenance and historical reliability.

(i) Since Epiphanius was born and spent his early years in Palestine, the statement that Gitthon 'is now a village' may be based on personal knowledge (so A.2: England, 1940, p. 149).

(ii) Epiphanius' assertion that Simon saw Helena as the Holy Spirit (found twice: 21. 2. 3 and 4) is at variance with that of Irenaeus (I. 16.1) and Hippolytus (Ref. VI. 19. 1) that Simon himself 'appeared to the Jews as Son, in Samaria as Father and among other nations as the Holy Spirit'. We are not inclined to suppose that Epiphanius' testimony is based on the Hippolytan Syntagma nor that it represents a more reliable tradition than that of Irenaeus: we cannot think it reasonable to take Epiphanius as a reliable witness to the Syntagma on a point where he disagrees with the Elenchos; nor, as we have argued in our discussion of Irenaeus' Simonian account, can we see any plausibility in the view that the binitarian formula found in Epiphanius is older than the Trinitarian one found in Irenaeus and Hippolytus.

It must remain uncertain from what source, if any, written or



oral, Epiphanius derived this idea, as also whether any Simonians in his time or earlier in fact held this view of Helena. However, since our investigations have suggested that the figure of Helena salvator antedates in Simonianism that of Helena salvanda and since, as will later appear, we believe that Epiphanius had contacts, direct or indirect, with a strain of Simonians who preserved the doctrine of the victorious, salvific Helena more fully than did the Irenaeian Simonians, we find nothing in itself implausible in the supposition that some Simonians made Simon Father and Son but reserved the title Holy Spirit for Helena.

In (iii) - (vii) we have three assertions placed on the lips of Simon himself. Cerfaux (A. 2: Cerfaux, [1925], pp. 494-505) and more especially Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 30-35) see them as quotations from the Hippolytan Syntagma. Since they do not occur in Philaster, let alone Ps Tertullian, we think it unsafe to make this assumption, although the reference to the beauty of Helena, to the Wooden Horse and to Helen's torch have parallels in Ref. VI. 19. We would wish to agree with Beyschlag (op. cit., p. 31) on this at least, that since none is anti-Simonian in tone they probably derive from a Simonian revelation document in which Simon allegedly expounded his teachings, and thus constitute extremely important evidence for the history of Simonianism. We must therefore examine each in turn in some detail.

(iii) We must first ask whether the references to Ennoia as Prounikos and Holy Spirit are part of the quotation. We have seen that some Simonians may well have identified Helena with the Holy Spirit. The fact that the name Prounikos is more often encountered in Ophian, Ophite, Barbelognostic and Libertine Gnostic connections

than in Simonian, does not prove that the Simonians, ever an eclectic group or groups, did not borrow the term. The exclusion of the clause from the quotation, therefore, by Lipsius (A.1: (vi): Lipsius, 1865, p. 81, n.1) and Beyschlag (op. cit., p. 29) is speculative.

We may note that the idea that Simon during his descent disguised himself in order to escape the notice of the Powers, is paralleled in Irenaeus (I. 16. 2). Of the other Irenaeian idea, however, which fits in very ill with this one, namely that the Powers did not know Simon, we find in these quotations, and in the Epiphonian account as a whole, no trace. Since none of the quotations has close verbal concordances with the text of Irenaeus, we think it quite likely that the revelation document from which the quotations have been abstracted contained no reference to the 'ignorance of the Powers' motif (a borrowing from the NT? cf. I Cor. 2. 8; Acts 3. 17, 13.27) and that it was not based on Irenaeus.

(iv) The thought of this passage has parallels in Irenaeus and in the Hippolytan Elenchos. It is striking, however, that the total picture of Helena is closer to the pre-Gnostic Simonian conception than to the Gnostic. Helena is here a victorious creator and saviour figure: she created the world through the powers and stood on a tower in Troy holding a torch (a motif not, as claimed, from Homer, but from Vergil: Aen. 6 . 518, 19), symbolising 'the revelation of the light above'. Nothing compels us to take Simon's coming to be thought of as motivated by the need to save Helena: she was herself a saviour. His coming is perhaps to be thought of as due only to his desire to be with her. Any similarity to Biblical ideas about the Jewish people awaiting the coming of the Messiah, or of the

Christian church awaiting the Parousia, may well be coincidental.

(v) This passage takes the Wooden Horse, which Hippolytus Ref. VI. 19 also says that the Simonians treated allegorically, as a symbol of the nations' ignorance of 'my knowledge' (? knowledge of me, or knowledge given by me, or both). Beyschlag (op. cit., p. 31, n. 45) is probably right to see in this passage assimilation of the Christian doctrines of exclusiveness and world-wide mission. He goes too far, however, when he argues (ibid.) that 'if one takes together with this text passages such as Philipp. 3. 19 ('...  $\delta\iota\upsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια ...') one can scarcely credit that the Simonians practised organised lechery': this is to underestimate the ability of heretics to twist biblical texts to their own ends (one thinks, for instance, of the appropriation by Libertine Gnostics of Eucharistic texts: cf. Epiph. Pan. 26. 4. 7, 8).

(vi) The claim in this passage that what Eph. 6. 14 says about spiritual warfare has reference to Athene is of great interest for with the mention of Athene we are back again in the thought-world of pre-Gnostic Simonianism. Nothing is more natural than that Simonians who saw in Helena an Athene figure should have sought to connect a passage such as Eph. 6. 12-17 with the goddess who was reputed to have sprung fully-armed from the head of Zeus.

(vii) There is some uncertainty as to whether the words identifying Helena with the lost sheep of the Gospel are part of this final quotation from the Simonian revelation document or are an Epiphonian parenthesis (cf. A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 31, n. 47). If Epiphanius had written the words himself one might have expected him to have used the word ἀπολωλός (Lk. 15. 4) rather than πεπλανημένον (cf. Mt. 18. 12 πλανώμενον) on the ground that Irenaeus probably had the Lucan form (I. 16. 2 perditam). But we have already seen

that in Ref. VI. 19 Hippolytus has both forms so it is quite possible that Epiphanius took *πεπλαυημένον* from there. Nor can we be at all certain that Irenaeus had *ἀπολωλός*, for in I. 1. 17, when speaking of Ptolemaeus' appropriation of the Gospel parable, he has *πεπλαυημένον* (verbally reproduced in Epiph. Pan. 31. 26.1) as also in I. 9.1. (Marcus), which is again preserved in Epiph. Pan. 34. 12. 1. There are in fact two good reasons for believing that the words are not taken from the Simonian document but are Epiphanian. Firstly, if the words had come from the revelation document one would have expected to read *αὕτη τὸ πρόβατον* rather than *τοῦτο τὸ πρόβατον* (cf. Ref. VI. 19. 2); and secondly the lost sheep motif does not fit in well with the drift of the revelation document, which regards Helena not as an errant figure in need of rescue but as a docetic incarnation of Athene who has come to the world on a divine mission. We are inclined therefore to believe that Epiphanius has sought, understandably but mistakenly, to explain the motive for Simon's descent by recourse to a conception that was indeed used by the Simonians described by Irenaeus and Hippolytus but not by those whom he himself was describing.

(viii) This passage resembles Ref. VI. 19. 2 in referring to the beauty of Helena, but in other respects the doctrine it preaches is without parallel in other Simonian sources. A parallel from elsewhere, however, does exist:

' [Barbelo] always appears to the Archons in beauty  
and takes from them their seed through pleasure  
(causing) its emission in order that by so doing  
she may recover again her own power that was

inseminated into those various beings'.

Epiph. Pan. 25. 2. 4 (B: Foerster, I, 1972, p. 316).

This other text of Epiphanius, in which he is speaking of Libertine Gnostics, helps us make sense of a detail in his Simonian account which would otherwise be puzzling, his statement that Helena commingled (sexually) with the Powers. The idea clearly is that Helena-Ennoia weakened the power of the angelic forces, which had in the first case come from herself, by increasing the flow of blood and of the sexual secretions. That Epiphanius wrongly ascribed to the Simonians ideas that were peculiar to the libertine groups of Gnostics, there is nothing to suggest, and the fact that in Pan. 25 he says nothing about the shedding of the Archons' blood makes it unlikely. Whether the Libertine Gnostics influenced the Simonians or vice versa, we are not in a position to say.

(ix) That the Simonians should further have had a sacramental meal of the menstrual and seminal fluxes is altogether credible. The Gnostics who like them are said to have spoken of Ennoia's intercourse with the Archons are credited with a similar practice, Epiph. Pan. 26. 4. 7 and 8.

(x) cf. comments on (v).

(xi) We have here again a motif known outside but not elsewhere within Simonianism, that of the mystagogy of the names of the heavens and Powers. Again it is the Libertine Gnostics (known personally to Epiphanius: he had eighty of them expelled from his city, Pan. 26. 17. 4 seq.) who provide the parallel: Pan. 25. 4. 5 seq.; 26. 10. 1 seq. We have again no reason to doubt the accuracy of Epiphanius'

account. The sacrifices they offered to the Father of All, 21. 4. 3, consisted presumably of the aforementioned secretions, and they were said to be offered 'through the Archons and Powers' (ibid.) because the substances owed their existence in man supposedly to the Archons and Powers.

(xii) The notion that each part of the OT was the work of one of the Powers is unattested elsewhere. What Epiphanius says is:

He claimed that the law is not of God but from the Left Power nor are prophets from the good God but from one power or another. And he determines the derivation of each as he pleases: one power for the law, another for David, another for Isaiah, another again for Ezekiel: each one of the prophets he attributes to a single principle apiece. All these are from the Left Power and are outside the pleroma; to every man that put confidence in the old covenant he held out the prospect of death. (21. 4. 5).

Whereas Irenaeus' Simonians rejected only the Prophets, these Simonians are said to have rejected the whole of the OT, although, as we have already seen, they appealed to the NT.

The distinction between 'Right' and 'Left' the Simonians shared with, and perhaps borrowed from, the Ophites (Iren. I. 28. 1), the Valentinians (Iren I. 5. 1 seq.), the Peratae (Hipp. Ref.V. 15. 5) and others, including again the Libertine Gnostics (Epiph. Pan.25.5. 2).

(xiii) The story of the fall and death of Simon in the city of Rome derives from neither Irenaeus nor Hippolytus. It agrees rather

with some of the Conflict Stories (e.g. Acta Petr. 32: Simon there falls in Rome, but dies in Aricia; in the Didascalia XXIII and the Apostolical Constitutions VI. 9, Simon falls in Rome and breaks his leg, but his death is not narrated) and is doubtless dependent on them and thus without historical value.

#### 4. PHILASTER

The points of substance in Philaster's brief account which do not derive from Epiphanius are as follows:

- (i) 'Post passionem autem Christi Domini nostri et ascensionem...'
- (ii) '(Audebat dicere) angelos factos a quibusdam sensibus de caelo praedito, eosque fefellisse genus hominum.'
- (iii) 'Intellectum autem quendam alium adserit esse, qui descendit in mundum salutis causa hominum, Helenam illam...'
- (iv) The death of Simon in Rome is dated in the principate of Nero. Simon died 'percussus ab angelo'; no mention is made of a fall.

Each motif deserves a comment.

- (i) This is reminiscent of Justin Apol. I. 26.1 καὶ μετὰ τὸν ἀνάλευσιν τοῦ Κυρίου εἰς οὐρανόν : it must presumably have come either from this passage or perhaps from the Justin Syntagma (possibly through the Hippolytan Syntagma).
- (ii) This is a difficult sentence. It is clearly corrupt. Marx proposes the following emendation (A.1.(vi): Marx, 1898, p. 15):

...angelos factos a se quibusdam sensibus de caelo  
praedito, eosque fefellisse se cum de caelo  
descenderet et angelos fecisse genus hominum.

Lipsius (A.1.(vi): Lipsius, 1865, p. 81 n.1) had earlier suggested a simpler emendation:

...angelos factos a quibusdam sensibus de caelo

proditis, eosque fefellisse genus hominum.

The 'sensus de caelo proditi' would be a paraphrase for Ennoia (turned by Philaster of his own accord into Ennoiai).

We find Lipsius' restoration of the first half of the sentence more convincing than Marx'; further we find it easy to credit that the MS reading of the second half is, as Lipsius believed, correct (the idea that the Powers deceived the human race, though not explicitly stated elsewhere, agrees with the idea that the OT issues from the 'Left Power').

(iii) Lipsius (ibid.) suggested that one should place a full-point after 'hominum', and that there should be an 'esse' after 'illam.' 'Intellectum...hominum' would then refer to the coming into the world of  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  through Simon, and the words 'Helenam illam' would begin a new sentence. Lipsius argued further (ibid.) that Philaster could not have been using Epiphanius because the latter does not mention the  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ .

We cannot follow Lipsius here. His construction of the passage makes it too disjointed (what is a statement supposedly about Simon himself, whose claims about himself have already been summarised, doing here?) and there is no reason why Philaster should, on Lipsius' understanding of the passage, have characterized the 'intellectum' as 'alium.' It is far more reasonable to suppose that 'Intellectum...nunciatur' is all one sentence, in which Helena is proclaimed as the Ennoia that became incarnate for the salvation of the human race. The word 'alium' will distinguish the Ennoia that is Helena from the Ennoiai that produced the angels. Such a distinction is admittedly unique. One suspects that it derives from a misunderstanding by



Philaster of one of his (lost) sources.

(iv) Philaster agrees with the Acta Petr. and later Conflict Stories, in dating the Rome encounter of Simon and Peter in the principate of Nero; the manner of his death ('percussus ab angelo' rather than as a direct or indirect result of a fall) is peculiar to Philaster.

Since both Philaster and Epiphanius have Simon dying in Rome, but in different circumstances, whereas Hippolytus' Elenchos has him leaving Rome after the encounter, recommencing teaching and dying eventually by self-induced premature burial, it seems very unlikely that the Syntagma of Hippolytus contained any account of Simon's death. Epiphanius and Philaster will each have relied in this matter on sources, oral or written, peculiar to himself. There is nothing to suggest that Philaster's version, any more than Epiphanius', has any basis in fact.

### Recapitulation

Having found it impossible to reconstruct from Ps Tertullian, Epiphanius and Philaster what the Hippolytan Syntagma said of Simon and the Simonians, though all these authors will have been indebted to that work, we have examined each of them in his own right. From Ps Tertullian we have discovered that the Simonians may, by his time, have come to identify Helena with the Gnostic Sophia (which was not, we argued in Chapter 4. 4. (iv), the case in Irenaeus' day). Epiphanius we found to be a source of some valuable information, in that he quotes what was probably a Simonian revelation document; this document seems to have preserved important elements of the

pre-Gnostic view of Helena as a saviour goddess, rather than as the human soul in need of redemption. Epiphanius also provides evidence that the Simonians of his day may have equated Helena with the Holy Spirit; that they were thoroughly libertine; and that they rejected, as having nothing to do with the good God, the Old Testament in its entirety. Philaster's testimony was found to contain nothing to assist us in our investigations.

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## Chapter 7

### A MISCELLANY OF SOURCES

In this penultimate chapter we shall examine, in some cases briefly but where necessary in some detail, the remaining sources which at the end of Chapter 1 we have undertaken to survey.

#### 1. The Sibyllines

In Sib. III.63 -92, where we read of the coming of Beliar from among the men of Sebaste, some scholars (including Bousset, Geffcken, Lanchester, Reider and Kippenberg: see F: Bousset, 1908, p. 597; F: Nikiprowetzky, 1970, p. 224; A.3.(i): Kippenberg, 1971, p. 123) detect a reference to Simonianism. The first, and more important, part of the passage reads as follows:

'Afterwards Beliar will come from the men of Sebaste and he will make the mountain heights and the sea stand still; he will make to stand still the great fiery sun and the gleaming moon, and he will make the dead stand up and will perform many signs to men; but these signs will not be fully accomplished by him for he is a deceiver and will lead astray many human beings, both faithful, elect Hebrews and lawless men and others who have not yet heard God's word. But when the threats of the great God draw near (to fulfilment) and the flaming power comes through the swelling sea to land, it will consume

Beliar and all the overweening men that have placed their trust in him'(III. 63 -74: our translation).

The date of this passage, as indeed of the Third Sibylline as a whole, is very uncertain. Up to the time of Geffcken (1902) Sib. III was taken to be a unified Jewish work of the second century B.C. (either c. 170 or c. 140). Geffcken argued that it was a composite work consisting of five different layers of varying dates, and that III.63 -92 was a Christian interpolation, as Jülicher (F: Jülicher, 1896, p. 379) had argued (taking (1) πιστοῦς ἐκλεκτοῦς , (2) Ἑβραίων ἀνθρώπων and (3) ἄλλους ἄνθρωπους to refer respectively to Christians, Jews and gentiles). Nikiprowetzky has recently reasserted the unity of the book, dating it, however, to the first century B.C. (c. 42: p.217) and taking lines 63 -96 to be a Jewish interpolation of slightly later date.

Whether Christian or Jewish, and whether an interpolation or an integral part of the text, III. 63 -92 must be dated, as Geffcken observed (E: Geffcken, 1902, p. 15) after 25 B.C., because of the use of the name Sebaste for the city previously known as Samaria (if as is now generally accepted ἐκ Σεβαστηνῶν refers to men of Sebaste rather than to descendants of Augustus, as was commonly supposed in the last century). We believe, however, that Geffcken goes too far when he asserts (ibid.) that since Beliar comes from Samaria he can scarcely be other than Simon Magus. As Nikiprowetzky says (pp. 223 -25; 335), the description of Beliar is conventional and stereotyped. The miracles he works resemble closely those that Antiochus IV thinks to perform in

2 Macc. 5. 21; 9.8. Moreover, the figure of Beliar of Sebaste is reminiscent of the Samaritan false prophet Belkira of Bethlehem, an agent or incarnation of Satan, who was supposedly a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah: the Ascension of Isaiah (II. 12; III.1, 11, 12), in which this factitious character appears, refers to him as a protege of Beliar. Beliar in Sib. III may well, then, be no more than a stereotyped evil figure. If he should refer to, or be based on, an historical figure, we would suggest that Dositheus is as good a candidate as (either) Simon. As we shall see, Dositheus (like the Simon of Acts 8?), claimed to be the prophet like Moses of Deut. 18, and this, we would suggest, would explain the use of the verb  $\pi\lambda\alpha\upsilon\acute{\nu}\omega$  of Beliar in Sib. III. 68 since it is also used in Deut. 13. 5 LXX of false rivals to Mosaic-type prophets.

## 2. John 4. 1 -42

A number of scholars have thought that the narrative of Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman in John 4 is not unconnected with a tension existing in the first century between Christians and members, or ex-members, of the Samaritan religion. Thus J.D. Purvis has suggested that

'the representation of Jesus as greater than Moses [viz. in Jn 4 and elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel] reflects not only a polemic with Samaritan (or a Samaritan-like) Mosaism, but also a polemic with a northern Palestinian sectarian movement engaged in the promotion of a particular figure as the Mosaic eschatological prophet. The hints received

from the Gospel suggest that the heresiarch was the leader of a baptizing sect, a wonder-worker, and someone who claimed that he was a divine being. Christian and Samaritan traditions relating to sectarian movements in Samaria would indicate that the most likely candidates for this unnamed prophet-magus [symbolized by the woman's paramour, 4. 18] would be Simon, Menander and Dositheus. (D: Purvis, 1975, pp. 191, 92).

Purvis is here following in the footsteps of B.W. Bacon, who, under the influence of K. Kundsinn, had already in 1933 seen in John's Gospel a polemic against the disciples of Simon and Menander, whom he took to be from the school of John the Baptist (F: Bacon, 1933, pp.88, 89). Such ideas are indeed no creation of twentieth century scholarship, for St. Jerome had long ago suggested that the man with whom the Samaritan woman was living signified Dositheus (Ep. 108. 13; PL 22 col. 838) (Purvis, we may note, agrees (ibid.) that Dositheus is the most likely candidate).

Hanhart has recently joined the ranks of the scholars named above, but he sees the polemic as directed not against Samaritan heresiarchs in general, as did Kundsinn and Bacon, nor against Dositheus, as did St. Jerome and Purvis, but against Simon:

The sixth man, not her husband may allude to Simon Magus, 'that power of God which is called Great' to which all Samaritans 'gave heed' (Acts viii. 10)... The vehemence with which the church fathers denounce him indicates the depth of his influence. Was he a particular threat to

John's own community? (F: Hanhart, 1970, p. 33).

Whether or not the Fourth Evangelist has a Samaritan heresiarch, or heresiarchs, in mind, we cannot view with any favour the suggestion that we should see here a reference to 'Simon', whether the Simon of Acts or Simon of Gitta:

(i) Both in Jn 4 and elsewhere the Fourth Evangelist is attempting to demonstrate Jesus' superiority to Moses (cf. F: Meeks, 1967, passim). If he has an heresiarch in mind in Jn 4 he will be one who defined his own role with reference to Moses. It is certainly feasible that Simon the Samaritan laid claim to a Mosaic role, but our analysis of Acts 8 showed it to be probable that the Simon there spoken of repented and that he was not therefore the progenitor of the Simonian, or of any other heresy.

(ii) Nor is John likely to be referring to Simon of Gitta, the real founder of Simonianism, for it is clear from our analysis of the testimonies of Justin, Irenaeus and others that he did not arrogate to himself a Mosaic role.

The Samaritan heresiarch, we would observe, whom we know to have seen himself as a new Moses or as the prophet like Moses, is Dositheus. If John has an heresiarch in mind, we are inclined to identify him, with Jerome, as Dositheus.

### 3. Josephus AJ 20. 7. 2

We have seen that Waitz (A.2: Waitz, 1904) identified with Simon the Samaritan magician of Acts 8 the Jewish magician from Cyprus mentioned by Josephus in AJ 20. 7, 2. This man, who is

said to have effected a match between Felix and Drusilla at Caesarea in the period 52 -60 A.D. is called Simon in some MSS, though not in the best, where his name is Atomos.

That Josephus' magician should have been the magician of Acts 8 is, on our reading of that chapter, according to which Simon the Samaritan repented, impossible. What, though, of Simon of Gitta? The latter is associated with Caesarea, e.g. in the Ps Clementines. However, to make the identification one has to suppose, first that Josephus is wrong in calling his magician a Jew, next that the less well attested version of his name is the more original (1), and finally that Κούριον is a mistake ('Kittim' for 'Gitta'). Clearly the identification is nothing but a wild surmise, and even if it were true it would add nothing of significance to our knowledge of Simonianism (2).

#### 4. The Epistula Apostolorum

The document, probably from the second century or slightly later, variously known as the Epistula Apostolorum, the Testament in Galilee, and the Discourses of Jesus with his disciples after the Resurrection, claims to have been written

because of the false apostles Simon and Cerinthus, that no one should follow them - for in them is deceit with which they kill men (Ep. Ap. 1: F: Hennecke, I. 1963, p.191).

Again it says

Cerinthus and Simon have come to go through the world.

But they are the enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ,



## (Ethiopic)

who in reality alienate  
 those who believe in  
 the true word and deed,  
 i.e. Jesus Christ.  
 Therefore take care and  
 beware of them, for in  
 them is affliction and  
 contamination and death,  
 the end of which will be  
 destruction and judgment.

## (Coptic)

for they pervert the  
 words and the object,  
 i.e. Jesus Christ. Now  
 keep(yourselves) away from  
 them, for death is in them  
 and a great stain of  
 corruption - these to whom  
 shall be judgment and the  
 end and eternal perdition.

(Ep. Ap. 7: Hennecke op. cit., p. 194)

If the document were as early as Gry (A.1.(vi): Gry, 1940) supposes, viz before 120, these references would be the earliest of all the testimonies to Simonianism (leaving on one side Acts 8). This dating is based on the interpretation of an obscure text, Ep. Ap. 17, where the Coptic version seemingly predicts Jesus' Return 120 years after either the Resurrection or - more probably, according to Gry (p. 95) - the Incarnation, while the Ethiopic has it coming after 150 years and the Latin contains no numeral at all. Gry, arguing that the author was predicting a Return 120 years after the Incarnation, is able to point out that Pseudo-Philo and the Syriac apocalypse of Baruch arguably foretold the Return for 119 A.D. (3).

However, we find Gry's dating far from persuasive. Let us examine the disputed text:

And we said to him, 'O Lord,  
how many years yet?' And he  
said to us, 'When the  
hundred and fiftieth year is  
completed, between Pentecost  
and Passover will the coming  
of my Father take place.'

But we said to him, 'O Lord,  
after how many years yet will  
this happen?' He said to us,  
'When the hundredth part and  
the twentieth part is  
completed, between Pentecost  
and the feast of unleavened  
bread, will the coming of my  
Father take place.'

(Ep. Ap. 17: Henneck, op.cit., pp. 200, 01).

The fragment of the passage preserved in a Latin translation reads:

/qu/ inta an  
no implente inter  
pentecosten et az  
yma erit adventus  
patris mei

(Gry, p. 87).

We find it altogether more natural to suppose that the 120/150  
years of the Ethiopic/Coptic begin at the supposed time of Jesus'  
speaking, viz. after the Resurrection (the question to which he is  
replying is about the number of years yet to come) rather than with  
the Incarnation. Also, whether the document is orthodox, as C.  
Schmidt thought, or Gnostic, as Bardy argued (A.l.(vi): Bardy, 1919),  
it is common ground among scholars that it derives from a world in  
which Gnosticism was rampant, and it is by no means clear that this  
was true of the second decade of the second century. We agree with

Bardy (p. 132) in declining to base a dating on such an obscure text as Ep. Ap. 17:

Il est évidemment regrettable que ce passage si intéressant nous soit parvenu dans un texte si incertain. Mais il ne semble pas vraiment qu'on ait le droit de tirer grand'chose d'un manuscrit latin presque illisible et de versions copte et éthiopienne en désaccord...Il vaut mieux ne pas risquer là-dessus des conclusions trop fermes.

If there are indications favouring an early date (Duensing, Hennecke op. cit., p. 191, instances 'the free and easy way with which the author uses and treats the New Testament writings' and the fact that 'the questions concerning the end of the world and the Lord's return still have very immediate significance' and Hornschuh (A.1.(vi): Hornschuh, 1965, p. 116) 'the strong influence of Essene thought, the unconscious quotation of Jewish Apocrypha as canonical writings...the absence of hierarchy') there are also things in the text which are more easily explained on the hypothesis of a late second or early third century dating, such as the suggestion in chapter 13 that the author's contemporaries had a set daily liturgy (Duensing, ibid.) and, we may add, the presence in chapter 4 of an apocryphal Infancy legend (cf. Infancy Gospel of Thomas, 14. 2: end of second century?). The evidence is consistent with several theories, as that there are earlier and later layers of tradition represented in the text, or that the book is early but in some ways the community from which it emanated

was in advance of its time, or contrariwise that it is late but comes from a community that preserved certain archaic ideas (theological development, we may be sure, progressed in the early days no more than today at a uniform pace throughout the Church).

The surprising thing about the two references to Simon and Cerinthus is that they are so unspecific about Simonian and Cerinthian doctrine. Simon and Cerinthus seem to be little more than stereotype arch-heretics (A.1.(vi): Bardy, 1919, p. 118; F: Bardy, 1921, pp. 372, 73 n.1), conventional accessories as Beyschlag says (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 73). Since Cerinthus will have been active round about the end of the first century, we surely need to posit at least half a century after his death for history to have been swallowed up by legend.

Duensing (op. cit., p. 150) thinks that this much at least is implied in the Epistula about Simon and Cerinthus, that they spoke of Jesus in docetic ways ('The reality of Christ's body is strongly maintained, against Cerinthus and Simon, whom the apostles warn against'). Duensing here ventures into the realms of speculation. That the Epistula is violently opposed to docetism is clear enough (e.g. from chapters 12 and 13), but it is also anxious for instance to emphasise that Jesus will truly return, so one might as readily assert that the Epistula thinks of Simon and Cerinthus as rejecting the Parousia. This is not to say that the Epistula definitely did not associate Simon with docetism (it is relevant to recall that the Simonian Gnostics of Irenaeus' time spoke of the

sufferings of Jesus' in docetic fashion), only that it is not clear that it did so. Since Cerinthus' name is in Christian tradition from the time of Irenaeus' onwards associated with docetism, it is perfectly possible that the Epistula thinks of Cerinthus as the champion of docetism and Simon as the champion of some other theological deviation, e.g. the repudiation of the Parousia. It is equally likely, however, that the author does not associate any specific aberration with either figure. The Epistula's Simon and Cerinthus may be literary creations, stock opponents of the truth with as little relationship to historical individuals and what they believed as the Demas and Hermogenes of the Acta Pauli (late second century?) have to the historical figures of those names in 2 Timothy. We note indeed that in Acta Pauli 1 'Hermogenes the copper-smith' seems to be the result of a confusion between the Hermogenes of 2 Tim. 1. 15 and the Alexander the copper-smith of 2 Tim. 4. 14; this sort of blunder may throw a great deal of light on the degree of historical scholarship that went into providing opponents for the apostles in the apocryphal literature.

We are strongly inclined to suppose that the Epistula post-dates Irenaeus and that its picture of Simon and Cerithus owes everything to Irenaeus. Dependence on Irenaeus would give particular point to the choice of the figures Simon and Cerinthus as antagonists of the apostles, for Cerinthus is represented in Irenaeus as the arch-opponent of the apostle John (III 3.4: the bath-house story) and Simon as the arch-opponent of the apostle Peter and as the 'fons et radix' of heresy.

We must regretfully conclude the Epistula Apostolorum to be valueless for our inquiry into Simonianism.

### 5. The Epistula Corinthiorum

In this apocryphal epistle, part of the late second century (?) Acta Pauli, the Corinthians report to Paul the arrival in Corinth of two men who 'pervert the faith of many through pernicious words' (Ep. Cor. 1. 2), namely Simon and Cleobius. Their teaching is then summarised (to be subsequently refuted in Paul's apocryphal reply, 3 Corinthians):

We must not, they say, appeal to the prophets,  
and (they say and teach) that God is not almighty,  
and that there is no resurrection of the flesh,  
and that the creation of man is not God's (work),  
and that the Lord is not come in the flesh, nor  
was he born of Mary, and that the world is not of  
God, but of the angels. (Ep. Cor. 1. 10 -15.

F: Hennecke, II, 1974, p. 374).

The fact that both Ep. Ap. and Ep. Cor. speak of a pair of heretics opposing, in the former case, the apostolic college as a whole, and, in the latter, the apostle Paul, need not mean that either is dependent on the other. The Jewish tractate Aboth tends to group rabbis in zugoth or pairs (Jose ben Joezer and Jose ben Johanan; Jehoshua ben Perahiah and Nittai the Arbelite; Jehudah ben Tabbaï and Simeon ben Shetah; Shemaiah and Abtalion; Hillel and Shammai: Aboth I. 4 -15), so the pairing of heretics in so many early Christian works may, we suggest, represent a Christian imitation of a Jewish convention. We have already suggested dependence on Irenaeus for Ep. Ap., and we would posit it for Ep. Cor. too (Schneemelcher, in F: Hennecke, II, 1974, p. 351, suggests for Ep. Cor. a date between 185 and 195, so acquaintance with

Irenaeus on the part of the author will be more likely than not), and whereas Ep. Ap. has Simon and Cerinthus as opponents of the apostles as a whole because for Irenaeus Simon resisted Peter and Cerinthus John, Ep. Cor. chooses as opponents for Paul Simon, because he was for Irenaeus the progenitor of all heresy, and Cleobius because perhaps he is named by Hegesippus immediately after Simon in his list of heretics (in Eus. HE 4. 22).

If we are right in all this, it would be futile to examine the doctrines attributed to Simon and Cleobius to ask which is supposed to be proper to which and then to seek to discover whether the attribution is reliable. The author of the document will have listed the doctrines which he saw as dangerous for his contemporaries and then put them on the lips of men of whom he probably knew nothing save that Church writers whom he respected listed them as prominent among the first generation of heretics; he will therefore have taken them to be fit opponents for Paul.

Cleobius is for us nothing but a name preserved in Hegesippus, and the absence of any reference outside Hegesippus to the existence of Cleobians in the late second century or later must make it unlikely in the extreme that the author of Ep. Cor. was engaged in a polemic against Cleobians; Cleobius will for him have been a stock heresiarch and nothing more. It is likely that the same applies to Simon. Had the author been involved in controversy with the Simonians of his day, he would surely have made some reference to their teachings about Simon and Helena. He has, it is clear, no independent information to give about either Simon or Simonianism.

## 6. Clement of Alexandria

Clement (c. 150 - c. 215 A.D. ) has three brief references to Simonianism.

### (i) Str. II. xi. 51. 3

In this passage Clement is arguing that the true Gnostic, which the Christian believer should, to his mind, aspire to be, will stand firm in his faith by virtue of using reason as his guiding principle. It was through reason that Abraham was able to 'stand' before God (Gen. 18. 22); so too Moses (Deut. 5. 31). Only immutable means can give access to the Immutable One. The Simonians too, Clement adds, are keen to become like the Standing One whom they worship:

οἱ δὲ ἐμφὶ τὸν Σίμωνα τῷ ἑστῶτι, ὃν σέβουσιν,  
ἐξομοιοῦσθαι <τὸν> τρόπον βούλονται.

Therefore faith and gnosis of the truth always prepare the soul that has chosen them to remain unchanging.

This passage attests the use of Hestos as a title in use among the Simonians in Clement's day, and implies a belief, whether justified or not, that they understood it as meaning The Unchanging One. The thought may be paraphrased thus: to have access to the unchanging God one needs to imitate him by virtue of the immutable principle of reason, a fact understood even by the Simonians in that they spoke of assimilation to their Unchanging One.

### (ii) Str. VII. xvi. 107. 1

This text is truly, in the stock phrase of the textual critic, 'valde vexatus sed nondum sanatus'. The drift of Clement's remarks is that the heresies are guilty of perverting the meaning of



Christian doctrine, and that this view of them is supported by the fact that whereas the Church began, and the apostolic testimony concluded, within the first century, the heresies arose only in the second century, beginning under Hadrian (117 - 38) and continuing down to Antoninus Pius (138 - 61). He mentions some of the second century heretics that he has in mind: Basilides, Valentinus, Marcion and (seemingly) Simon. There are two formidable difficulties here: (a) Marcion is said to have arisen at about the same time as Basilides and Valentinus, as was indeed the case, but also to have associated as an old man with younger men:

Μαρκίων γὰρ κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν αὐτοῖς ἡλικίαν γενόμενος  
ὡς πρεσβύτερος νεωτέροις συνεγένετο.

If, as the context implies (and external testimonies confirm that this is likely to have been so), the three heretics are thought of as being roughly at least of an age with each other, the younger men can scarcely be Basilides and Valentinus. Who then are they, and why are they mentioned?

(b) Clement then proceeds to say, apparently, that Simon came after Marcion and was for a time responsive to the preaching of Peter, which is absurd.

We would suggest that both difficulties may be resolved fairly easily. Clement has argued that both Basilides and Valentinus are separated from the apostolic age by an interval of time, since between Basilides and Peter stood Glaucias and between Valentinus and Paul Theodas. The neoterói will surely have the same role in the case of Marcion that Glaucias and Theodas have in the case of Basilides and Valentinus respectively: they represent the

generation that links the age of the apostles to the age of the heretics. Now if we emend  $\mu\epsilon\delta' \dot{\epsilon}\nu$  (with Voss, Tillemont and Pearson) to  $\mu\epsilon\delta' \dot{\epsilon}\nu$ , in the sense 'as one of whom' (cf. Soph. Phil. 1312 where  $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha} \dot{\iota}\omega\nu\tau\omega\nu \acute{\omicron}\tau' \dot{\eta}\nu$  means surely 'when (Achilles) was one of the living'), all obscurity disappears. Simon's role is not, pace Beausobre and others, that of a second century heretic alongside Basilides, Valentinus and Marcion, but as one of the neoterói who bridged the period of the apostles and that of Marcion. We would paraphrase thus:

Now Marcion, active at the same time as Basilides and Valentinus, though somewhat senior to them in years, only associated with the younger generation of Christians; one of them, Simon, hearkened to the preaching of Peter for a short time.

One might suppose, Clement means (we suggest), that because Marcion was older than Basilides and Valentinus he had had contacts with the apostles himself; but in fact he, like them, could not claim to be a direct witness of the apostolic preaching, for his experience of it came to him through Simon, whose contact with the apostles was itself brief.

In support of this interpretation, which eliminates the idea of a second century Simon (who somehow managed to hear Peter) is in fact that when, a little later, Clement gives a list of sects which take their name from their founders, he speaks of the Valentinians, the Basilideans and the Marcionites, but not of the Simonians (108.1). Heresies, in Clement's view, were a second

century phenomenon; believing that Simon belonged to the first century, he was unable to reckon Simonianism a heresy (which does not imply, of course, that he approved of it). If he had, as those who follow Beausobre believe, taken Simon to have lived in the second century, his omission of the Simonians from the list would be inexplicable.

It might be objected that since Marcion did not travel to Rome until c. 149 it is highly unlikely that Clement should have supposed him to have had any contact with a man who had encountered Peter. But we have no information about the date of Marcion's birth, only about his death, which occurred c. 160. It is not inconceivable that he was born as early as say 80 A.D., in which case (if Clement did not know or was not taken in by the apocryphal stories of 'Simon's' death in the principate of Nero) there is no reason why Clement should not have credited a report, if he came upon it, of Simon's having met Marcion in Simon's extreme age and Marcion's youth. Indeed we must ourselves allow that such a report, though improbable, could be true, whether it related to Simon the Samaritan or Simon of Gitta (Clement presumably will not have distinguished between the two, because of Irenaeus' confusion of the two Simons).  
(iii) Str. VII. xvi. 108. 2

Clement here gives as an example of heretics whose name denotes their immoral behaviour 'those of the Simonians known as the *Ἐντυχῖται*'. It is interesting that Clement, who, as we have seen, does not regard the Simonians as strictly heretics, considers a branch of that sect to qualify for the title. Presumably the Entychites will have begun in the second century. Whether the

Entychite movement (to which we have no other reference in any source except in Theodoret Haer. fab. comp. 1. 29 (PG 84 col. 337), where we find the variant form Εὐτυχῆται, originated within Simonianism or whether it grew up independently of it but came to invoke the name of Simon later, is a fit matter for speculation only, as also is the nature of the loose behaviour attributed to them. Perhaps the name indicates that they were antinomians who believed that morality has more to do with chance, tyche, than with law, nomos (cf. Irenaeus' statement, I. 16. 2, that the Simonians taught 'nec esse naturaliter operationes justas, sed ex accidenti'). If Irenaeus is right in making the Simonians antinomian, then the Entychites are more likely to have been a group that originated outside Simonianism and came to associate themselves therewith because of a similarity of moral teaching rather than one that was conceived within Simonianism (this for the reason that Beyschlag gives, A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 69, that it is difficult to see why a group of Simonians that agreed with the movement on what they regarded, as their name implies, the main point of doctrine, should have broken away).

## 7. Ps Cyprian

The anonymous third century (?) author of the tractate De Rebaptismate which goes under the name of St. Cyprian (A.1.(vi): Hartel, 1871, pp. 69 - 92) speaks of 'quidam desperati homines' who on the basis of Matt. 3. 11, Lk. 3. 16 count baptism invalid unless it is accompanied by the appearance of fire above the

baptismal waters. The author professes his uncertainty as to whether these men produce the phenomenon of fire by the practice of magic arts or only purport to see it. He says of them (chapter 16) that they '*originem iam exinde trahunt a Simone mago multiformi peruersitate per uarios errores eam exercentes*'. Ps Cyprian says that in support of this practice of theirs the heretics have forged a book known as the *Praedicatio Pauli* in which fire is said to have appeared above the waters when Jesus was constrained by his mother, against his own will, to receive John's baptism.

That Ps Cyprian had a definite text before him seems to us, as to Schneemelcher (F: Hennecke, II, 1974, p. 92), to be certain. There is nothing in what he quotes from it, however, either in the odd reference to the baptism of Jesus or in that to the meeting of Peter and Paul in Rome for the first time, to suggest that it was Simonian. Nor does Ps Cyprian say that the heretics were Simonians, only that they claimed that Simon Magus was responsible for the origin of their baptismal practice. Ps Cyprian never in fact refers to Simonians at all, and there are no reasons to believe that the fire-baptism of which he speaks, which was in fact a not uncommon Gnostic practice (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 70 n. 146), was used by the Simonians. The invocation of Simon's authority by Ps Cyprian's desperate men may, if his report is accurate, reflect merely their infection by the Irenaeian view of Simon as the '*fons et radix*' of Gnosticism.

## 8. The Pseudo Clementines

Few scholars since the days of the Tübingen school, or at least of Hans Waitz, have believed that the Pseudo Clementines, which mention Simon far more frequently than any of our other sources, preserve much, if any, historical information about Simonianism . Nevertheless some account of the Pseudo Clementines and their testimony must be attempted, if only to show why such a seemingly invaluable source is in fact virtually valueless.

The twenty discourses that make up the Homilies that Clement of Rome is represented as having sent to James of Jerusalem are principally concerned to narrate Clement's travels in the East, in the course of which he supposedly witnessed Peter's conflict with Simon Magus, which took the form partly of heated verbal exchanges and partly of rival displays of miraculous deeds. The Homilies have come down to us in their Greek original. The ten books of the Recognitions, on the other hand (so called because they narrate, towards the end, Peter's encounter with and recognition of several members of Clement's family), have survived only in an expurgated Latin abridgement, made by Rufinus (c. 345 - 410), of the Greek original, and in Syriac. The narrative parts of the Recognitions are very close to those of the Homilies, and no one disputes that the two go back to a common Grundschrift. The dating of H and R (as henceforth we shall call the two works), as also of G (Grundschrift), is, however, a moot point. Equal uncertainty attends the source analysis of G itself, as the diagrammatic representation below of several of the viewpoints put forward will, we hope, show.

HILGENFELD

1848

(A.1.(v): Hilgenfeld,  
1848)

Kerygmata Petrou (Jewish Essene)

(originally joined to Ep. Petri  
and the Contestatio)

Ebionite recension

R 2, 3, 4 - 7, 8 - 10

anti-Marcionite recension

H

UHLHORN

1848

(A.1.(v): Uhlhorn,  
1854)

G (Jewish Christian)

H

(Jewish Christian)

R (Jewish Christian  
elements reduced)

LIPSIUS

1872

(F: Lipsius,  
1872)

\*Praxeis Petrou

(Ebionite)

Kerygmata Petrou

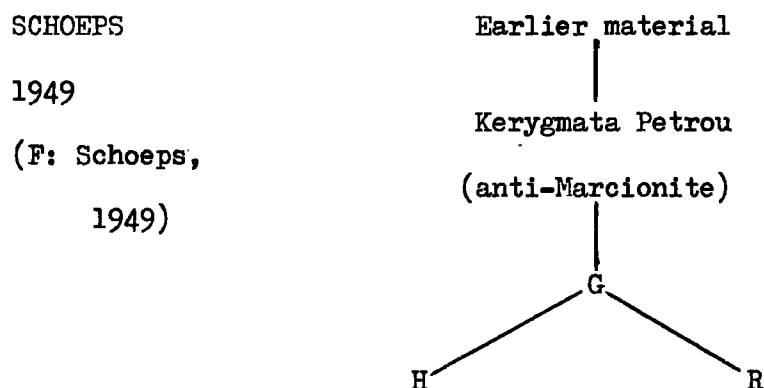
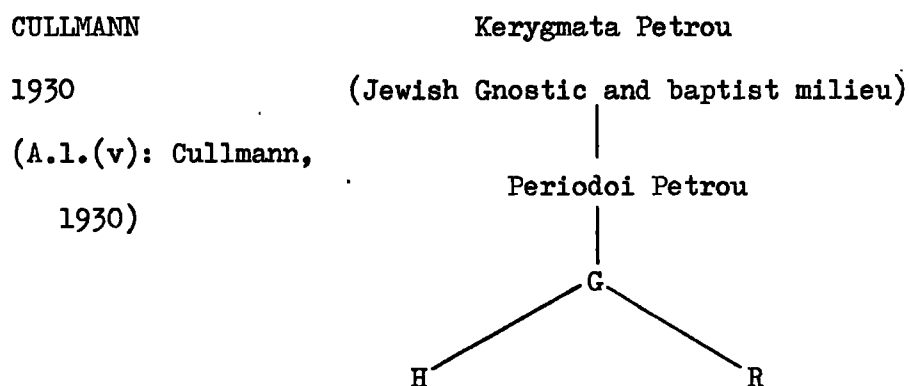
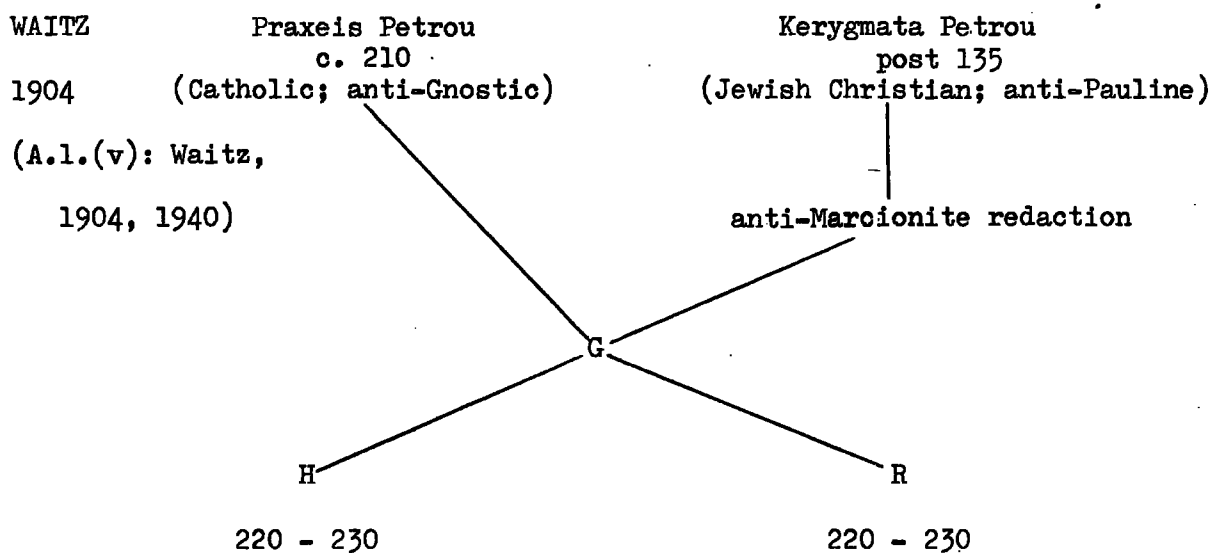
(Ebionite)

G

H

R

\*(Praxeis Petrou, here and elsewhere, denotes a putative  
document related to but to be distinguished from the  
extant Acta Petri).



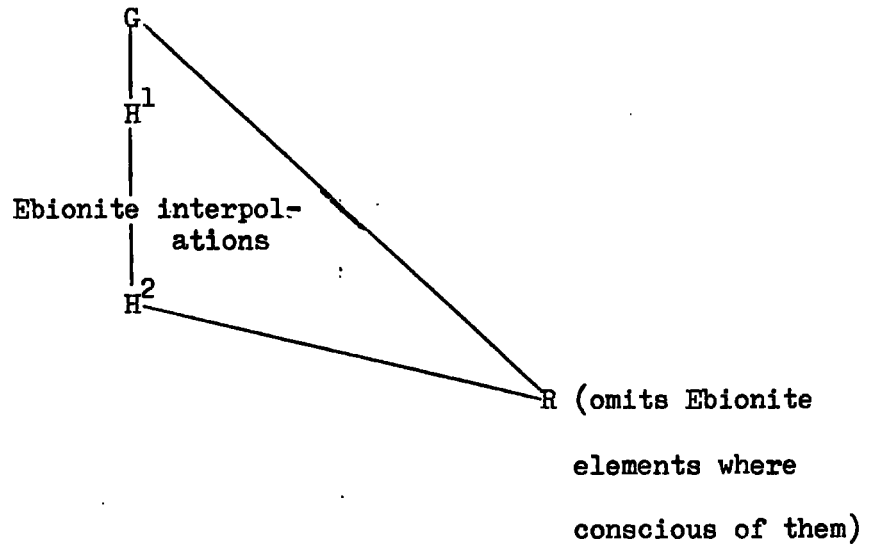


REHM

1938

(A.1.(v): Rehm,

1938, 53, 65) Ebionite interpolations



**STRECKER**

1958

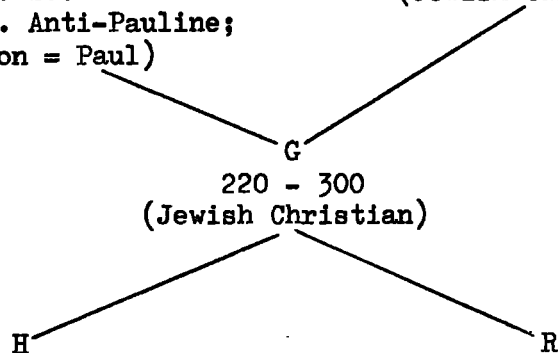
(A.1.(v):

**Strecker,**

1958)

Kerygmata Petrou  
c. 200  
(Gnostic. Anti-Pauline;  
Simon = Paul)

\*AJIT source  
(Jewish Christian)



\*(A source concerned with Peter and having affinities with the so-called Anabathmoi Iacobou).

## SALLES

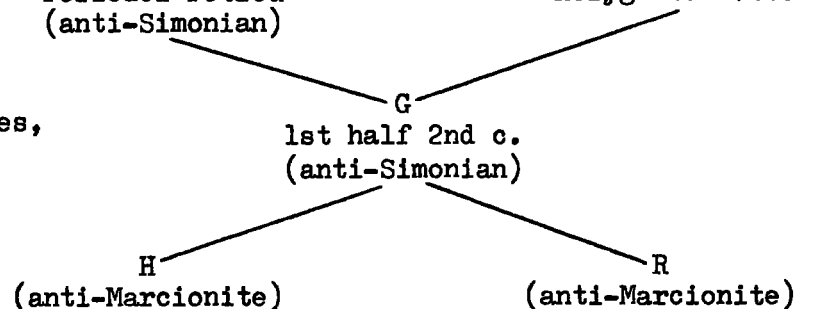
1958

(A.1. (v): Salles,

1958)

### Periodoi Petrou (anti-Simonian)

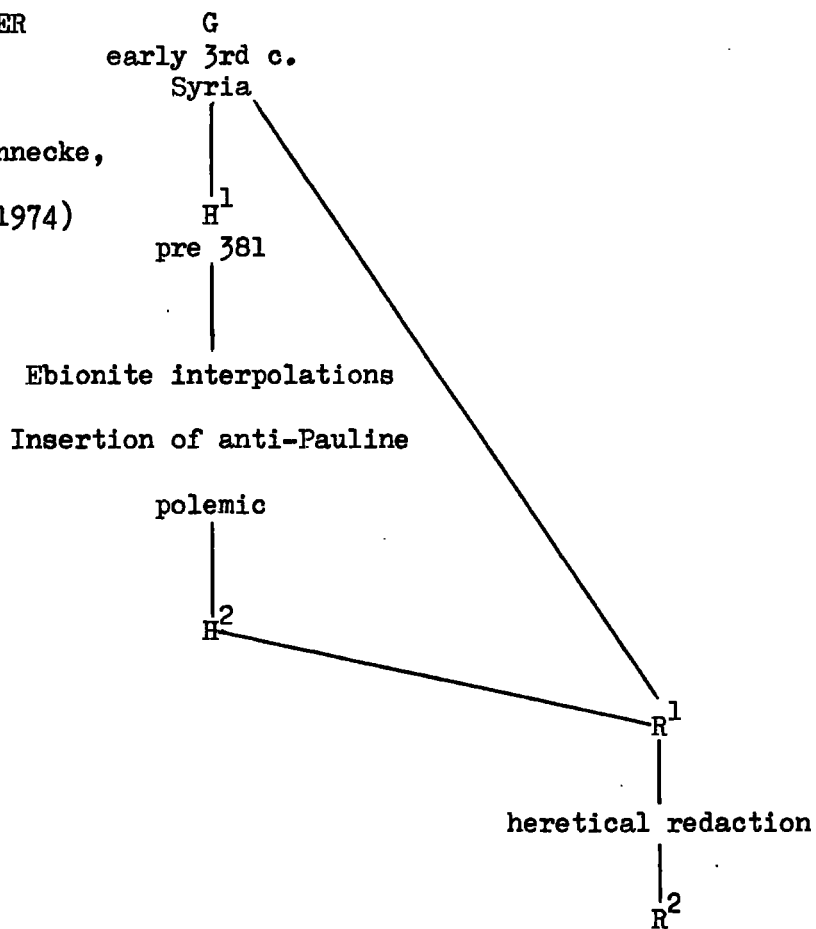
## Kerygmata Petrou



IRMSCHER

1965

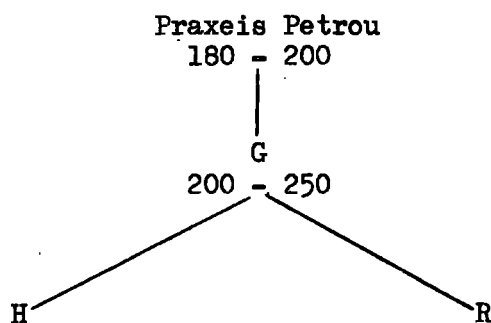
(F: Hennecke,  
II, 1974)



BEYSCHLAG

1974

(A.2: Beyschlag,  
1974)



It is clear from the above that nothing can be stated as established fact about the provenance and source criticism of the Pseudo Clementines. Most scholars would, however, today subscribe to the following propositions: (i) That H and R in their present form date from the fourth century; (ii) that H is slightly earlier than R; (iii) that G belongs to the 3rd, or possibly the 2nd century; (iv) that the sources of G probably included, along with a discourse source (the Kerygmata Pêtrou), a narrative source which told of the acts of Peter including his disputes in the East with Simon; this latter source may go back to the second century; (v) that H may represent more accurately the doctrinal passages, and R the narrative order, of G (D.1: Isser, 1973, p. 21). Unfortunately there is no agreement on whether the narrative source which narrated the disputes of Peter and Simon may be reconstructed.

It is perhaps significant that H and R have Peter and Simon in conflict in the East only: R takes the dispute no further West than Caesarea, H than Antioch, and neither narrates Simon's death. If the source concerned (Periodoi Petrou, or Praxeis Petrou) is really of the second century, it will antedate the sources, such as the Didascalia, the Acta Petri et Pauli and the Actus Petri cum Simone, which have the two in dispute with each other in Rome and narrate Simon's death, and be independent of them. England (A.2: England, 1940, p. 93) will probably be right to see the Western conflict stories as legendary extensions of the Eastern.

Various explanations of such a tradition of conflict between Simon and Peter in the East are possible: as (i) that it may be historical; (ii) that it may be a legend transferring to Peter

and Simon of Gitta the dispute recorded in Acts 8 between Peter and Simon the Samaritan; (iii) that it may be a legend arising from a coincidence, namely that Peter and Simon of Gitta preached in some of the same Eastern cities; (iv) that it may be a dramatization of the conflict between Christianity and Simonianism. Of these possibilities, (i) is the least likely, for if the tradition were historical we should have expected some independent account of it to have survived. Since there is no agreement as to what the source contained, we are reluctant to seek to adjudicate between the remaining possibilities, the more so because a tentative acceptance of any of them would add little to our knowledge of Simonianism.

It will be appropriate at this point to summarise the chief statements that H and R make about Simon. We may, with Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 49 -52), treat the material under five heads.

(a) Personal information about Simon is given in H 2.

22. 1 - 5 and R 2. 7. His parents, we are told, were called Antonius and Rachel; he was born in Gitta/Getthon; he was educated in Greek culture (in Alexandria: H); he wished to be considered the Highest Power, and to take precedence over the Creator; he called himself the Christ and the Standing One.

(b) Simon's alleged teaching is summarized in H 2.

22. 6 - 7 (cf R 1. 54. 4). He is said to have repudiated Jerusalem, putting Gerizim in its stead, and to have arrogated to himself the place of Christ. He denied the resurrection of the dead

and allegorised the law. He placed knowledge of himself in place of righteousness as understood by the Bible.

- (c) In H 2. 23 and R 2. 8.1 we are told of Simon's relationship to John the Baptist. He became interested in religious, as distinct from magical, matters because of joining the sect of John (the Hemerobaptist: H), which comprised, beside the Standing One, thirty members, 29 men and a woman (Helena: H; Luna: R) who because of her sex counted as a half. The number of members was chosen to correspond to the number of days in a lunar month.
- (d) H 2. 24 narrates the course of a rivalry between Simon and Dositheus for the leadership of the sect after John's death. Simon was in Egypt when John died and Dositheus took the opportunity to appoint himself as Standing One. On his return Simon accepted temporarily the second place, but after a few days began to accuse Dositheus of infidelity to John's doctrine. Dositheus tried to strike Simon, but his staff passed through Simon's body 'as through smoke'. Dositheus was moved by this to acknowledge Simon as the true Standing One.
- The conclusion to the story is: μετ' οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας ὁ Δοσίθεος, ἐκείνου στάντος, αὐτὸς πεσὼν ἐτελεύτησεν.
- R's version is somewhat different. According to this, Simon was not a member of the sect till John's

death, when he approached the new leader, Dositheus, and applied for membership and was admitted as soon as a vacancy occurred among the thirty members. He subsequently quarrelled with Dositheus, who, however, having failed to be able to strike him with his rod, ceded to him the office of Standing One and soon afterwards died.

- (e) Finally, the relationship of Simon and Helena is narrated in H 2. 25. 1 - 4 and R 2. 11. 1 - 12. 3. On the death of Dositheus, Simon started going about with Helena, whom he claimed to have brought down from heaven. She was, according to him, κυρία and παμμήτωρ οὐρα καὶ σοφία (H 2. 25. 2); the Greeks and Trojans fought over her, or rather over her εἰκὼν, for she herself remained with the Highest God. R adds (R 2. 12. 4) that the woman, whom R calls Luna, appeared on a tower and seemed to be looking out of all the windows at the same time.

If we are to suppose any of this information from probably fourth century documents, which has little in common with anything we have found in other, earlier sources, to reflect genuine Simonian traditions and doctrines, we need to be able to show that it goes back not only to G but to one of G's sources. Only if it can be shown to be plausible that the information derived from G's narrative source (the Praxeis, or the Periodoi Petrou) shall we be inclined to treat it as having any claim to be presumed to contain

reliable traditions.

Alone of modern scholars A. Salles (A.1.(v): Salles, 1958) has attempted to prove precisely that the Simonian testimonies of H and R go back to such a source, which he takes to be the *Periodoi* and dates to the second century. He thinks the author of the *Periodoi* was well informed about the Simonian movement and was concerned to engage in polemics therewith. We must devote a little space to an examination of Salles' case.

Salles was setting out to combat what with some exaggeration he characterized as the unanimous verdict of scholars since Waitz in 1904, that G was directed against Marcion, that the figure of Simon was an 'arbitrary, fantasising creation of the compiler' (p. 197), and that the heretic attacked under the name of Simon was in fact Marcion. Salles did not wish to discount anti-Marcionite elements in H and R, only to dispute whether they went back to G. He concluded that they did not and that H and R must have been composed earlier than is commonly supposed, for when they were written Marcionism was still a live issue. G and the *Periodoi* on which it drew were from the first half of the second century and were directed against Simonianism.

First Salles notes that R 2 and 3 are devoted to the controversy between Simon and Peter and that the interruptions, counterarguments and interjected questions which enliven the first part of the controversy largely disappear after 2. 48, to be followed by set speeches by Simon and Peter. A similar change can be detected in H. Salles suggests that after a while the author of G tired of the toil of making his protagonists debate with each other and contented

himself with placing on Simon's lips speeches comprising 'authentic extracts from a work composed by Simon himself or one of his disciples' (p. 202) together with replies which suggest 'comments written in the margin of a book and calculated to challenge its statements' (ibid.). R 2. 53 and 54, Salles believes, are the heart of the Simonian document being laid under subscription.

The passages in R which incorporate Simonian texts have, Salles argues, little to correspond to them in H, though the latter is equally hostile to Simon. This is because H borrows from the Kerygmata Petrou, which was directed against Simon but was ignored by R.

If G had been directed against Marcion, it is inconceivable, Salles thinks, that, given the author's conviction that flesh is good (H 2. 30 - 37; R 8. 11. 22 - 34, &c), he would not have attacked Marcion for saying that matter is evil and marriage is to be condemned.

In the ideas, philosophical and religious, attributed to Simon, we have, Salles believes, fragmentary but precise details of a system which has nothing to do with Marcionism but everything to do with Simonianism. This system has, Salles urges, three main elements.

(i) Conception of the divinity.

There are two heavens (R 3. 14), of which the higher contains the Unknown God (ibid.) and is the seat of infinite, eternal Light (R 2. 61). This Light seems to have been equated with the Unknown God for it is called (R 2. 49) 'Virtus' and this is one of the titles,



along with 'Substantia', 'Intelligentia', 'Mens', 'Bonitas' and 'Vita', accorded to the Unknown God in R 2. 56. Alongside this God, but subject to him, there exist a number of other deities (R 2. 38 seq.), one for each nation (H 18. 4); whether there is conceived to be any hierarchy among them is unclear.

The statement that the Light was unknown to Jesus (R 2. 49) fits Simonianism but not Marcionism, because for Marcion Jesus was the revelation of the Unknown God. Likewise the doctrine that the Good God was unknown to angels and demons (R 2. 51) is a leading idea in Simonianism but alien to the thought of Marcion. Again, the notion that the Creator God is bad (R 2. 54) is at variance with Marcionite belief, according to which he is just (whereas the Higher God is good).

(ii) Doctrine of Creation.

H 3. 2 says that the Creator and the God who gave the Law are separable, but H 18. 4, which says that the Demiurge and the God of the Jews are identical, is followed in 18. 12 by a statement that the Great Power has sent two angels, one to create the world, the other to give the Law; this text also mentions the Standing One. In all this we are clearly, according to Salles (p. 214), in an atmosphere of mitigated polytheism that is remote from the religion of Marcion.

(iii) Soteriology.

Simon seems, Salles observes, to contradict himself in the few passages of the speeches placed on his lips that bear on soteriology, in that he sometimes says that the soul is not immortal

(R 2. 70, 3. 30, 39, 41, 42; H 2. 29, 30), whereas in R 2. 57, 59 (souls come from the Good God and are held captive on earth unable to return to their Father, 2. 58 (souls can be saved through knowledge of their origin), and H 2. 22. 3 & 4, the immortality of the soul' seems to be proclaimed or at least implied. Perhaps, suggests Salles (pp. 215, 16), the passages denying the immortality of the soul should be taken as attacking in a confused way the resurrection of the body.

There are passages seemingly asserting Simonian belief in fatalism and disbelief in free will, but they are so oratorical that Salles hesitates to adjudge them reliable testimonies to Simonian doctrine.

The reason why R contains more texts attesting the doctrines of Simonianism than H is, Salles thinks (p. 216), that H has eliminated more of them than R from the text of G, concentrating on what united Simonianism and Marcionism, viz the idea of the two gods.

The possibility of supposing that G has invented the doctrines ascribed to Simon is excluded, Salles thinks (pp. 223, 24), by his manner of working:

Like all compilers, he lacked imagination; even the romantic passages of his book are made up of borrowings. He no more thought up what he made Simon say than he made up the rest. Therefore the data given by him, which are considerable, must be accorded serious consideration and given an important place in the Simon Magus dossier (p. 224).

Unfortunately, Salles' work is as methodologically unsound as that of the scholars he is attacking for making G anti-Marcionite. If they have neglected, as he observes (p. 218 n. 30), to check the supposedly Marcionite doctrines put on Simon's lips in G against other evidence for Marcionism, Salles himself has too readily assumed that any doctrines that are not Marcionite must be Simonian without checking them against other evidence for the nature of Simonian tenets. That there are parallels between the doctrines espoused by the Ps Clementine Simon and Simonian beliefs as attested elsewhere, we should not wish to deny, but there is too much in Salles' Simonianism, including basic ideas like the doctrine of the two gods, which has no parallel in other sources, for us to be able to follow Salles.

Nor does Salles persuade us that the change of style at R 2. 49 shows that 2. 49 - 66 derives from a Simonian source and a written refutation of Simonianism. It is true that after this point there is less verbal jousting, and more set speeches, than before and that this probably means that G has tired of the labour of providing verbal fireworks. It by no means follows, however, that the set speeches that follow come from a written source: the fact that set speeches are easier to write than a ding-dong verbal skermish is a sufficient explanation.

We may now return to a consideration of the treatment of Simon and Simonianism in the summary account in H 2. 22 - 25 and the R parallels. We do so (having found it impossible to follow Salles) without any presumption that G, from which the H and R narratives

derive, is a reliable witness to Simonianism or even had any serious intention of giving an account of Simonianism, or that G uses a second century source well informed thereon.

(a) That Simon's parents were called Antonius and Rachel may seem a statement that cannot be explained as a product of anti-Simonian polemic and that is likely therefore to be true. Dieterlen (A: 2: Dieterlen, 1878, p. 29), it must be confessed, has argued that the supposed mixed parentage of Simon (his mother has a Biblical, but his father a pagan name) may be a legend reflecting the Jewish view of Samaritans as half-breeds, but this is rather speculative. Even less impressive is Ory's attempt (D: Ory, 1956 [1]) to explain the naming of Simon's mother as symbolically motivated. He argued, for instance, that Jn 4. 1 - 42, the Samaritan Woman pericope, is a Christianized version of a Samaritan Simonian account of the meeting of Simon and Helena, an account modelled on the Jacob-Rachel and Moses-Zipporah encounters at a well in Genesis. The connection of Jn 4 with OT well stories is plausible enough and is quite widely accepted, but the Simon-Helena version is a figment of Ory's imagination. Likewise when Ory suggests (D: Ory, 1956 [2] p.4) that since Rachel means 'sheep' there is a connection between the fact that the name is given to Simon's mother and the description of Helena by Simonians as the Lost Sheep: the connection is to be found, he thinks, in the idea that to disguise herself from the archons Helena assumed animal forms corresponding to the spheres of the archons. All this is sorry stuff and does nothing to persuade us that Antonius and Rachel are not the real names of Simon's parents, his father probably being a gentile and his mother a Samaritan.

The place of Simon's birth is given as Gitta (4) or Getthon, an uncertain location probably either SE of Caesarea Maritima or W of Nablus. Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 53 n. 94) thinks the tendency of Christian writers to give obscure villages as the birthplaces of heretics (one thinks of Menander of Kapparetia, Peter the archontic from Capharbaricha, Valentinus of Phrebonitis/Pharbaithis and Montanus of Ardabau) must render the information suspect. Beyschlag is perhaps being over-sceptical here. It is certainly credible enough that Christian writers will have been delighted to discover that particular heretics hailed from villages with outlandish-sounding names, and will have made capital out of the knowledge, but this is quite another matter from fabricating such place names.

The account of Simon's education, on the other hand, inspires us with no confidence in its authenticity. There is nothing inherently implausible in the idea of Simon being given a Greek education, nor in that of his being sent to Alexandria (H), for although they are hard to square with the statement that Simon was a disciple of John the Baptist, the latter is, as we shall see, undeserving of credence; but it is all too likely that the story will have been based on conjecture, for what would be more natural than that the man who tried to marry Christianity and Greek paganism should have received a Greek education, or that a noted magician should have studied in Alexandria, a hot-bed of magic?

Beyschlag (op. cit., p. 53) finds equally suspect the statement that Simon wished to be considered

ἀνωτάτη τις εἶναι δύναμις καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον  
κτίσαντος θεοῦ. ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ κριστὸν ἑαυτὸν  
ἀνισσομένου ἐστῶτα προσαγορεύει (H 2. 22. 3, cf. R 2.7. 2),

seeing herein a compromise between the Irenaeus title ἀνωτάτης  
 δόξης and 'the Christ-claim used by the author himself'.  
 That Simon, or the Simonians, believed in a demiurge, as is  
 asserted throughout the Clementina, is unlikely: the Simonian  
 belief about creation was that the world was created by the angels  
 who were brought into existence by Ennoia (who does not appear  
 in Ps Clement at all). Nor does the Christ-Hestos equation agree  
 with Simonian testimonies from elsewhere: in Simonian doctrine  
 Jesus is only a docetic appearance of Simon, the Highest and  
 unmoving God, the Father, and it would therefore be inappropriate  
 to hail Simon as the Christ, for he was believed to be something more.

The interpretation of the title Hestos as meaning that Simon's  
 body would not 'fall' by reason of corruption, may again be based  
 on nothing but ill-founded conjecture. Whether the Simonians  
 used the term Hestos, and if so in what sense, we shall consider  
 shortly. Certainly this is not the connotation of the word in the  
 Simonian sources on which Hippolytus draws, so it would be  
 hazardous to suppose that the word was current among the Simonians  
 in the sense here asserted merely on the say-so of a source as  
 unreliable as the Clementina.

(b) The summary of Simon's alleged teaching in H 2. 22. 6 - 7  
 is valueless for our purposes. It is peculiar to H and from the  
 fact that two of the things here attributed to Simon, viz. repudiation  
 of the doctrine of resurrection and replacement of Jerusalem by  
 Gerizim, are in R l. 54. 4 attributed to 'another sect, that of the  
 Samaritans' - immediately after a reference to the sects of Dositheus  
 and Simon - we may reasonably conclude that the redactor of H,  
 misreading his source (G), has confused Samaritan theology with

Simonian, and has added thereto (knowing that Simon was not an orthodox Samaritan) some typically Gnostic notions, such as belief in a demiurge and the idea that the OT is to be understood allegorically. The statement that Simon professed belief in divine judgment but belied this belief in the moral tenour of his life has, again, the authority of H only and results perhaps from the Homilist's understanding of, on the one hand, Samaritan doctrine and, on the other, the morality of the Simonians, the Marcionites or heretics generally.

(c) We come now to a consideration of the assertion, common to H and R, that Simon was a disciple of John the Baptist (R) / the Hemerobaptist (H) and a member of his sect of thirty.

Who were the Hemerobaptists? Hegesippus lists Hemerobaptists as a Jewish sect along with the Essenes, Galileans, Masbotheans, Samaritans, Sadducees and Pharisees (Eus. HE 4. 22. 7). Marcel Simon, in his study of Jewish sects at the time of Jesus, has plausibly argued that this text, together with Justin's reference to a Jewish sect of Baptists (Dial. 80. 4) and a Talmudic reference to 'morning baptizers' (TB Ber. 22a) suggests that 'it is not without reason that students of the period have spoken of a baptist movement existing in the region of the Jordan River around the beginning of the Christian era' (C: Simon, 1967, p. 89). The essential characteristic of the movement will have been the erection of 'a supplementary rite between itself and the ordinary Israelite', viz. baptism (p. 88). Since the word Masbothei 'is almost certainly the Greek rendering of an Aramaic doublet for the Baptists' (ibid.), and since Hegesippus mentions both Hemerobaptists and Masbothei,

the Baptists of Justin should probably be identified with Hegesippus' Masbotheans and distinguished from the Hemerobaptists, who may be the same as the 'morning baptizers' and have been characterized (as their name suggests) by the daily use of baptism.

If there were such a baptizing movement among the Jews (and the attestation of the practice of baptism at Qumran, not far from the place on the Jordan where John baptized, is not the least powerful piece of evidence for its existence), then John the Baptist will presumably have been, originally at least, a member of it. The Ps Clementine description of him as a Hemerobaptist (in H), and its assertion that Simon was a disciple of his, must be regarded with deep suspicion. The Homilist may have assumed that all Baptists were Hemerobaptists, and G may have been led to make Simon a disciple of John because in Acts 8 the Samaritans did not on baptism receive the Holy Spirit (the text, of course, does not say that they had received John's baptism, but Acts 8 may well have been read in the light of 19. 1 - 7 and taken to mean this).

(d) What then are we to make of the Simon-Dositheus accounts? We use the plural advisedly since, as we have indicated, H and R have somewhat different versions.

Before we examine the accounts ourselves, it will be appropriate to give a brief resumé of recent research on Dositheanism. The sources which speak of Dositheus (notably Hegesippus, Origen, Hippolytus, Ps Tertullian, Eusebius, the Clementine, Epiphanius, Philaster and Ab'ul Fath) do not present us with a consistent view of the man, his historical setting, his teachings and the movement named



after him. Thus some seem to make him pre-, and others post-Christian; some make him support the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, others make him repudiate it. It is small wonder, in view of the 'confused and contradictory character' of the evidence (D: Montgomery, 1907, p. 253), that some scholars have argued that there was more than one Dositheus. Nutt (D: Nutt, 1874). and Kraus (D.1: Kraus, 1901) postulated as many as three heresiarchs of that name, and Montgomery (op. cit.) and Caldwell (D.1: Caldwell, 1962) opted for two. Vilmar (A.1.(vi): Vilmar, 1865, pp. LXXI, LXXII) thought there was one Dositheus who founded a sect that split into two factions. A recent doctoral dissertation by Stanley Isser (D.1: Isser, 1973) has subjected all the evidence to a fresh examination and has persuasively argued that patristic references to Dositheus as a forerunner of the Sadducees are based on 'a misunderstanding of, or an error in, the writings of Hippolytus' (op. cit., p. 1) and that Dositheus' supposed rejection of the doctrine of the resurrection then arose from this false association of Dositheus with the Sadducees. Having eliminated 'the tradition of the proto-Sadducean anti-resurrectionist Dositheus' (p. 1) from the inquiry, Isser is then able to argue convincingly that there was a single Dositheus, a first century A.D. Samaritan who identified himself with the Prophet like Moses of Deut. 18 and founded a sect which 'became the arch-heresy of the Samaritans' (p. 3).

Whether or not Isser is correct to postulate one Dositheus only it would seem fairly clear that there was a Dositheus who lived in the first century A.D. Both Hegesippus and Origen are witnesses to this, and it is further plain from Origen (confirmed

by other sources) that this Dositheus identified himself with the eschatological prophet of Deut. 18. That this Dositheus and the heresiarch Simon were indeed contemporaries, as in the Clementina, seems to be established on the authority of Hegesippus and Origen.

We have seen above that both H and R speak of a rivalry and a contest between Simon and Dositheus, but that H states that during John's lifetime Simon was his chief disciple ( $\pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma$  καὶ δοκιμώτατος : H 23.4) and was passed over for the leadership because he was out of the country when John died, whereas R says that Simon was not even a member of the sect until after Dositheus' accession to the leadership. This divergence must make it doubtful how much of the rivalry story comes from G. We are inclined, with Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, p. 51), to believe that the R version corresponds more exactly than the H with the G account, on the ground that the implication of H is that Simon as a member of the sect went off to Egypt without being replaced and the sect was thus reduced to  $28\frac{1}{2}$  members, which is scarcely thinkable. Further, as we have seen, the connection of Simon with Egypt is peculiar to H and may well have been added to G by the Homilist. Isser (op. cit., pp. 38 - 40) argues for the priority of the H version: R has a well-known tendency to expunge heretical tendencies in his sources and his version of the rivalry, according to which Dositheus did not sink into heresy until after John's death and John the Baptist (who for H is a representative of the female element of the syzygies: H 2. 16 seq.; contrast R 3. 61) is cleared of the imputation of being the teacher of the two heresiarchs Simon and Dositheus, is an adaptation of an earlier

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version which was closer to that of H. We agree with Isser that R has probably altered the G account to exonerate John by delaying Dositheus' lapse into heresy but we believe that this does not prove that the R version is in other respects less original than H.

If we are right in what we have said above, G will have had Simon not as a rival to Dositheus for the leadership in succession to John, but as an outsider coming along and trying to take over the running of the sect. It is tempting to explain this story as a dramatized account of an attempt by the Simonian sect to infiltrate Dositheanism and to win its members over to their own way of thinking.

What of the alleged use of the term Hestos by Dositheus and Simon? We have seen earlier in this chapter that Clement of Alexandria is a witness to the use of the term among the Simonians in the sense The Unchanging One. Since Numenius of Apamea in the second century used the term in this way of the first god (see ch.5 3 supra), it is likely that the Simonians by the early third century had taken the expression over from the pagan philosophers - Philo also uses it in this sense, but with him the Simonians had less affinity - to apply it to Simon (absence of the term from Justin and Irenaeus makes it likely that it had not originally been part of Simonian vocabulary). It might seem remarkable to call a man that had died The Unchanging One, but Philo had done so of Abraham and Moses and the Christian church spoke of Jesus as 'the same yesterday, today and forever' (Hebr. 13. 8).

As for the Dositheans, it is likely that the term Hestos was understood among them in a different sense. We have noted that

Dositheus claimed to be, or it was claimed by the Dositheans that he was, the Prophet like Moses. Now the idea of standing is particularly associated, as we have seen earlier, with Moses, the one to whom God said, 'Stand by me', Deut. 5. 32, and in Deut. 18 God, speaking of the coming Prophet like Moses, uses the verb 'to stand':... $\text{אנשׁ אקם כ'ל}$ . It is highly significant that in the Samaritan version of the Exod. 20 Decalogue these two texts are inserted after the Ten Words. We may note further that in the Ps Clementine story of Simon and Dositheus the staff of the latter, which he vainly uses to try to vanquish his rival, may be an emblem of his Mosaic prophethood, equivalent to Moses' own rod (so, among others, Isser, op. cit., pp. 218, 19). Therefore, whereas the Simonians (from the early third century, at any rate) used Hestos of Simon in the sense The Unchanging One, the Dositheans (and perhaps even Dositheus himself) used it of Dositheus in the sense of the Prophet like Moses.

The story of the contest between Simon and Dositheus for the title Hestos (not for the love of Helena/Luna: this is probably an R embellishment) may well, therefore, have arisen from rivalry between the two sects and from the fact that the term Hestos was used of the founder of each, though in a different sense.

If, as we have argued, G spoke of Simon trying to join an already established sect of thirty under the leadership of Dositheus, the motif of the thirty sectaries will be Dosithean in origin rather than Simonian. This is the more credible because it seems to betoken the notion of an esoteric, exclusive ecclesiola

which contrasts strongly with Simonian pretensions to be a world religion.

But why did the Dosithean group have thirty members? According to H, it seems it was because Jesus and John the Baptist represented respectively the male and the female elements of a syzygy, and since Jesus as the male element had twelve disciples (solar symbolism) John's sect had to have the female, lunar number of thirty. This explanation is too closely tied up with the Ps Clementine syzygy-theology for one to accept it as part of Dosithean thinking, particularly since, as Isser observes (p. 39), the lunar month does not in fact have thirty days. No doubt the Dosithean sect did have thirty members (had G concocted the story, he would have credited the sect with only twenty eight members) but the real reason now eludes us.

Beyschlag (A.2: Beyschlag, 1974, pp. 58 -62) has argued at some length that the Simon-Dositheus legend has significantly striking resemblance with the account in Acta Petr. 32 (2 - 3) of the ascension of Simon. Both accounts are concerned with rivalry in respect of the practice of magic, in both Simon explicitly states ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἑστώς ; in both cases Simon, as Standing One, is identified with Christ and thus not with the Father, as in Simonian sources, but with the Son; in both cases, again, the ultimate loser of the contest is doing well until his opponent, who has not been present on the scene until now, comes into the action from outside; the idea of jealousy is important in both narratives; and finally the 'fallen' antagonist (fallen in the literal sense in Acta Petr., in the metaphorical in Ps Clem.) dies shortly after his fall.

We agree with Beyschlag both that the similarities are too close to be accidental and that the later document, the Clementine, preserves the earlier version. The grounds for the latter assertion are as follows. The Ps Clementine version is more apt for a dispute as to who is the Standing One: in Acta Petr. Simon sets out rather (under the influence probably of Suetonius Vita Neronis 12) to show himself to be the Flying One. (5) Again, the Palestinian setting of Ps Clem. is more likely to be early than the Roman setting of Acta Petr., and finally the Acta Petr. episode is not so much a story of rivalry between Simon and Peter as an attempt by Simon to imitate the Ascension of Jesus (Peter has only a secondary role, whereas in H and R Simon is the victor, not just an instrument of victory.)

(e) H and R have a few differences in the accounts they give of the relationship of Simon and Helena. R has Simon beginning the intrigue before, H after, Dositheus' death; R alone has the story of the tower and the title 'Luna' for Helena.

The Ps Clementine account of Helena seems to us very likely to be a garbled version of the Irenaeus account. In both narratives Simon takes Helena around with him and she is identified with Helen of Troy and is said to have come from heaven and to be *παρθένωτος*. However, Ps Clem. gives her no role in salvation, either as salvator or as salvanda. The statement that it was only the

*ἐκείνη* of Helen of Troy over which the Greeks and Trojans fought may well have been prompted by Irenaeus' reference to Stesichorus, who taught the doctrine that only an *ἐκείνη* of Helen went to Troy. It does not fit in well with either the Irenaeus or even the Ps. Clementine picture. Further, as Beyschlag points out (op.cit., p.66),

the Ps Clementine version drives a wedge between Simon and the  
πρωτίστως θεός , who in Simonian theology were identical with  
each other.

In so far as G seems to have envisaged a place for Helena in  
the Simonian economy, it is a teacher, as wisdom figure, Probably  
the title παμμήτωρ suggested to G the OT Wisdom tradition,  
where Wisdom is represented as being 'with God' and dwelling  
'on high' (e.g.Prov. 8. 1, 30) and coming among the sons of men  
to teach them divine truth.

R has confused the picture by trying to develop the lunar  
connotations of the sect of thirty and of the Pythagorean  
Helena-Selene equation. For R Helena is not merely the figure of  
divine Wisdom who has come down to earth to enlighten the human race,  
she is also the moon whom Simon has charmed down to earth from the  
sky, as Alexander of Abonoteichos is said (Lucian Alexander 35)  
to have brought down to earth the Moon, his bride,with whom,  
through the good offices of one Rutilla as the Moon's human  
representative, he celebrated a hieros gamos.

R's tower story is a further extension of the lunar symbolism.  
Vergil (Aen. 6. 518, 19) has Helen appearing on a tower in Troy  
holding a torch. This suggested to R the well known conception  
of the Moon goddess as Ἑκατη ἐπιπυργίᾳ looking in  
different directions at the same time (Alcmenes had sculpted  
three statues depicting this scene, with Hecate holding a torch, for  
the entrance to the citadel in Athens). Whether Cerfaux is correct  
(A.2: Cerfaux, [1926], p. 273 seq.) to connect this motif with that  
of Aphrodite Parakuptousa, viz. of a prostitute leaning out of a  
window and beckoning to invite clients, is uncertain, and Quispel's

further connection of this motif (C: Quispel, 1951, p. 68) with the tradition of Helena's brothel, which Ps Clem does not in fact mention, is, if not 'a fantastic hypothesis' (Beyschlag, op.cit., p. 66 n. 135) at least somewhat speculative.

Certainly Cerfaux goes much too far when he seeks, on the basis of such a late and unsatisfactory source as the Clementina, to postulate as the most primitive form of Simonianism a religion in which Simon and Helena were worshipped as the Sun and Moon and a hieros gamos was celebrated by the devotees in memory of Simon's having brought the Moon goddess down to earth and having formed an alliance with her. As we have seen, the texts on which Cerfaux relies are peculiar to R and may well be a fourth century speculative embellishment to G's conception of Helena as divine Wisdom, which in turn may well be an equally speculative reworking of the Irenaeus tradition.

We conclude from this survey of the Ps Clementine literature that it may preserve correctly the names of Simon's parents and birthplace, but no credence can be accorded to any of the rest of the information about Simon and Simonianism contained therein. There is no reason to connect Simonianism with John the Baptist (though Dositheus and the Baptist may have belonged to the same broad movement), nor to suppose that Simon and Dositheus ever met (though the Simon-Dositheus stories may attest some contact between the movements named after the two men).



## 9. Eusebius

Two passages in Eusebius (c. 260 - c. 340) call for examination, HE 2 . 1. 10 - 12 and 13. 1 - 15. 1. We may preface our consideration of them with the remark that the dating of the various books of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* has been much disputed. Wallace-Hadrill, who gives a useful survey of scholarly views (A.1.(vi): Wallace-Hadrill, 1960, pp. 39 - 42), himself dates books 1 - 7 before 303 (p. 57). The latest date given for the first edition, comprising the first seven, eight or nine books, is 313.

### HE 2. 1. 10 - 12

In this passage Eusebius retells in his own words the Simon Magus pericope of Acts 8 and Irenaeus' gloss on it to the effect that Simon's repentance was simulated. He adds the information that the Simonians even down to his own time have attached themselves to the Christian Church (λοιμώδους καὶ ψωραλέας νόσου δίκην 2 . 1. 12), although most of them have been detected and cast out. It is very interesting to note that by implication there were in the early fourth century Simonians within the Christian fold who had not been excommunicated, unless we are to suppose that Eusebius wrongly attached the Simonian label to some of his opponents within the Church. It is certainly conceivable that Eusebius may have written inaccurately, influenced perhaps by Irenaeus' view of Simonianism as the 'fons et radix' of heresy (cf HE 2.13. 5 πάσης...ἀρχηγὸν αἰρέσεως , following immediately on a reference to Irenaeus) and by his own conception of the course of Church history as an unremitting struggle between God and his

Church, on the one hand, and Satan and his minions on the other. The tendency to lump different heresies together in an uncritical way is clearly demonstrated a century later by the law of Theodosius II and Valentinian III in 435 A.D., repeated in an edict of 449 or 450, 'We legislate that persons everywhere sharing Nestorius' nefarious opinion should be called Simonians, for it is proper that those who imitate that one's impiety in aversion from the Divinity should obtain with that one the same appellation' (F: Coleman-Norton, II, 1966, p. 700).

It is therefore not certain that in Eusebius' day there were Simonians operating within the Christian Church. Eusebius, no friend to heretics whether within the Church or without, may be loosely describing as Simonians fellow-Christians of whom he disapproves and whom he sees as spiritual descendants of Simon. Is it even certain that the Simonian sect as such existed at this time? May the people against whom Eusebius railed with such ferocity (e.g. ὅτι ποτὲ γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐπινοήθειν πάντων αἰσχροῦ μικρώτερον, τοῦτο πᾶν ὑπερηκόντισεν ἢ τῶνδε μυσερωτάτη αἵρεσις : HE 2. 13. 8) have been adherents of a different heresy whom Eusebius unconsciously confused with the Simonians? The very violence of the language he uses about the sect seems to suggest that he is not speaking of it by hearsay: he knows them and knows them to be very much a present threat. Further, he has seen a 'written oracle' of theirs. In our view it is very unlikely that he should mistakenly have identified as Simonians a sect whose members he knew so well.

We may hazard a guess that these Simonians lived in Eusebius' own town of Caesarea.

HE 2. 13. 1 -15. 1

Eusebius here says that Simon came to Rome in the principate of Claudius intent on capturing the capital before emissaries of the Christian Church could arrive to preach the Gospel, and that by trickery and sorcery he beguiled many Romans into the path of error. Eusebius then quotes Justin's account of Simon and Helena, and tells the reader that he may read another account in the first book of Irenaeus' attack on heresies.

After this Eusebius proceeds (13. 6-8) to tell us something of the Simonians:

And as for their esoteric practices, at which they say that a man, on first hearing them, will be amazed and 'astonied' (θαμβωθήσεται) (to use the written oracle in vogue among them) - for in truth they are full of amazement and frenzy and madness - they are of such a nature that not only may they not be committed to writing, but they may not even so much as be found on the lips of modest men, so outrageously vile and infamous is their character. For the foulest depths of shame imaginable have all been surpassed by this filthiest of heresies, which they follow who make a sport of wretched women laden (σεσωρευμέναις γυναῖξιν, cf. 2 Tim. 3. 6: γυναῖκες σεσωρευμένα ἁμαρτίαι) with all kinds of vices (tr. Lawlor and Oulton, A.1.(vi): Lawlor & Oulton, 1954).

Reverting to his account of Simon in Rome, Eusebius says (chapt. 14) that Simon had come to Rome after being exposed by Peter in Judaea (sic) and after having been 'smitten in the eyes by a divine and extraordinary effulgence', as a result of which he had fled from east to west (ἀπ' ἀνατολῶν ἐπὶ δυσμῶν ). His success in Rome was, Eusebius continues, shortlived, for the divine providence brought along to Rome not long after this

the great and mighty Peter, who for his virtues was the leader of all the other Apostles. Like a noble captain of God (γενναῖος θεοῦ στρατηγός ), clad in divine armour, he brought the costly merchandise of the spiritual light from the east to the dwellers in the west, preaching the Gospel of the light itself and the word which saves souls, the proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus when the divine word made its home among them the power of Simon was extinguished and perished immediately, together with the fellow himself (2. 14. 6 - 15.1, tr. K. Lake, A.1.(vi): Eusebius, 1926).

We shall examine first what Eusebius has to say about Simon and Peter, and then his account of the Simonians.

Simon and Peter. Eusebius' tradition of a first visit to Rome by Peter in the principate of Claudius (in the year 42, according to the Latin version of his Chronicle: the entry for that year reads, 'Petrus Apostolus cum primus Antiochenam ecclesiam fundasset, Romam mittitur, ubi euangelium praedicans XXV annis eiusdem urbis episcopus perseuerat'), which has been almost universally discounted by scholars, has recently gained the support of J.A.T. Robinson (F:

Robinson, 1976, pp. 111 - 14). It must be noted, however, that although Robinson's claim (p. 112) that 'there is a sizable body of evidence, both in inscriptions and literary tradition, to suggest an association of Peter with Rome a good deal longer than the brief stay at the end of his life', none of the pieces of evidence to which he, or his chief authority in this matter, G. Edmundson (F: Edmundson, 1913, pp. 47 - 56), refers (save Jerome De Viris Illustr. 1, which is, as both allow, dependent on Eusebius), attests a Petrine visit specifically in the principate of Claudius. The strongest argument for a visit in 42 is based on the fact that Christian iconographers at Rome delighted to portray Peter's release from imprisonment at the hands of Herod Agrippa, which leads Edmundson to comment (p. 53), 'the frequency with which this subject was chosen might be accounted for by the existence of a traditional belief in a close connection between the event and the first visit of St. Peter to Rome'. This seems to us rather speculative. The visit in 55 postulated by Edmundson and Robinson would itself sufficiently account for the tradition of a considerable acquaintance of Peter with Rome. Since Justin has Simon in Rome in the principate of Claudius without any mention of Peter, and the Conflict tradition has Peter and Simon meeting in Rome either at an unspecified time or in the principate of Nero, it seems likely that Eusebius, who was familiar with both (he quotes Justin, and his acquaintance with the Conflict stories is evident from, inter alia, the fact that he speaks of Simon's flight following a defeat by Peter not in Samaria but in Judaea, as in Acta Petr. 17. Eusebius claims in 3 . 3. 2 to take no cognisance of the Acta Petr., but he clearly has been influenced in this matter by a tradition, either at an oral or a written stage, which found its way into that book), arrived at his

account of Simon's Claudian visit by a conflation of sources.

There are a number of indications that Eusebius' account of Peter and Simon is no more reliable than any of the other versions of it. Firstly, the fact that both men are said to have travelled from east to west in journeying to Rome, where they subsequently have great success, is bound to create a suspicion that Simon is but a foil for Peter, and his voyage but a duplication invented for literary purposes of the voyage of the Apostle. Next we notice that the details given about Peter himself seem like a duplication of another tradition: the words γενναῖος and ἐνὶ δυσμαῖς which are used in the Peter story have a parallel in I Clem. 5. 6 - 7, where it is said of Paul that he obtained τὸ γενναῖον τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ κλέος by preaching ἐν τε τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ δύσει, and that he travelled ἐνὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως. Can it be that not only is the Simon story a duplication of the Peter story but that the latter is itself a duplication of traditions about Paul? Certainly this must be deemed quite possible, and would indeed help to explain why Simon is said to have been blinded by the divine effulgence, for this will be a reference back to the light seen by Paul on the Damascus road. It may further be remarked that there are parallels between what Eusebius says of Peter and what Epistula Clementis 1. 5 says: for instance, both have Peter coming to Rome to preach the Gospel and to found a Christian community there, bringing the Gospel from east to west. Now in Ep. Clem. no mention is made of Simon but Peter is said to have contended in Rome with

the Evil One, a circumstance which must suggest that Eusebius represents a later development of the story with the Evil One given a human representative in the form of Simon.

Such considerations as these, together with the fact that there is a contradiction between Eusebius' assertion that Simon's power died with him (2 . 15. 1) and his statement that Simonianism has endured till his own day, impel us to agree with Beyschlag, who has examined the Eusebian Peter-Simon legend in his book on Clement of Rome (F: Beyschlag, 1966, pp. 291 -99) and has concluded that no trust can be reposed in Eusebius' version of it.

The Simonians. Eusebius' statements about the Simonians, apart from those which can easily be traced back to earlier sources, amount to these two: that a written oracle (λόγιον ἑγγράφον) used by the sect contains the verb θαμβέω, and that the women-folk of the sect are 'weighed down' by evil. That 'women weighed down' was a term used in a special sense by the Simonians is possible, but the context does not positively require us so to take it, and if it was we have no means of knowing what the Simonian overtones of it will have been. As for the written oracle, this is clearly a reference to one of the sacred textbooks of the sect. There are only two other occurrences of the verb (a variant of the common θαμβέω) which Eusebius says the 'written oracle' used: Lucian De dea Syra 25 (θαμβώσας, sometimes conjecturally emended by editors to ἀμβώσας; even if θαμβώσας is correct, it will have no religious connotation here, so is no help to us in our inquiry) and John Damascene De haeresibus, 100 (PG 94, col. 761B). The latter text may possibly

throw some light on our present one, for John Damascene, writing of an obscure sect that arose after the death of Heraclius (641 A.D.), the Autoproskoptai, says this of their followers: ἔπονται δὲ αὐτοῖς, ὡς οἱ τεθαμβωμένοι. The presence here of the article with the participle, as also the use of the rare verb, θαμβόω, suggests that 'The Astonied Ones' constituted a well-known group or sect. They will have gained their name because Θάμβω was particularly associated with their rites. That this group went back to the second century, we have no reason to believe, but there is evidence that, just as the phenomena of shaking and quaking existed in the Christian churches long before the Shakers and Quakers were founded, so Θάμβω as an unusual ingredient of religious experience antedated the foundation of οἱ τεθαμβωμένοι. Astonishment or marvelling seems to have played a role in the religious experience of the Hermetic movement (Corpus Hermeticum IV. 2; XIV. 4) and there is an apocryphal saying of Jesus found in four versions which uses the notion. We read in the Gospel of Thomas, logion 2: 'He who seeks, let him not cease seeking until he finds; and when he finds he will be troubled, and if he is troubled he will be amazed, and he will reign over the All' (F: Hennecke, I, 1963, p. 511). In Clement of Alexandria (Str. V.xiv. 96. 3) we find a variant:

οὐ παύσεται ὁ ζητῶν, ἕως ἂν εὕρῃ. εὕρων δὲ θαμβηθήσεται,  
θαμβηθεὶς δὲ βασιλεύσει, βασιλεύσας δὲ ἀναπαύσεται.

Clement has an abbreviated form of the saying in Str. II.ix. 45. 5,



where he attributes it to the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and a mutilated form of it has come to light in Oxyrhynchus papyrus 654 (F: Grenfell and Hunt, IV, 1904, pp. 4, 5). As Vielhauer says (F: Hennecke, I, 1963, p. 160), in the present state of investigation no answer can be given to the question which is the earliest version of the saying; Schneemelcher (Hennecke, op. cit., p. 100) is probably right, though, that such a saying must have had its origin in a 'mystic-gnostic philosophy of life'.

We conclude from our examination of Eusebius that a couple of scraps of information about the Simonians may be gleaned from his writings, but none about Simon himself.

#### 10. Marutha

The Persian bishop, St. Marutha of Maipherquat, who died some time before 420 A.D., wrote a History of the Council of Nicaea which includes an interesting discussion of Simonianism. The text is preserved in Vatican Cod. Syr. Borg. 82. A Latin translation by Abraham Ecchellensis, from an Arabic version, was published by Mansi (F: Mansi, 1900 - 27, II, col. 1057) but its authorship was not there indicated. Braun's German translation of the Syriac text (A.l.(vi): Marutha, 1898), which identified it as the work of Marutha, gave it a new interest (A.l.(vi): Tissérant, 1927, p. 148). Harnack republished Braun's translation with a brief commentary in 1899 (A.l.(vi): Harnack, 1899).

Peculiar to Marutha are the following points:

- (i) That Simon was so-called, according to his followers, because he was obedient to the Father.

(ii) That Simon 'made himself a chariot, wherein he might be borne through the air by demons'.

(iii) That the Simonians had a Gospel in four volumes which they called The Book of the Four Corners, or Cardinal Points, of the World.

(iv) That they had 'red, rose-coloured threads hanging around their necks, symbolising their covenant with the devil their seducer'.

(v) [Omitted from the Latin version] That the women plaited their hair and occupied themselves with oaths and strange works.

(i) Is based on the derivation of  $\text{ܝܚܝܐ}$  from  $\text{ܝܠܐ}$  (cf. Gen. 29. 33, though there it is the Lord who does the hearing, not the bearer of the name). It is unlikely, however, that the Simonians in fact subscribed to this theory, at least in the form in which Marutha explains it, for in Simonian theology Simon was the Father.

(ii) The flying exploit of Simon is, of course, a motif common in the Conflict narratives, but the chariot mentioned by Marutha is not found in any of them (in most, Simon launches himself into space from the top of a tower). Doubtless this is a variant form of the legend, influenced perhaps by the idea of Elijah's fiery chariot.

In the Latin version, only, we read after the mention of the chariot: 'Hujus (sc. Simonis) rerum gestarum narratio refertur in libro Actorum apostolorum Petri & Pauli'. However, in none of three versions of the Acts of Peter and Paul (F: Lipsius and Bonnet, I, 1891, pp. 178 -222; 118 -77; 223 -34) does Simon's chariot appear. Doubtless the reference to these Acts derives from the translator, whose memory has played him false.

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(iii) The statement about the fourfold Gospel which, as Puech notes (F: Hennecke, I, 1963, p. 231), recalls Irenaeus' assertion that there must be four Gospels, neither more nor less, because of the four regions or cardinal points of the world (III. 11. 11), is of doubtful authority. Puech (p. 232) says, 'Whether the book ever existed at all remains doubtful', but Harnack and Haase both thought the account might be reliable (Hennecke, op.cit., p. 231 nn. 3 and 4) and writers of the Cercle Ernest-Renan have made much of it, for instance Alfarc (A.2: Alfarc, 1921), who believed that Marutha had seen a copy of the Simonian Gospel, which had been written by Simon himself, and that it had influenced the Ps Clementines.

For our part we see no reason to doubt the existence of such a Simonian fourfold Gospel, which may have been either a 'revision' of the Christian Gospels or a separate composition. That it was the product of early Simonianism, however, seems most unlikely in the light of the silence of earlier Christian writers about it. Had, say, Hippolytus and Epiphanius known such a work it is most unlikely that they would have kept quiet about such a blasphemy, as it would have seemed to them to be. Nor do we see any need to assume that Marutha had actually read or seen a copy of the book.

(iv) We doubt not that Marutha's story of the red fillets is true. There is no reason why a Christian should have fabricated such an account: it has the circumstantiality of a reliable report, although the explanation of the custom is obviously Christian and polemical. Whether Marutha knew some Simonians (if the movement survived until his day: Harnack (A.1. (vi): Harnack, 1899, p.8 n2)

thought this hard to credit but not totally impossible, and we are inclined to agree), or whether he had the report from an oral tradition, or whether, finally, he had read it in the Simonian Gospels, is a matter for speculation, as also is the real reason for the existence of the custom. The Christian explanation is based perhaps, we would suggest, on the story of the red fillet of the harlot Rahab (Josh. 2), which acted as a sign of the compact she had made with the Hebrews, but this is not likely to be the true explanation for it does not assign a reason for the use of the epithet 'rose-coloured'.

(v) The statement that the women-folk of the Simonians occupied themselves with oaths and strange works is so obviously a hostile testimony that no credence can be accorded to it. That they plaited their hair is (to the extent that this assertion is not on the face of it part of a Christian polemic) more likely to be reliable, though we are at a loss to suggest any doctrinal reason for their adoption of the custom.

#### 11. The Jewish Haggadah.

Schoeps has attempted to find references or allusions to Simon and Simonianism in the Haggadah (A.3.(iii): Schoeps, 1948). Thus he identifies with Simon both Ben Stada (a name which he thinks represents a Hebraised form of  $\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\delta\iota\omicron\varsigma$ , a synonym of  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ ), a magician executed by a Jewish court at Lydda (near Gitta, says Schoeps) and Balaam, the (first century?) lame, libertine murderer

and cheat mentioned in the Talmud (Schoeps associates with Balaam's lameness the Conflict story of Simon's breaking his leg when he fell to earth; with his character as a murderer he associates the Ps Clementine assertion that Simon killed a boy; and with Balaam's libertinism he associates the patristic tradition accusing the Simonians of moral depravity). Schoeps further suggests that Balaam in the NT, Rev. 2. 14 seq., 2 Pet. 2. 15, Jude 11, may also be Simon, - this despite the fact that only in the first of these three texts does Balaam seem to stand for an historical personage of the first century (and that a man of Pergamum, a place which we have no reason to associate with Simonianism).

While we would accept Schoeps' point (p. 257) that it would be surprising if Simon had left no trace in Jewish literature, we believe that the alleged references are far from convincing. As for Ben Stada, the word  $\sigma\tau\alpha\delta\iota\alpha$  is never found in a Simonian connection, and we know of no tradition that Simon was put to death by Jewish authorities. In the case of Balaam, we note that the parallels alleged are mainly or entirely with traditions about Simon that have least chance of having an historical foundation, so that even if Balaam is based on Simon (which is very far from being proved) the Simon on whom he will be based is the Simon of legend rather than the Simon(s) of history.

## 12. The Nag Hammadi Codices

The Nag Hammadi tractates which are most often thought to

afford direct or indirect testimony to Simonianism are: (i) The Exegesis of the Soul, NHC II. 6; (ii) Bronte, NHC VI. 2; (iii) The Sense of Understanding, the Thought of the Great Power, NHC VI. 4; (iv) The Apocalypse of Peter, NHC VII. 3; (v) The Treatise on the Triple Epiphany, on the Protennoia of Threefold Form, NHC XIII. 1.

(i) The Exegesis of the Soul

We have already noted in Chapter 4. 2. (v). b that the Exegesis compares the Soul with Helen of Troy longing to return to her father's house, and we there suggested that it therein reflects a long-established Pythagorean conception that Helen typified the fallen human soul and that this idea was important in the evolution of Gnostic Simonianism from the earlier non-Gnostic form of the religion. The validity of this view, which we here reaffirm, by no means depends on whether the Exegesis is itself a Gnostic document. Although most scholars do take it to be Gnostic, Wisse has put up a case for thinking it a product of heterodox, but non-Gnostic, Christianity (B: Ménard, 1975, pp. 68 -81).

Arai, as we noted in Chapter 1, has characterised the Exegesis as Simonian. Inasmuch as it speaks of the soul as a virgin that falls from heaven into a human body and is assailed by robbers who sexually abuse her, until her brother, the first-born of the Father, comes down and, having married her, enables her to ascend back to heaven, it certainly has a mythological schema which has parallels in that used by the Simonian Gnostics. With pre-Gnostic Simonianism, however, it has no points of contact, and the parallel even with Gnostic Simonianism is, as Arai recognises, limited, in

that the Simonians made the Father himself (alias Simon), not his son, to descend. We are therefore inclined to believe that rather than posit Simonian influence on the Exegesis it seems reasonable to suppose that the ideas reflected in the Exegesis, which draw upon a mythical conception of the fall and abasement of the soul which was very common in antiquity (cf. Colpe in B: Bianchi, 1967, 429 -47), although the motif of the brothel is new, were formative in the evolution of a Gnostic from a non-Gnostic version of Simonianism.

(ii) Bronte (The Thunder: Perfect Mind)

This tractate (the title of which should according to the Berliner Arbeitskreis be read as Nebrond, a supposed variant of Nimrud (B: Bethge, 1973); Tardieu has, however, strongly defended the reading Bronte (B: Tardieu, 1974); similarly B.A. Pearson in B: MacRae, [1976?], p. 10) has been hailed by H.M. Schenke as 'basically Simonian' (B: Krause, 1975, p. 283). Can this judgment, shared by several contributors to B: MacRae, [1976?], be sustained?

Bronte is much more reminiscent of the pseudo-Simonianism of the Megale Apophasis than of Simonianism proper. We would concur with Bethge (op.cit., pp. 98. 99) in seeing significant parallels with the Megale Apophasis. The parallels are not always as close, however, as he and others claim. Thus in 14. 9 seq. we find the expressions 'incomprehensible Silence' and 'Epinoia' used of Bronte, and B.A. Pearson (op. cit., p. 12) sees herein a parallel with the MA text quoted in Hipp. Ref. VI. 18. 2 -3, where both terms occur, failing to note, alas, that they are there predicated

of two different realities (the 'invisible, incomprehensible Silence' is the ultimate cosmic reality, undifferentiated in gender, whereas the 'great Epinoia' is the female (in the MA: in the MA Commentary it becomes androgynous) member of a syzygy of offshoots from the ultimate reality); the parallel is thus not at all exact. Again, Bronte uses the terms 'Voice' and 'Name' (in 14. 12 and 14.15 respectively; not 16.12 and 16.15 as in B: MacRae, [1976?], p. 26), which occur together in the phrase from the MA quoted at Hipp. Ref. VI. 9. 4, but whereas in the MA 'Name' denotes an entity, even if only a figurative one, in Bronte 14. 15 'name' is in no sense an entity: the word is only part of a phrase, 'the utterance of my name', used to allude to thunder. The androgynous motif is found in both Bronte (13. 27 -28) and the MA, but its use was so widespread in the second century, as we saw in Chapter 5, that on its own this proves very little.

Perhaps the closest parallel between Bronte and the MA is the following:

This is the one power, diffused	I am the wife and the virgin
above and below, begetting	I am the mother and the daughter
itself, finding itself, being	I am the members of my mother...
its own mother, its own father,	I am the bride and the bridegroom,
its own sister, its own spouse,	and it is my husband who begot me.
its own daughter, its own son,	I am the mother of my father
mother and father both, a single	and the sister of my husband
entity, being the root of all	and he is my offspring (Bronte 13.20
things. (Hipp. Ref. VI. 17. 3).	- 14.9; tr. MacRae, B: MacRae, [1976?],
	pp. 5 -6 Cf too NHC II. 162. 8-15).



Although the MA passage lacks the 'I am' formulation, the thought behind the two passages is not dissimilar. Henrichs (B: MacRae, [1976?], p. 30) has pointed out that what he terms 'the paradoxical predicating of opposites of the divinity' can be found in the Heraclitean and Orphic fragments. Thus in Heraclitus (fr. 67 Diels-Kranz; 77 Marcovich) we read that 'God is day and night, winter and summer, war and peace, satiety and hunger; and he takes various shapes just as fire does'. Such a passage is concerned to teach 'the transcendent neutrality of ultimate reality...the ultimate reality...is itself so pure and unparticularized that it does not possess any qualities whatever, thus being susceptible to any and all manifestations and changes' (E: Wheelwright, 1959, p. 106), and this way of thinking seems to inform both Bronte and the MA (the phrase 'I am war and peace' in 14. 30 shows perhaps that Bronte was acquainted with this very text of Heraclitus).

Bronte consists largely of a series of self-advertisements by the speaker, Bronte, in the form 'I am' followed by a pair of contrasting or contradictory terms, as 'I am the first and the last... I am knowledge and ignorance...I am strength and I am fear'. Quispel has argued persuasively (B: Ménard, 1974, pp. 82 -122) that Bronte (which, incidentally, he is not convinced is a Gnostic document: cf. too the reservations on this score in B: MacRae, [1976?], pp. 3, 28) is strongly influenced in both its thought and its form by Isiac literature: in Isis aretologies the 'I am' formulation is common, and in Plutarch *De Iside* 77 a variety of opposites are predicated of Isis (light, darkness; day, night; fire, water; life, death;

beginning, end). The MA, however, is not characterised by 'I am' sayings nor by pairs of opposites comparable to those of Bronte; nor does it reveal any other signs of Isiac influence. This fact makes us reluctant to postulate too close a connection between the two documents: there is a kinship here, certainly, but it may be at several removes.

As for Simonianism proper, in 13. 18 Bronte says 'I am the prostitute (πορνή) and the saint (σεμνή)'. It is, in our view, totally unnecessary to posit here any influence from a Simonian quarter. The formulation is characteristically Isiac, and the Epiphanian tradition that Isis (no doubt taking over some of the characteristics of Astarte) served as a prostitute for ten years in Tyre (Ancoratus 104. 11) sufficiently explains the allusion. Pearson (B: MacRae, [1976?], p. 12) has sought to connect 18. 24 seq., where Bronte says that she is both peace and the bringer of war, with the Trojan War motif in Simonianism, but this is very speculative. In 13. 2 seq. Bronte says that she was sent by The Power, which may be the same as the Great Power of 21. 7 seq., which may in 21. 10 seq. be described as Bronte's creator. On the strength of this very uncertain exegesis, Pearson (ibid.) suggests that Bronte may be identifiable with that Helena who in Simonian theology issued from Simon, the Great Power, and produced the angels that created the world. On this we can only observe that even if Pearson's exegesis is correct, the parallel would be very inexact, since the Simonians did not say of Helena that she had been created by Simon/ the Great Power.

We are unable, therefore, to find in the tractate Bronte anything

to support the view that it is Simonian, or anything to illuminate the history of Simonianism, though it has something in common with the pseudo-Simonianism of the Apophasis movement. Simonianism proper and Bronte have this only in common, that the figure of Isis probably exercised an important influence on both.

(iii) The Sense of Understanding, the Thought of the Great Power

In this enigmatic tractate Wisdom reveals to her sons that world history may be divided into three epochs, the age of the flesh, which ended with Noah's Flood, the psychic age, which was ushered in by Jesus Christ, and the coming pneumatic age, in which the whole of the material creation will disappear and the souls of the Gnostics be rescued.

Doresse, as we saw in Chapter 5. 3, thinks that the tractate may be Simonian. The Berliner Arbeitskreis, on the other hand (B: Fischer, 1973, p.173), seem by implication to incline to see it as anti-Simonian in that they suggest that in 44. 10 -29 Simon Magus may be seen as the Antichrist. Is either suggestion more than a shot in the dark?

Reminiscent of Simonianism, at first glance at least, are the terms Power and Thought. Power, however, seems never in this tractate to be unequivocally an hypostasis. The redeemer himself (Jesus, not Simon) is said only to know the Power, not to be it (40. 26-27). In 47. 33 -34, where the Gnostic souls call on the Power that is above all powers and cry out thereto for mercy, it is not clear whether this Power is an hypostasis or merely, as elsewhere, an attribute of Wisdom. At all events, of the descent of the Power in human form the tractate knows nothing. As for Thought, this

concept is once called by the MA term ἐπίνοια (36. 18), once it is called διάνοια and twice νόημα (36. 1; 36. 2 and 48.14) but never is it called by the Simonian term ἔννοια ; nor is it ever represented as coming on earth in human form. Pace Doresse (whose 'assessment of the content of the Nag Hammadi library has often proved to be wrong': Wisse in B: Ménard, 1975, p. 78), we can see no more reason for regarding NHC VI. 4 as Simonian than, say, the Chaldean Oracles.

As for a possible reference to Simon in 44. 10-29, we are equally unconvinced. The passage is speaking of resistance to the Logos preached by the envoys of Christianity and tells how the archon of the West arose and will accomplish a work from the East and will teach men his wickedness, since he loves deceitful wisdom. 'He raised his assault', it continues, 'against the High One (or High Place) and since he introduced evil he sought to clothe himself with honour. He availed nought, since his contaminations and his apparel (of wickedness) were too numerous. Then he became enraged and wished to ascend in all publicity and to remove hence to that place' (44. 20-29). The passage is very cryptic. It is clear that 'the archon of the West' here, as in 44. 1, refers to Nero and that 'that place' means the East as in 44. 2, where reference is made to the emperor's Eastern exploits. Perhaps the 'work' that Nero (Nero redivivus, perhaps) is here said to accomplish from the East is his self-divinisation. That superimposed upon the figure of Nero is that of Simon, as the Berliner Arbeitskreis suggest, is in our view improbable. The reference to going up publicly might

seem to fit the legend of Simon's attempted flight, but 'that place' could mean nothing in the case of Simon, whereas in the case of Nero, as we have seen, it clearly means 'to the East'. The author means no more, we suggest, than that Nero will angrily arise and betake himself to the East again. Even if a secondary reference to Simon is intended, the allusion will be to a legend which we have already seen to be valueless for our purposes.

(iv) The Apocalypse of Peter

The Nag Hammadi Apocalypse of Peter (not to be confused with two other books of the same title; F: Hennecke, II, 1974, p. 664) contains a hostile reference to 'a man with a naked woman of diverse forms who had been exposed to manifold injuries' (74, 30-34). The Berliner Arbeitskreis, in their translation of the tractate (B: Werner, 1974) say that this may 'perhaps' (col. 576) be an allusion to Simon Magus. H.M. Schenke in an article about the tractate (in B: Krause, 1975, 277-85) has gone much further. The words fit aptly only Simon Magus and his partner Helena (p. 282). The way in which Helena is described suits a goddess or a mythological female entity better than a real woman, and this enables us finally to settle the old problem of whether the Simonian Helena is mythologised history or historicised mythology, in that it confirms her non-historicity (ibid.). Further, if Simon had no bride, neither can he have been conceived as bridegroom nor as once-for-all redeemer of his bride. He can in reality have at most been understood, not as the supreme deity,

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but as the final appearance of the highest power in the world-long process of the rescue of the fallen universal soul (pp. 282 -83). This suggests indeed, Schenke thinks, that the question whether the Simon of Irenaeus or the Simon of the source used by Hippolytus is the more ancient, which appeared to have been settled long ago in Irenaeus' favour, needs to be opened up again, the more so since Frickel has shown that Hippolytus was using not the Megale Apophasis itself but a Commentary or Paraphrase on it (p. 283). These conclusions of Schenke's are nothing if not far-reaching.

We are inclined to think that the text in question, which follows a reference to men who revile truth and proclaim evil doctrine, may indeed be to Simon, although 'naked' is not an epithet elsewhere used of Helena. The document seems to be Jewish-Christian, like the Pseudo Clementines, and to share with them a disapproval of Paul (74. 16 seq.), so a similar hostility to Simon would be readily understandable. We cannot, however, agree with Schenke that the text shows that Helena was not an historical person. The woman does, as he says, sound rather mythological, but the mythical persona given to her is that of the suffering Helena, not that of the earlier Athene-figure. The passage thus contains a polemic against the developed form of Simonianism in which Helena functioned as a mythical prima salvanda.

We find Schenke's remarks about Hippolytus hard to follow. Why should Frickel's discovery of the Commentary/Paraphrase help to establish the greater antiquity of the 'Simonianism' attested in the Refutatio than that of the Simonianism of Irenaeus? What, again, is there in the system of the MA Commentary that agrees with

Schenke's view of primitive Simonianism as teaching that Simon was the last of a series of divine agents come to redeem the human soul? Of the redemption of the human soul, of divine agents, of the coming of Simon, the MA Commentary, on our reading of it, says not a word.

(v) The Triple Protennoia

We have nothing to add to what we have written about this tractate in Chapter 5. 3 (to the effect that there are similarities between the Triple Protennoia and the MA which do not at present admit of explanation, but that Doresse's identification of the two is impossible), except to note that although the goddess Athene is never mentioned in the tractate, Tardieu has shown that she probably sat as model (so to say) for the figure of Protennoia (B: Tardieu, 1974). In this tractate we find the 'I am' style of the Bronte tractate as also the same use of paradoxical titles. Perhaps this results from the assimilation of Isis and Athene, on which we commented in Chapter 4. 3. (ii). Proclus' attribution to Athene of the power to reconcile opposites (Tardieu, p. 528) may also, we would suggest, show the influence of the assimilation of the two goddesses.

(vi) The Nag Hammadi Codices; conclusions

What Wisse has written of the Exegesis of the Soul, 'the study of the tractate has only just begun' (B: Ménard, 1975, p.70), is true indeed of all the Nag Hammadi texts. The date and place of composition of the Greek originals is quite uncertain, the Coptic translations are not infrequently suspected of misrepresenting

the meaning of the lost originals, and in the case of few tractates can it be said that we know for sure to what branch of Gnosticism, if any, they belong. For these reasons, if some of the Nag Hammadi texts seemed to point in different directions from the patristic evidence, we should, pending further investigations, think it imprudent to prefer the Nag Hammadi witness. In fact, however, we have found nothing in the NHC which is at variance with the testimony of the patristic sources. The Exegesis of the Soul, which shows no Simonian influences, attests the existence of the idea that the fallen human soul was imprisoned in a bordello, and this fits well our suggestion, based on the patristic evidence, that an historical ex-prostitute called Helena, after being apotheosised as Athene, was demoted to the position of prima salvanda because of the double coincidence that Helen of Troy was a recognised symbol of the human soul and that the human soul was thought of in late antiquity as a virgin fallen into prostitution. The Apocalypse of Peter probably contains a reference to Simon and Helena, but it adds nothing to our knowledge of Simonianism. None of the other tractates proves to be material to our inquiries.

### 13. The Samaritan Chronicles

The Samaritan Chronicle of Abu'l Fath (A.1.(vi): Vilmar, 1865), written in Arabic in 1355, has, in the middle of its treatment of Dusis (=Dositheus), whom it surprisingly places in the third century A.D., a brief discussion of 'Simon the magician' (pp. 157-59). This account is reproduced with minor variations in the Samaritan history composed in Hebrew at the very end of the nineteenth century and known as the Adler Chronicle (D: Adler & Séligsohn, 1902, 03).



These, to the best of our knowledge, are the only Samaritan documents even to mention Simon. What have they to say, and on what authority?

(i) Abu'l Fath tells firstly how a servant girl who had unsuccessfully tried to win the affections of Yahaam, son of Nathanael the Samaritan highpriest, approached Simon with a request, supposedly emanating from Nathanael himself, that he should bring about the death of Yahaam as a stubborn and rebellious child. Simon sent a spirit not to kill the boy but only to render him unconscious lest the father should repent; the spirit, however, found him eating holy food, the meat of a first-born animal, and had no power over him. The next night, though, the spirit was able to render the boy unconscious because he made himself unclean by virtue of nocturnal pollution. When Simon saw Nathanael's grief over the fate of his son, he restored the lad to his senses and tortured the girl until she confessed that the request she had brought to Simon had been of her own devising; he then put the girl to death. The Adler Chronicle version differs little from Abu'l Fath's except that Yahaam becomes Bahaam and whereas Abu'l Fath gives Alin as Simon's town Adler has him hail from Tablin (5).

(ii) Abu'l Fath then says that out of embarrassment at the prospect of appearing before Nathanael Simon departed for 'Armiya' (= Rome?), where he had some success in competing in debate and magical practices with the Christians. In Adler this is located in 'Armina'.

(iii) Both Abu'l Fath and Adler then tell how Simon tried to enlist the help of Philo the Jewish philosopher in his efforts to defeat the Christian gospel, only to be told by Philo that Christianity was of divine ordinance and therefore not susceptible of defeat.

(iv) Abu'l Fath concludes with a statement, missing from Adler, of how Simon returned to his native town, died there and 'was buried in the valley opposite to the house of the disciple who was the first martyr of Christ, namely Stephen'.

We take each section in turn. First, though, we must comment on the context of the Simon stories. Inasmuch as Abu'l Fath (and after him the Adler Chronicle) implies that Simon had some association with Dositheus, he seems to reflect the influence of the Ps Clementine literature, though the contact between Abu'l Fath and Ps Clement must have been indirect else Abu'l Fath could not have placed Simon in the third century and given his place of origin as Alin.

(i) This story might have grown out of the Ps Clementine account (R 2. 15) of Simon of Gitta's putting a boy to death. On the other hand, since there seems to be no animus against Simon in the story, it is conceivable that Abu'l Fath has preserved what is basically a genuine tradition about Simon of Gitta or even about the Simon of Acts. However, it would be rash to treat this as anything more than a possibility in the light of the very late date of the author who narrates the episode.

(ii) The reason given for Simon's departure for Rome is rather unconvincing. Doubtless it is not part of the tradition of story (i), with which it accords ill, but is rather a redactional insertion due to conjecture on Abu'l Fath's part. Story (ii)

clearly derives from the Conflict Stories and is as such unworthy of any credit.

(iii) This tradition clearly goes back beyond Abu'l Fath, for it makes Simon a contemporary of Philo whereas Abu'l Fath himself, as we have seen, dates him two centuries later. Could there be any substance in the account? Philo visited Rome in 40 A.D., to plead before the emperor Caligula the cause of the Jews of Alexandria, but he could scarcely have encountered Simon of Gitta there on that occasion, for the latter's stay in Rome is dated by Justin in the principate of Claudius. However, it is not self-evident that the story originally envisaged the encounter as taking place in Rome, - the Roman location could easily be a redactional change made by Abu'l Fath. A meeting between Simon and Philo in Alexandria is not impossible, but it is incredible that Philo should have said that Christianity was of divine origin. Philo might perhaps have expressed an opinion similar to that attributed to Gamaliel in Acts 5. 38 - 39, though the possibility cannot be excluded that the story preserved by Abu'l Fath is a fictitious construction deriving from this very text of Acts. All in all, taking into account the lateness of Abu'l Fath as well as the uncertainties outlined, it would be unwise to place any reliance on the historicity of this story.

(iv) There is a circumstantiality about this statement which might incline one to grant it more credence than the other three. Probably Abu'l Fath, or his source(s), knew of a tomb of a Simon opposite to what was reputed to be the house of Stephen the proto-martyr, somewhere in Samaria (6). But Simon is a very

common name, and the chronicler or his source(s) may very well have confused two or more Simons. In any case, even if the tomb of Simon (whether of the Simon of Acts or of Simon of Gitta) was known in the fourteenth century or earlier, that would scarcely assist our investigations very much.

We regretfully conclude that Samaritan sources, perhaps surprisingly, contribute little or nothing to our knowledge of the Simonian movement.

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NOTES

1. 'This ( $\text{Ἀτομὸν}$ ) is the reading of the best MS and of the Epitome. The other two major MSS, a marginal notation in the best MS, and the Latin version have the name as Simon': A.l.(vi): Feldman, 1965, ad loc. Not only is  $\text{Ἀτομὸν}$  the reading of the best MS, but it is hard to imagine why 'Simon' should have been corrupted to 'Atomos', whereas the corruption of 'Atomos' to 'Simon' is readily intelligible, a poorly known magician being displaced by a better known one (cf. A.l.(i): Clark, 1933, p. 352).
2. We may note that Acts does know of a Jewish Cypriot magician, Barjesus alias Elymas (13. 6.-12) or, in the Western Text, Hetoimas. Rendel Harris, taking the Western reading to be authentic, sought to identify Hetoimas and Atomos (A.l.(i): Harris, 1902).
3. Gry has argued the case in F: Gry, 1939. In Biblical Antiquities 19. 14 Ps Philo makes Moses say that 'four and a half have passed, two and a half have still to come'. If the numerals here, like those in the book of Daniel, represent 'weeks of years', and if the terminus a quo for the  $4\frac{1}{2} + 2\frac{1}{2}$  is the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., then the former figure may represent  $31\frac{1}{2}$  years that have passed, giving as a date for the composition of the book mid-101 A.D., and the latter figure the  $17\frac{1}{2}$  years that will elapse before the End arrives in 119 A.D. In Syr. Baruch Gry finds evidence of a double recension, the first in 67 A.D. (in 28. 2 the cryptic phrase 'two sections, weeks of seven weeks' represents the 98 years since the battle of Actium in 31 B.C.) and the second in

116 (28. 2 was re-interpreted (?) as 'a week consisting of two sections', the second section of which was to be the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years that must supervene before the End should come in 119). Gry's arguments, which are speculative in the extreme, have not found much favour. As Bogaert says of them in his edition of the Syriac Baruch (F: Bogaert, 1969, I, p. 289) 'mieux vaut, s'il faut, avouer une ignorance certaine, que se prévaloir d'hypothèses fondées sur les conjectures'. Bogaert's own attractive theory that Syr. Bar. 1. 1 ('The word of the Lord came to Baruch in the twenty fifth year of Jeconiah king of Judah'), which on the face of it is nonsensical (since Jeconiah reigned only for three months in Jerusalem in 597 before the city fell for the first time to the Babylonians yet the book seems to regard the capture of the city as still lying in the future), contains a cryptic dating of the book itself to the twenty fifth year after the Roman sack of the city (viz. to 95 A.D.) leads him to credit the writer with the expectation of the End in about 105 or 110; 28. 2 indicates, Bogaert thinks, the 'two weeks of years' that the author expected to elapse between 95 and the End.

4. As in Justin. Heidenheim's attempt to show that Simon really came from Gathera is totally unconvincing. He claimed (A.3.(ii): Heidenheim, II, 1885, p. xxxv n.1) that Ps Clem. R had as one of the readings at 27. 1 'Gethorum', but such a reading is not attested in any of the witnesses known to Rehm (A.1.(v): Rehm, 1965 ad loc. ; the readings mentioned are 'Getthonum', 'Gethonum', 'Gettonum',) nor is it found in the Syriac version (A.1.(v): Frankenberg, 1937 ad loc.).

5. No village called either Alin nor Tablin is known. Neither name occurs in either The Survey of Western Palestine (1881 -88) or V. Guérin's Description géographique et archéologique de la Palestine (1875).

6. If, as A. Spiro has argued (A.l.(i): Munck, 1967, pp. 285 -300), Stephen was a Samaritan, Abu'l Fath's reference to his having a house in Samaria fits in very well, but there is insufficient evidence that he was. Stephen's speech in Acts 7 (in which it is generally agreed that we can catch the ipsissima vox, though not the ipsissima verba, of Stephen) certainly has points of contact with Samaritan theology, but its praise of the prophets (verse 52) strikes a very unSamaritan note. Scharlemann's conclusion about Stephen's background has much to commend it: 'that he was influenced by certain Samaritan theological interests can be demonstrated, but that he himself was a Samaritan seems most improbable'. However, Stephen need not, of course, have been a Samaritan to have resided at one time in Samaria.

One should note that Abu'l Fath is speaking of Stephen's house, not of his tomb. Christian tradition has it that Stephen was originally buried in the vicinity of Jerusalem. A Christian priest called Lucian, who speaks of himself as 'presbyter Ecclesiae Dei quae est in villa Caphargamala in territorio Jerosolymorum', claims to have discovered in the year 415 Stephen's remains (together with those of Gamaliel, who has supposedly undertaken his burial) in the village of Kefr Gamla (PL 41, col. 807). This does not conflict at all with Abu'l Fath's story.

## Chapter 8

### SIMON AND SIMONIANISM

If scholars have been and remain sharply divided over Simon and Simonianism, this is in part due to the fact that the evidence is ambiguous and patient of several different interpretations. To a considerable extent, however, the divergence of scholars' conclusions stems from differences in methodology and procedure. Many have, in our view, paid insufficient attention to source criticism, and a number of the most distinguished scholars who have interested themselves in Simonianism of late (e.g. Gilles Quispel and Walther Schmithals) have, after the manner of the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule to which they belong, sought to illuminate the nature of Simonianism by placing it within a History of Religions which is itself very much open to question and they have thus, as we see it, compounded uncertainty with uncertainty. We have tried in this present study to examine the history of Simonianism without invoking controversial hypotheses about, for instance, the existence of a pre-Christian Gnostic movement and have deliberately devoted much the greater part of our space and energies to a revaluation of testimonia, and alleged testimonia, for Simonianism, in an attempt to distinguish the early sources from the late and the independent from the derivative.

Our findings about the various sources may be summarised as follows. A number of them (e.g. Tertullian, Augustine and Theodoret) have already been shown to be dependent on earlier, extant, authorities, and may be passed over. Acts 8 is our earliest



source, composed in our view in the period 66-70 and resting on two oral traditions. The next witness is nearly a century less ancient, namely Justin Martyr. Justin either had personal contacts with Simonians or, more probably, he was relying for his information on the testimonies of other Christians. It is not, we believe, possible to supplement the extant text of Justin, as many have sought to do, by reconstructing from Irenaeus the contents of the lost Syntagma Against All Heresies. Irenaeus himself probably had access to a Simonian account of the religion; he also used the Justin Syntagma; he probably knew no Simonians himself. Hippolytus of Rome seems to have had access, whether through personal contact, oral reports or written sources, to information not preserved by Irenaeus (some of his sources of information may have been Simonian; others will have been Christian), though he also drew on Irenaeus; he used, too, a Commentary or Paraphrase on the Megale Apophasis. That Ps Tertullian, Epiphanius and Philaster used the lost Syntagma of Hippolytus is not to be doubted, but nothing of moment from among the Syntagma's statements about Simonianism can in our view be disinterred from the text of these Fathers. Epiphanius appears to have drawn upon an important Simonian revelation document of uncertain date, and may himself have had personal contacts with Simonians. Ps Tertullian and Philaster may or may not have used other sources apart from the Hippolytan Syntagma. Clement of Alexandria, the Ps Clementines, Eusebius and Marutha contain fragments of information not derivable from sources already mentioned; Eusebius may have had personal contacts with Simonians, the others probably had not. A variety of texts proved under scrutiny to be virtually

or totally useless for the purpose of our inquiries either because they turned out not to be speaking of Simonianism after all (e.g. III Sib., John 4, Josephus, Ps Cyprian, the Jewish Haggadah) or because it is unlikely that they draw on reliable sources (e.g. Ep. Ap., Ep. Cor., the Samaritan Chronicles). Of the Nag Hammadi Codices, the Exegesis of the Soul, though not a direct witness to Simonianism, has some indirect significance for our inquiries; the Apocalypse of Peter may refer to Simon and Helena, but has nothing to add to our knowledge; Bronte and the Triple Protennoia throw some light on the development of ideas that were important in Simonianism.

Our analysis of the sources and their contents being now concluded, we are in a position to attempt to answer, even if sometimes rather tentatively, the questions which we posed in Chapter 1 and here repeat: (i) Was the Simon of Acts 8 an historical person? (ii) Was the Simon of Acts 8, if historical, the founder of Simonianism? (iii) Was Simon of Gitta an historical person, and if so what is known of him? (iv) Was Helena an historical person? (v) Was Simonianism Gnostic from the start? (vi) What changes are discernible in Simonianism as it evolved? (vii) What implications, if any, have our conclusions for other areas of study?

(i) Was the Simon of Acts 8 an historical person?

We know of no scholar in this century (except for members of the Cercle Ernest-Renan) who has impugned the historicity of the Simon of Acts. Denial of his historicity was particularly associated with the name of the Tübingen School and was based on the two notions, first that Simon was a mask or pseudonym for the Apostle Paul and secondly that his name was derived from that of

Sem, an hypothetical pagan sun god from Samaria. The Sem theory was, as we saw in Chapter 1, eventually dropped even by Baur (it was based entirely on conjecture: there is no evidence for the existence of a god Sem). That the Simon of Acts is a vehicle for anti-Paulinism is a thesis last sustained, so far as we know, in 1903 by P. W. Schmiedel (A.2: Schmiedel, 1903), but he did not positively assert the non-existence of Simon, but only claimed that if he did exist the figure of the historical Samaritan magician had been overlaid by anti-Pauline traits. Only if there were solid evidence for the existence of embattled Petrine and Pauline parties in the Church at or before the time of the composition of Acts could the assertion that Acts 8.21 ('your heart is not right before God') contains a hostile allusion to Gal. 2. 14 ('they walked not uprightly': ἀρθεροδοσοῦτε, whereas Acts has εὐθετεῖα) or that Simon's offer of money is an allusion to Paul's great Collection (Schmiedel, op. cit., col. 4557) seem other than far-fetched. The fact is that it is quite unjustifiable, perverse even, to regard Acts as in any way anti-Pauline.

Our investigations into Acts 8 suggested that the narrative draws on two oral traditions of the evangelisation of Samaria, the first associated with the name of Philip, the other with that of Peter. We argued that the Philip tradition related to the Hellenized parts of Samaria and originally made no mention of Simon, and that the Peter tradition, which told of a missionary campaign among adherents of the Samaritan religion by Peter and John, had Simon, a Samaritan, approach the Apostles with a request for baptism and for Church office, which was refused. Simon had exalted ambitions, seeing himself perhaps as the Prophet like

Moses, and was hailed as divine by his followers. His attempt to infiltrate the Church and to appropriate the Charistian charismata having failed, he repented and became a Christian. The historicity of this early tradition we saw no reason to doubt at the time of our examination of Acts 8, and our attachment both to our reading of the pericope and to our acceptance of the oral tradition that we identified as lying behind it, has in no way been shaken by our subsequent inquiries.

(ii) Was the Simon of Acts, if historical, the founder of Simonianism?

If the Simon of Acts did indeed repent, then unless he subsequently lapsed he clearly was not the founder of Simonianism. That he did not found the Simonian movement is confirmed by our reading of Justin Martyr. We saw in the Chapter devoted to Justin's testimony that he makes no reference to the Acts pericope despite the fact that it can be shown that he was not unacquainted with that book. The absence of any reference to any of the motifs of the Acts story (Great Power; 'simony'; rebuke by Peter) would, in the light of Justin's clear desire to unmask the founder of Simonianism be surprising, in that it would amount to the loss of excellent opportunities for doing so, if he did indeed identify him with the Simon of Acts. Merrill (A.2: Merrill, 1924) was, therefore, quite correct to argue that Justin's testimony is a powerful support for the double-Simon theory which goes back through Stock, Schmiedel, Salmon, Beausobre and Heumann to Campegius Vitringa the Elder in 1708.

We cannot agree with Merrill (op. cit., p. 295) that Irenaeus himself was uncertain whether there was one Simon or two, but we

do find in the text of Irenaeus further support for the double-Simon case, in that the odd double incipit ('Simon enim Samarites... Simon autem Samaritanus') is best explained, as we saw, on the hypothesis that Irenaeus was in I. 16.2 drawing upon a written Simonian source, or sources, that did not allude to Acts 8 and that Irenaeus himself in I. 16.1 (following probably the lead of Hegesippus) made the identification of the Simon of the Simonian source(s) with the Simon of Acts.

Given the frequency of the occurrence of the name Simon in the early Christian period (out of Jesus' Twelve, two bore this name and we have already referred to Fitzmeyer's evidence that it was the commonest of all names in that period) confusion between two religious leaders of that name, both reputedly magicians, would not be surprising in the least.

- (iii) Was Simon of Gitta an historical person, and if so what is known of him?

That Simonianism had a founder scarcely needs proving, but it is theoretically possible that he was not called Simon. Since, however, Justin, without any influence from Acts 8, gives him that name, we may presume that he was so called. Nor is there any good reason to dispute Justin's statement that he came from the village of Gitta.<sup>(1)</sup> Less certain, because it goes back only to the Ps Clementine Grundschrift (3rd century?), but still more likely than not to be true, is the tradition that his parents were named Antonius and Rachel.

As appeared in Chapter 7, the identification of Simon of Gitta with Josephus' Simon of Cyprus, is very improbable.

Although most supporters of the double-Simon view place Simon

of Gitta in the second century, we find the grounds for doing so unconvincing. If Simon were a Gnostic, a second century dating would perhaps be inherently more likely than a first, but our examination of the evidence of Justin, Irenaeus and Epiphanius has shown, we believe, that Simonianism was not originally Gnostic. A first century dating is indicated, in our view, by Justin's story of Simon's arrival in Rome in the principate of Claudius (Chapter 3, supra) and by the fact that a confusion of the two Simons will have occurred the more readily if they lived at more or less the same time.

Simon of Gitta was a Samaritan rather than a Samaritan, in that his background was predominantly Hellenistic. Some contact with the Samaritan sect cannot, of course, be ruled out (possibly his mother, who had a Biblical name, had been brought up as a Samaritan), but it was from pagan religion that he mainly drew his inspiration. He saw himself as an incarnation of Zeus, as had done others before him, not least Antiochus IV Epiphanes. There is no good reason to suppose that he was in any way associated with Dositheus, with John the Baptist or with the Hemerobaptists. Simon probably travelled to Rome between 41 and 45 A.D. and his followers in Rome, who probably persisted until the time of Justin more than a century later, raised a statue to him which in 45 A.D., with Claudius' removal 'elsewhere' from the City of all unauthorised statues, of which Dio Cassius says that there were very many, was dumped on Tiber Island. The verbal similarity of the inscription to Simon, as recorded by Justin, with the texts of inscriptions to Semo Sancus, one of them from this same Tiber Island, may indicate that the Simonians identified Simon not only with Zeus/Jupiter but

also with the related figure of Semo Sancus; alternatively, Justin's wording of the Simon inscription may be inaccurate.

The reputation of Simon of Gitta as a magician goes back to Justin but must, in our view, be regarded with great suspicion. As we saw in Chapter 4, references to Simon as a magician do not occur in traditions found in the Fathers which are likely to have a Simonian provenance, and Simon's claim to divinity makes it unlikely that he would himself have regarded 'magician' as a sufficiently exalted description of his role. Accusations of magical practices were such a common weapon of religious polemic that the tradition that Simon was a magician probably reflects no more than the fact that he worked wonders of some sort, or was reputed to do so, and that the Christians heartily disapproved of him.

Of the latter end of Simon of Gitta we know nothing with any assurance. The Conflict Stories, according to which he was exposed and discredited by Peter and died thereupon, or shortly after, are worthless as historical accounts, not least because had the traditions any basis in fact it would have been unlikely in the extreme that the Simonian movement would outlive its founder. The Hippolytan account of Simon's leaving Rome to teach under a plane tree in Gitta (??), inasmuch as it is seemingly devoid of all polemical overtones, may be true; one of the few Samaritan traditions about Simon (if it refers to Simon of Gitta rather than Simon the Samaritan) speaks of his being buried in Samaria.

(iv) Was Helena an historical person?

The idea that Helena never existed, which goes back to Horbius in the 17th century, continues to appeal to many. Thus, of the

present generation of Simonian scholars Arai, Beyschlag (with some hesitation) Haenchen, Lüdemann, Quispel and H. M. Schenke repudiate the historicity of Helena.

For our part, we see the evidence as pointing strongly in the opposite direction. In the earliest, pre-Gnostic form of Simonianism, attested in Justin, Simon already had a female consort called Helena, who served as an incarnation of Athene, as Simon himself did of Zeus. Had the Simonians set out to invent a female consort for Simon there is no reason why they should have called her Helena, still less why they should have made her into an prostitute (unless they thought of her, as the Gnostic Simonians did later, as the prima salvanda rescued by Simon: but this, as we saw in Chapter 3 is very unlikely). A further pointer to the historicity of Helena, as argued in Chapter 4 supra, is the fact that the Simonian Gnostic myth logically ought to have had Helena, who stood for the human soul, being liberated forthwith by Simon from the bonds of flesh, whereas in fact she is represented only as being rescued from her brothel and as accompanying Simon during his preaching career. This, we suggested, is because the myth had to be reconciled with the fact that there was an historical Helena who actually did accompany Simon.

The location of Helena's brothel in Tyre, on the other hand, as we saw in Chapter 4, may well be unhistorical, being occasioned by the coincidence that Isis, with whom Helena was probably assimilated by the Simonians, was thought of as having once been a prostitute in Tyre for ten years.

(v) Was Simonianism Gnostic from the start?

We have seen in Chapter 3 that the Simonianism known by Justin



in the middle of the second century had no Gnostic characteristics: it identified Simon with Zeus and Helena with Athene (and probably Isis). Support for our thus postulating an original phase of Simonianism, lasting for more than a century, which was an admixture of paganism and Christianity without any tincture of Gnosticism, is provided by Irenaeus and Epiphanius. Irenaeus has a dual conception of Helena: alongside the passive, humiliated Helena, the prima salvanda of the Gnostics; there are traces of the divine, victorious, salvific Helena from the earlier version of the religion, standing in a very uneasy co-existence with the other conception. Epiphanius, at a rather later date, knows and uses a Simonian revelation document which employs the archaic conception of Helena as a victorious, salvific goddess.

(vi) What changes are discernible in Simonianism as it evolved?

Our investigations lead us to believe that the history of the Simonian movement may be divided into the following two phases.

I. The Pre-Gnostic phase. During this period Simon was identified with Zeus and Helena with Athene, and probably Isis; both were given a salvific role. An attempt was made to subsume within a Simonian framework selected Christian theologoumena (in particular Jesus was regarded as a Docetic manifestation of the ultimate deity, Simon). This period extended from the foundation of the movement in the mid-first century A.D. by Simon of Gitta until some time, probably, between 150 and 180, though if the revelation document used by Epiphanius belonged to his own time there will have been pockets of Simonians who remained faithful

to this primitive vision down to the late fourth century.

II. The Gnostic phase. By the time of Irenaeus Simonianism had become assimilated to Gnosticism far more closely than it had been, or was to be, to Christianity. Irenaeus, Hippolytus and other authors testify to the nature of the new version of Simonianism which spoke of liberation from, not improvement of, the material world as its object, which saw Helena as a humiliated, suffering figure representing the human soul, not as a glorious, salvific, divine figure, and the world as the creation of angels who did not know the universal Father. Simonian Gnostics survived until at least the time of Eusebius and possibly for another century till that of Marutha. That they were libertarian, libertine even, in their morals, is clearly asserted by Christian writers from Irenaeus onwards. Was this reputation justified? The belief that Simonianism was the prototypal heresy, which derives from Irenaeus and is totally unconvincing, may have sufficed for the Simonians to have been credited with the aberrations of other heretical sects. However, there is a circumstantiality about the attribution to Simonians by Hippolytus of libertine slogans that suggests that the Fathers had some grounds for their allegations, and the testimony of Epiphanius would seem to suggest that by the late fourth century the Simonians, as well as having adopted a more thoroughgoing mystagogy than they had had before, had become practitioners of orgiastic rites of a peculiarly gross nature. Perhaps these developments were signs of the decline of Simonianism as a movement.

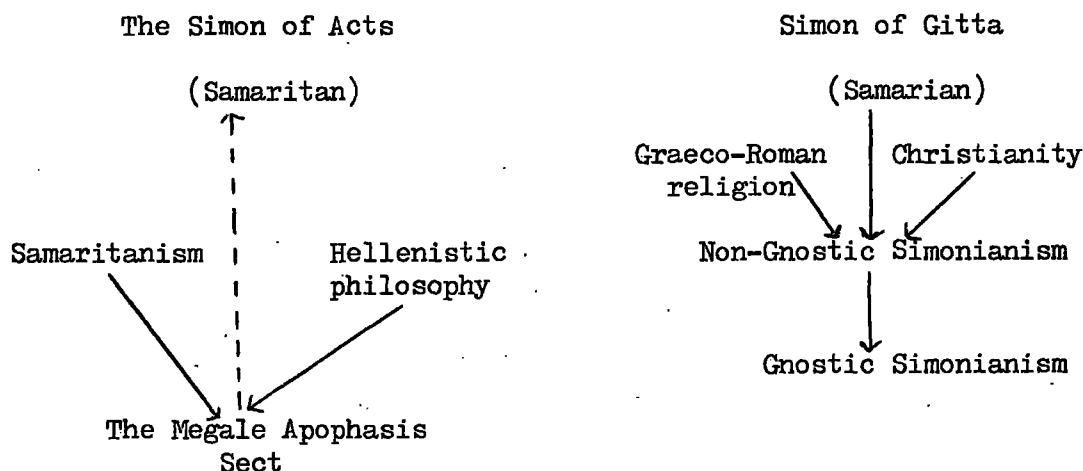
Justin says that in his day the Simonians claimed to be Christians and Eusebius, more than a century and a half later,

speaks of them as attaching themselves like a foul contagion to the Church. Both statements illustrate the parasitic nature of Simonianism. Neither author implies that Simonianism was a Christian aberration; rather they are speaking of Simonians trying to infiltrate the Church, as Eusebius' references to a contagion and Justin's comparison (Apol. I 26) of the Simonians with those who claim to be philosophers without holding the opinions of philosophers (Justin, we recall, was a philosopher himself, so we can detect a certain bitterness in these words) indicate.

What led to the transition from the primitive, non-Gnostic, to the developed, Gnostic Simonianism? One might have thought that if the religion was able to survive the crisis of faith constituted by the deaths of its 'divine' founders it had no need a century later to undertake so radical a revision of its theology. Gnosticism was, however, clearly a very pervasive force in the second century and Simonianism was already an eclectic religion which had appropriated some of the ideas of other religions (certainly the Christian and probably the Isiac), so some degree of Gnostic influence was only to be expected. We have suggested (in Chapters 3 and 4) that the Gnostification of Simonianism was assisted by three circumstances: Helen of Troy had become, under Pythagorean influence, a symbol of the human soul, and in pre-Gnostic Simonianism Helena had already become assimilated to Helen of Troy; the idea of prostitution as a symbol for the humiliation of the human soul was probably current (it is found in two Nag Hammadi treatises which probably derive from the second century, the Exegesis of the Soul, and Bronte) and Helena had formerly been a prostitute; Ennoia, a title for Athene, with whom Helena was identified, appeared in a

number of Gnostic systems.

We have seen reasons for being very reluctant to describe as Simonians the group(s) that produced the Megale Apophasis and the Commentary/Paraphrase thereon quoted by Hippolytus. They were Simonians only in the sense that they, being in some instances Samaritans, perhaps claimed a fictitious descent from the Simon of Acts; with the religion of the Samaritan Simon of Gitta they probably had no contacts (Helena, we noted, had no place in their system). Theirs was a religion that had nothing to do with Gnosticism, unless one is to define Gnosticism in such vague terms that the word virtually becomes useless. They saw the material world as good, and they believed in fostering the potential for fulfilment that they thought resided in man and in all things. Since we know of them only from Hippolytus, we can probably take it as fairly certain that this second century movement, which eclectically combined Samaritan ideas with the Pythagorean, Stoic and other philosophical notions that were in vogue at that time, had rather a brief lease of life.



(vii) Implications for other areas of study.

The picture of Simonianism which emerges from this study is

of a parasitic movement which fed chiefly on pagan Graeco-Roman religion but also to a lesser extent on Christianity, and latterly battened principally on Gnosticism. Alongside Simonianism in the second century was to be found the pseudo-Simonianism, if we may so style it, associated with the Megale Apophasis, which in its way was equally parasitic. This strongly suggests that the importance given to Simonianism by many authors is misplaced. It was not, in Irenaeus' phrase, the 'fons et radix' of heresy, of Gnosticism, or of anything else (not even of the religions of Menander and Saturninus, which were quite different and had no room for Simon and Helena). Simonianism and pseudo-Simonianism were both short-lived eclectic movements which put together ingredients from other systems in a somewhat clumsy and unimaginative way, and lacked the originality of vision - also, one suspects, leaders of sufficient charisma - to offer the world a durable religious vision.

In his dissertation on Simonianism nearly three decades ago, S. J. England (A.2: England, 1940), who took it to have been a unitary movement beginning with the Simon of Acts (a disciple, he thought, of Dositheus) and developing in two directions, the Gnostic (as attested in Irenaeus and Epiphanius) and the 'speculative' (attested in the Megale Apophasis), saw Simonianism as beginning at the same time as Christianity and developing in parallel with it (both movements, on his reading of the evidence, began as messianic groups within Judaic sects, had links with John the Baptist, drew on the concept of Incarnation, and experienced within themselves conflicts between pro-Judaic and anti-Judaic elements). He therefore found it to be reasonable to ask (p. 292)

whether the parallels arose because the two movements, arising in the same general area at much the same time, were affected by the same general factors, or whether perhaps the parallels were in part due to inter-reaction, Christianity influencing Simonianism but Simonianism also influencing Christianity. He suggested in particular that Christian adoptionists such as Theodotus of Byzantium and Theodotus of Rome, who used a concept which has Simonian associations, that of Power, and Christian modalists, especially Sabellius, Noetus and Praxeas, may have come under Simonian influence.

The members of the Cercle Ernest-Renan go much further than England in positing Simonian influences on Christianity, but their manipulation of the evidence (of which we have given examples) forfeits their right to a serious consideration of their case. England's position is far more considered and cautious, but it remains, we would wish to argue, no more acceptable. We cannot find any trace of adoptionist thinking in Simonianism (certainly not in the text adduced by England, Ps Clem. H 2. 25). As for modalism, we have seen that the Simonian doctrine of polyonymity ('... sustineri vocari se quodcunque eum vocant homines': Iren. I. 16), if not itself a borrowing from Christian Gnostics, may go back to non-Gnostic Simonianism and may derive from the polyonymity of Zeus. We would now add that the fact that by the time of Hippolytus the doctrine had so far fallen into abeyance that, according to a testimony of his that we have adjudged reliable, in the third century Simon and Helena had to be referred to by the specific titles *κύριος* and *κυρία*, both supports our connection of polyonymity with primitive Simonianism and makes it very unlikely that in the time of Sabellius, Noetus and Praxeas the main body of Simonians were sufficiently attached to polyonymity to have

infected Christians with the doctrine of modalism. Of course, the conservative Simonians whose revelation document Epiphanius draws upon might possibly have done so, if they were around at the time of the Christian modalists, but we find it hard to credit: of Christian influences upon Simonianism we have numerous examples, but we have no clear instance of influence in the opposite direction.

Our findings lend no succour to those who believe in a pre-Christian Gnosticism with Simonianism as its first flowering (e.g. Arai, Frickel, Daniélou, Haenchen, Rudolph, Schmithals). On the other hand, they do not disprove the existence of a pre-Christian Gnosticism. There may or may not have been such a thing, but Simonianism was not an instance of it.

### CONCLUSIONS

1. The Simon of Acts was an historical person, a Samaritan, who was regarded as divine by his followers. He may have identified himself with the Prophet like Moses. He sought admission to, and the purchase of office and charismatic powers in, the Christian Church, but after an Apostolic rebuke repented.
2. The Simonian movement derives not from Simon the Samaritan but from a Samaritan contemporary, Simon of Gitta, who claimed identity with Zeus and hailed his female companion, an ex-prostitute called Helena, as Athene. Helena was probably soon assimilated to Helen of Troy, and Isis too; she was looked upon as a salvific, victorious deity, and possibly a creator figure. Simon had no connection with the Gnostics (if indeed such existed in his day); the influences on him were largely pagan, though he also invoked some Christian ideas.

3. The main body of the Simonians in the latter part of the second century took over imperfectly assimilated Gnostic notions. They taught that the world had been created by angels, that Helena was not so much a victorious goddess as a personification of the universal human soul for whose redemption Simon had come on earth. The Simonian Gnostics survived at least till the time of Eusebius.

4. The religion of the Megale Apophasis is unrelated to Simonianism proper. It was an amalgam of Samaritanism and pagan philosophy, with no admixture of Gnosticism, and was the product of a group of heretical second century Samaritans, who may have claimed a fictitious descent from the Samaritan Simon of Acts. Their thinking was characterised by a cosmic optimism which contrasts strongly with the anti-world sentiments of the Simonian and other Gnostics.

5. The importance of Simonianism in the history of religion has been overestimated ever since the time of Irenaeus, whose association of it (through the influence of Hegesippus?) with the Simon of Acts led both to a misreading of Acts 8 and to a misunderstanding of the role of Simonianism in the rise of Gnosticism and of heresy generally.



NOTES

1. There are two candidates for the site of Gitta, Kiriet Djitt/ Jit 15 km. W. of Nablus (Guérin; Zahn; Conder & Kitchener, &c.) and Dshett 18 km. SE. of Caesarea Maritima (Alt; Jeremias; Kippenberg, &c.).

### Appended Note

The author wishes here to make some brief reference to a piece of work touching on the subject of the foregoing study that was published too late for discussion in the body of the thesis, viz. M. D. Goulder's chapter, 'The Two Roots of the Christian Myth' in J. Hick (ed.) The Myth of God Incarnate, London, 1977. Dr Goulder contends that the doctrine of the pre-existence and incarnation of Jesus was a Samaritan innovation, due in some sense to Simon Magus, that was superimposed upon a primitive Galilean understanding of Jesus as a man appointed by God as Lord and Christ and due to return in glory. His case for such a novel view, which accords Simon an even more significant role than did the Fathers, may here be only briefly outlined.

Goulder seeks to show that the Samaritan religion exhibited Gnosticising tendencies that make credible the patristic belief that Gnosticism originated with Samaritans such as Simon and Menander. The Samaritans saw God as no longer active in history but present only as hidden within the Pentateuch, so they laid great emphasis on wisdom and esoteric knowledge. Samaritanism further exhibited dualistic ('binitarian') characteristics: Goulder quotes Marqah, MM VI. 3, as attributing the creation of Adam to a pair of divine hypostases, 'the Pristine God' ('Elah gamma'ah) and The Glory, each wearing a crown of great light. Given this evidence that the Samaritans believed in a two-fold deity (based, Goulder thinks (p. 84), on an inference from Ex. 34.5 that The Glory is a second divine hypostasis), the path is then open for the argument

(p. 72) that the titles Great Power and Standing One connected with Simon testify that Simon 'took himself to be an incarnation of one person of the binity'.

Goulder then proceeds to suggest that in preaching to the Samaritans Philip and the other early evangelists will have chosen to avoid Jewish ideas such as messianism and eschatology; instead, they will have sought to clothe the gospel message in the thought-forms of the Samaritans. They will have needed in fact the sort of presentation of Christianity that we find most explicitly deployed in a NT book with numerous affinities with Samaritanism, the Fourth Gospel, where the doctrines of the pre-existence and divinity of Jesus, and of his gift of saving knowledge here and now, play a prominent role. Goulder argues in some detail that Paul originally had no contact with such ways of thinking and that there is evidence in the epistles that he appropriated them 'in the course of dialectic with the Samaritan missionaries in Corinth and Ephesus between 50 and 55' (p. 79).

Goulder concludes, provocatively, that the doctrine of the pre-existence and divinity of Jesus is nowadays an obstacle to faith and should be abandoned: 'the incarnational speculations introduced into the church by Simon Magus and his fellow-Samaritans seem to me entirely dispensable' (p. 85).

We shall confine our discussion of Dr. Goulder's chapter to a few comments on the role that he gives to Simon in his scenario. Whether the Samaritan religion had the sort of influence on the development of Christian theology that he predicates, it is not germane to our purpose here to investigate. Nor is this the place to argue for or against the indispensability of the doctrine of

incarnation for Christian theology, though we would note that, even given his Samaritan hypothesis, it is not clear why Dr. Goulder thinks the early church opted to use the incarnational model rather than merely the Mosaic Prophet model when adapting the gospel for Samaritan ears. Could it not be argued that only the incarnational model seemed to the church (whether the Samaritan hypothesis has any validity or not) adequately to measure up to its experience of who and what Jesus had been and was? In which case some rapprochement might be possible between Goulder and C.F.D. Moule who in his The Origin of Christology, Cambridge, 1977, has argued that a high christology was implicit even in the earliest Christian proclamation. But these are questions that lie beyond the scope of our present Note.

(i) It is unfortunately unclear whether Goulder thinks Simon introduced his 'incarnational speculations' into the church ab intra or ab extra. Is Simon envisaged as belonging to the 'Christianized Samaritans' of whom we read on p. 84, so that we need to suppose that he abandoned his own incarnational pretensions in order to saddle Jesus with them? Or are we meant to take it that he 'introduced' incarnational thinking about Jesus only in the sense that he provoked the church from outside (at the time of the evangelization of Samaria, or later?) to formulate a Christian doctrine of incarnation to counter his own claims for himself?

(ii) We concur with Goulder in believing that the Simon of Acts (who for him is the same as Simon of Gitta) was seen by his followers as a divine incarnation, though unlike him we are not convinced that Simon saw himself in this way. Goulder seems to believe (p. 74) that Simon identified himself with the second

deity (The Glory) supposedly referred to in MM VI. 3 rather than with Yhwh. Even if the Marqah text does point to a belief in two divine hypostases (rather than being merely an over audacious poetical conceit, somewhat like Marqah's hypostasization of the letters of the alphabet), we should still be inclined to think that Simon was identified with Yhwh rather than with the second hypostasis: Simon is called not The Glory but The Great Power, and this term functions in Samaritan texts solely as a surrogate for the name Yhwh, never for a second divine hypostasis.

(iii) Goulder assumes too readily that 'Simon' used the title The Standing One for himself. In fact, Luke does not mention this title in connection with the Samaritan Simon nor do our best authorities for Simon of Gitta, Justin and Irenaeus, use it of him. The Pseudo-Simonian author of the Apophasis uses the expression Hestos, stas, stesomenos of a cosmic principle, and Hippolytus, who thinks the MA Simonian, asserts that the author laid claim to this title for himself, but, as we have seen, this is probably only surmise on his part and is implausible. The expression Hestos on its own is not found in Hippolytus, but Ps Clement and Clement of Alexandria allude to its use, the former saying that Simon and Dositheus contended for the title and the latter saying that the Simonians worshipped and sought to imitate the Hestos. The Simonians probably adopted the title, we argued, in the early third century, not in the Dosithean sense in which Goulder understands it, viz. of the Mosaic Prophet, but in the sense of The Unchanging One.

(iv) If we are right in asserting the existence of two

Simons (and Goulder's chapter does nothing to shake our confidence in this hypothesis, nor in our presentation generally), Goulder's case cannot stand as formulated. So far as the doctrine of the Incarnation is concerned, it could still be argued that it entered Christian thinking through Samaritanism, but Goulder's apparent belief that the emphasis in various NT books on the knowledge of mysteries and revelation betrays Simonian influence is open to objection. Samaritan influence might be found here too, but not Simonian. Simonianism was, if we are right, in no sense Samaritan and probably had no effect on the formation of the New Testament or of Christian doctrine.