Heresy, Authority and the Bishops of Rome in the Fifth Century:
Leo I (440-461) and Gelasius (492-496)

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of History
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Abstract

This dissertation investigates how two fifth-century bishops of Rome, Leo I (440-461) and Gelasius (492-496) understood and opposed heresy. More specifically, by stressing the contested character of heresy and the at times optative nature of the bishop of Rome’s opposition to it, this dissertation hopes to provide a new perspective on how Leo and Gelasius imagined and justified the authority of the Apostolic See in an uncertain world. To accomplish this task, this dissertation considers Leo and Gelasius’ opposition to various different heresies and details the methods by which they were opposed. This will be done through an examination of the records of synods, Roman law, other contemporary narrative sources, but especially through the letters and tractates of Leo and Gelasius themselves, carefully read and considered in their fifth-century context.

Furthermore, it is argued that the history of the development of the ideas of heresy and orthodoxy were profoundly connected with Rome’s emerging importance as a locus of authentic Christian teachings; the history of the bishops of Rome cannot be told without examining the history of heresy and orthodoxy and vice versa. Because orthodoxy and heresy were not tangible historical phenomena but rather were malleable categories that emerged as part of a wider discourse of Christian identity construction, the bishops of Rome were not in every case the
unqualified enemies of heresy. Instead, their definition of heterodox belief and their opposition to religious deviance were complex, often qualified and always historically contingent. This study seeks to investigate the way in which Leo and Gelasius mobilized the language of heresiology in order to convince Christians in the Latin west and the Greek east, as well as the imperial authorities, that Rome’s interpretations were legitimate and binding.
Acknowledgements

First, I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to the members of my dissertation committee who each contributed in countless ways to the production of this work. My supervisor, Nick Everett, has guided and encouraged me since the beginning of this project. He, together with Alexander Murray, introduced me to the history of Late Antiquity and their knowledge, advice, and corrections were crucial during each stage of research and writing. Giulio Silano was always generous with his time and he constantly pushed me to ask deeper (and often difficult!) questions. I valued our conversations over the years greatly. I would also like to thank Thomas F. X. Noble for his perceptive comments and criticisms which have already made an impact on this dissertation and will undoubtedly continue to influence my work in the future.

I also wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge my appreciation for the help and encouragement I received from the professors and my fellow graduate students of both the Department of History and the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto. In particular, Joe Goering, Isabelle Cochelin, Mark Meyerson and Derek Penslar made my time as a student and as a teacher rewarding and enjoyable. I am especially indebted to George Rigg whose kindness and patience helped inspire in me an appreciation for the Latin language that I could not have imagined when I began this process. Here I must also mention Andrew Hicks who somehow managed to make me look forward to reading Macrobius. Sean Lafferty, with whom I shared many of the trials and tribulations of graduate school, was always supportive and willing to share his insights (and coincidentally was favourably disposed towards a pint). Thank you!

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On a personal level, I wish to thank my family – my aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephew and my grandmother Sheila – for their generosity and support. I appreciate that they at least pretended to be interested in my research and generally avoided asking me when I would

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(finally) finish my degree. In particular my sister Anna and her wife Kristi have been amazing neighbours, relatively good trivia partners, and generally loving and understanding in every way imaginable.

Lastly, I must express my gratitude to Julie M. Anderson and to my parents, Steve and Louise Cohen. Simply put, without Julie none of this would not have been possible. Her kindness, sense of humour and tolerance sustained me while her intelligence, editor’s eye for detail, and insightful observations made this dissertation far better than it was otherwise destined to be. And there are, of course, no words that can adequately sum up the affection and appreciation I have for my parents. My mom and dad have been a source of unceasing support and unconditional love for my whole life; their sanguine resilience in the face of life’s obstacles continues to be a model of quiet determination I endeavour to emulate, however imperfectly. Above all, I am grateful for their decision to procreate. I am pretty sure that without them, I would not be here. It is to them that this work is dedicated.

Samuel Cohen
University of Toronto
November, 2013
### Abbreviations

Journal abbreviations throughout conform to those of *L'Année philologique*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td><em>Auctores antiquissimi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACO</td>
<td><em>Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anon. Val.</td>
<td><em>Anonymi Valesiani pars posterior</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSL</td>
<td><em>Corpus Christianum, series Latina</em>, Brepolis, 1954 -.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSEL</td>
<td><em>Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum</em>, Vienna, 1866 -.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ET</td>
<td><em>Edictum Theoderici regis</em></td>
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Grillmeier, CICT

CICT 1 vol. 1: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451), Atlanta, 1975.


Jones, LRE A. H. M Jones. *The Later Roman Empire*


Loewenfeld Samuel Loewenfeld, ed. epistolae Pontificum Romanorum ineditae. 1885.

LF *Fragmentum Laurentianum*


MGH *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*


PCBE Prosopographie Chrétienne du Bas-Empire, 3 vols., eds., Charles Pietri and Sylvain Destephen. 1999.

PL Patrologia Latina


tr. *tractatus*

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Introduction

In modern scholarship, the study of the bishops of Rome has commonly emphasized the elaboration and implementation of papal primacy and the growth of the institutional church. For its part, heresy and the controversial literature that evolved out of the disputes over the definition of correct belief are often considered in purely theological or dogmatic terms that appear outside the interest of scholars concerned with institution-building or other more broadly historical developments. Neither of these approaches will be taken in what follows. In the present study, which takes as its subject the bishops of Rome in the fifth century, the emphasis is not the development of Christian theology or the growth of papal power and the creation of the foundations for the later Medieval Papacy. Nor is this dissertation meant as an exhaustive narrative of the period or as a set of papal biographies. Rather, it has been conceived of as two case studies focusing on the pontificates of the most significant and influential Roman bishops of the fifth century: Leo I (440-461) and Gelasius (492-496). It examines how these men understood the concept of heresy, how they reacted to it, and how historical circumstances influenced the way they opposed, exploited, or accommodated challengers to their faith. In what follows, it will be argued that the fight against heresy and a powerful sense of their own orthodoxy provided one way by which Leo and Gelasius could demonstrate, defend and extend their authority in a rapidly changing world.

In recent years, a number of scholars have considered various aspects of the pontificates of these two bishops, especially the more widely-known Leo. For example, some have endeavoured to explain what made Leo great, describing him as exceptional in an age of decline and a man who expressed the teachings of the Christian faith in clear and straightforward terms. Others have looked in detail at Leo’s Christology and at his soteriology. Others still have examined the

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1 In particular, the various studies of Walter Ullmann: e.g. A Short History of the Papacy in the Middle Ages, 2nd ed. (London, 2003), i. “The principle object of this book is to show in outline how the papacy as an institution developed in the Middle Ages.” This statement could be taken as programmatic for many of Ullmann’s works. See also Walter Ullmann, The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages; A Study in the Ideological Relation of Clerical to Lay Power, 3rd ed. (London, 1970), passim, but esp. Chapters 1 and 2; Walter Ullmann, Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages, 4th ed. (London, 1978).
3 Lucio Casula and Jean Galot, La cristologia di San Leone Magno: il fondamento dottrinale e soteriologico (Milano, 2000); J. M. Armitage, A Twofold Solidarity: Leo the Great’s Theology of Redemption, vol. 9 (Strathfield, 2005); Bernard Green, The Soteriology of Leo the Great (Oxford, 2008).
related questions of justice, mercy and Christ’s humanity and the important place traditional Roman values had in Leo’s thought or, alternatively, how he reimagined these ideas, endowing them with newly Christian content. In comparison to Leo, Gelasius is less well studied. Erich Caspar dedicated a lengthy chapter of his monumental pre-war study to Gelasius, largely in the context of the Christological debate and the articulation of Rome’s primacy. Walter Ullmann’s 1981 biography, the only modern book-length monograph dedicated to Gelasius, depicts him as an isolated figure who had little to do with the heretical Gothic kingdom of Italy. In Ullmann’s telling, the history of Gelasius’ pontificate was not an Italian story; rather, it was the history of a simmering conflict between the sedes apostolica and imperial power in the east and ultimately the culmination of notions of papal primacy articulated by Leo years earlier. Most recently, Kristina Sessa’s innovative study examined Gelasius’ pontificate in the context of a wider investigation of the role of the domestic sphere in the construction of Roman episcopal authority in Late Antiquity. The question of heresy is tangentially addressed in many of these works on both men, but it is often conceived of in relatively static terms with the bishops of Rome described as its natural and sworn enemy.

This study takes a different approach. In particular, by stressing the contested and fluid character of heresy and the at times optative nature of the bishop of Rome’s opposition to it, this dissertation hopes to provide a new perspective on how Leo and Gelasius imagined and justified their place in an uncertain world. To accomplish this task, we will consider a number of different heresies, the methods by which they were opposed, and more generally, the important place the fight against heresy had in Leo and Gelasius’ self-perception and authority. This will be done through a detailed examination of the records of synods, Roman law, various other contemporary narrative sources, but especially through the letters and tractates of Leo and Gelasius themselves, carefully read and considered in their fifth-century context. This perspective will not only illuminate the methods Leo and Gelasius used to argue for their own authority with eastern

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5 Erich Caspar, *Gesch. des Papsttum*, II.11-81. Much of Caspar’s analysis focuses on the Acacian Schism (484-519) between Rome and Constantinople and only deals indirectly with Gelasius.
7 Kristina Sessa, *The Formation of Papal Authority in Late Antique Italy: Roman Bishops and the Domestic Sphere* (New York, 2012). Many of Sessa’s conclusions on the development of the authority of the bishops of Rome are, from a slightly different perspective, complementary to my own.
bishops and emperors, but it will also touch on important organizational issues in the western church and especially in Italy and the city of Rome. This is especially true in the case of Gelasius who is too often thought of only in terms of his fight against eastern imperial interference. As will be seen, Gelasius must also be firmly resituated in an Italian context.

The notion of authority is important to this study but it is difficult to define. Two useful explanations are provided by Claudia Rapp and Bernard Hoose. In his study on the theory and practice of authority within the church, Hoose describes the concept as encompassing two important and interrelated ideas. The first is that of power. Or to put it slightly differently, authority can be defined as the ability to command obedience, to govern the church, and the exercise of control over other people. This control could be employed directly or delegated to intermediaries. However, it is easy to overstate this aspect of authority, especially when discussing a pre-modern institution such as Rome’s episcopacy in the fifth century. Simply put, in a world in which communications were difficult at best, no late antique bishop could exercise terribly efficient coercive power even within his own city, let alone over the church at large. Hoose’s second aspect of authority seems more applicable to the question of heresy in the fifth century: the ability or sanction to teach legitimately. This is a softer form of authority, one perhaps more closely connected to that almost untranslatable Latin word *auctoritas* that denotes something like the dignity, legitimacy and credibility of a person or office. In her study, Claudia Rapp described episcopal authority in Late Antiquity as comprising three elements: spiritual authority, which is personal and whose ultimate source is God; ascetic authority, which is also personal but can be obtained through one’s own actions and is directed inward; and pragmatic authority, which also arises from personal actions, but unlike ascetic authority, it is directed outward for the benefit of others. This final form of authority is more restricted than the first two in that it is dependent on one’s wealth, social position and/or ability. Moreover, pragmatic

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9 *Auctoritas* is variously defined by Lewis and Short as “Counsel, advice, persuasion, encouragement to something; will, pleasure, decision, bidding, command, precept, decree; Might, power, authority, reputation, dignity, influence, weight; a warrant, security for establishing a fact, assertion, etc., credibility.” The definition of ambiguous Latin terms such as *auctoritas* – or its translation into the English cognate ‘authority’ are problematic for the simple reason that the meanings of words are not static. It can be easy to lose sight of the fifth-century context of its usage, especially when read through the context of later medieval political thought. On this problem in the context of Gelasius’ correspondence, see Alan Cottrell, "Auctoritas and Potestas: A Reevaluation of the Correspondence of Gelasius I on Papal-Imperial Relations," *MS*, 55 (1993), 96-97. In general on authority in Roman society and in particular in the law, see Fritz Schulz, *Principles of Roman Law* (Oxford, 1936), 164-188.
authority is always public authority. In Rapp’s view, spiritual and especially ascetic authority was a locus for and a justification of pragmatic authority.¹⁰

Rapp and Hoose’s definitions touch on a number of ideas useful for this study. Firstly, the question of legitimate teaching raised by Hoose cannot be untangled from the concept of heresy. Gelasius and Leo took their pastoral responsibilities very seriously, a fact that has been widely recognized in the secondary literature. But what is sometimes overlooked is that their relentless insistence on orthodoxy also constituted an implicit claim to the right to decide the boundaries of correct and incorrect belief. Indeed, Leo’s preaching in particular often encompassed anti-heretical rhetoric and he commonly used heresy as a tool in order to define orthodoxy. In this context, the very act of preaching and teaching constitute both an assertion and a demonstration of the authority of the Apostolic See. Moreover, the fight against heresy took place in full view of the public: in churches, tribunals, letters and even in person at councils and synods. Leo and Gelasius’ ability to argue their case in part depended on Rome’s status in the Christian world; their successes in the defense of orthodoxy acted as a validation and as an explanation for this status in much the same way as spiritual or ascetic authority justified pragmatic authority in Rapp’s formulation. In the context of this study, then, authority is not one particular quality. Instead it is better understood as the process by which various different characteristics – orthodoxy, legitimacy, dignity, etc. - are recognized and accepted by others.¹¹

Also important to this study is the definition of and relationship between heresy and orthodoxy. Orthodoxy and heresy were not tangible traditions or lived historical phenomena that evolved separately and fought for ascendancy. Rather, they were categories that emerged as part of a wider discourse of Christian identity construction that were used to define the self and exclude the other.¹² Heresy and orthodoxy as we now understand them were developed in the second century of the Christian era largely by Justin Martyr († ca. 165) and Irenaeus († ca. 202). In its origin the word heresy, derived from the Greek hairesis – choice – was used to designate a religious or philosophical sect. But in Christian circles, it came to denote a deviation from the religious norm and increasingly took on malicious or even demonic connotations. Mobilizing

Hellenistic historiography and doxography to explain religious deviance, Justin, Irenaeus and other Christian polemicists described heresy in terms of ‘sects’ or ‘schools’ whose false teachings passed from teacher to disciple in a chain of transmission that ultimately reached back to the devil himself. The definition of what constituted heresy was in essence a debate over who possessed the ultimate authority to act as the final arbiter of religious truth. In the end, what was deemed orthodox represents the views of the winners of this debate. The heretics were the losers.\(^\text{13}\)

This interpretation of heresy and orthodoxy has important implications for our understanding of the history of the bishops of Rome, especially in the fifth century when men like Leo and Gelasius emerged as central and vocal participants in the debates over the nature of the faith and Rome’s place within a changing Christian Roman Empire. The particular way early Christian thinkers conceived of heresy made it an effective tool that could be used to clarify uncertainties arising out of evolving interpretations of the Christian faith.\(^\text{14}\) Allegations of heresy – of having departed from the tradition of Jesus and his apostles – could be used to demarcate legitimate theological distinctions, for instance between the tradition that emerged as normative Christianity and the Gnostics against which Justin Martyr and Irenaeus fought so vigorously. But the heretic was not only imagined to be a completely foreign outsider; he could also be a lying imposter – an insider who only mimicked orthodoxy. And since this kind of heresy was almost indistinguishable from orthodoxy, its detection and exposure was dependent on the authority of the accuser.\(^\text{15}\)

Thus accusations of heresy were never merely descriptive; they were always prescriptive and unambiguously polemical – a rhetorical tool that could legitimize, control or exclude. As we shall see in this study, Leo and Gelasius used heresy to delegitimize foes in contemporary theological debate. To accomplish this task, Leo and Gelasius employed the traditional Christian


genre of heresiology – the science of heresy.16 Heresiology was, in the words of J. Rebecca Lyman, “the combative theological genre for asserting true Christian doctrine through hostile definition and ecclesiastical exclusion.”17 This was done by exaggerating, manipulating or otherwise decontextualizing the teachings of opponents to make them seem as foolish and wicked as possible. H...
heresiology to undermine their opponents by linking them to already condemned heresiarchs in a genealogy of error. Moreover, Rome’s own authority and legitimacy in this debate was profoundly connected to its historic claims of scrupulous orthodoxy and thus the Apostolic See’s continuity with authentic Christian tradition.

Heresy also served as a useful tool to define orthodoxy which, it must be recalled, was not a single, unified preexisting idea; instead, it was an answer to a question, a consensus that emerged out of debate. Or to put it another way, orthodoxy, like authority, was a process and this process was still very much under way in the fifth century and beyond. The imprecise and evolutionary nature of orthodoxy was due in part to the fact that no definition of the faith could be freed from the mundane vicissitudes of human language. And since there could be no simple and precise test for orthodoxy, there was a general reluctance among Christian thinkers to unambiguously define the exact nature of correct belief. Preferring terms such as “Catholic,” “the Christian religion,” “the Church of Christ,” “the doctrine of Truth” or “the apostolic faith,” for Leo and Gelasius orthodoxy was a matter of what was to be rejected rather than what was to be affirmed. This meant that the boundaries of orthodox teaching were defined only gradually by

10 Orthodoxy as a process; Susanna Elm et al., "Introduction," in Orthodoxie, Christianisme, Histoire, ed. Susanna Elm, Eric Rebillard, and Antonella Romano, Collection de l’École française de Rome 270 (Rome, 2000), xvii-xix.
11 Karl Frederick Morrison, Tradition and Authority in the Western Church, 300-1140 (Princeton, N.J., 1969), 56.
12 In the New Testament we can find references to the lex fidei (Romans 3:27) or the lex Christi (Galatians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 9:21) but the earliest definition of orthodoxy was the regula fidei, a flexible creed-like summary of the basic elements of the Christian faith. On the regula fidei, see, for example, L.W. Countryman, "Tertullian and the Regula Fidei," The Second Century, 2 (1982); W. R. Farmer, "Galatians and the Second-Century development of the Regula Fidei," ibid., 4 (1984).
13 A systematic study of the language and semantics of heresy in the writings of the late antique bishops of Rome is a desideratum. In short, Leo and Gelasius tended to use “Catholic” in order to designate orthodoxy, often paired with words like “faith,” “church,” or “tradition.” From the Leonine corpus, see esp. JK 412 = ep. 15 (PL 54, pp. 677-695), “Quam laudabiliter pro catholicae fidei vertature movearis...”; cf. JK 398 = ep. 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597); JK 416 = ep. 18 (PL 54, p. 706); JK 421 = ep. 24 (ACO II.4, p. 3-4); JK 442 = ep. 27 (ACO II.4, p.9); JK 424 = ep. 29 (ACO II.2, pp. 9-10); JK 425 = ep. 30 (ACO II.2, p.10-11); JK 425 = ep. 31 (ACO II.2, p.12-15), “Christi Ecclesiam”; JK 426 = ep. 32 (ACO II.4, pp. 11-12), “doctrinam veritatis”; JK 427 = ep. 33(ACO II.4, pp. 15-16), “Ecclesia Dei”. There are, of course, many other similar examples in Leo’s letters and sermons. For Gelasius, see, for example JK 611 = de vitanda communione Acacii (Thiel, pp. 287-311), “una catholica apostolicaque communio”; cf. JK 620 (Thiel ep. 3, pp. 312-321), “Catholic [i.e. orthodox] prince”; JK 625 (Thiel ep. 4, pp. 321-323 = CA ep. 98, pp. 398-400); JK 621 (Thiel ep. 6, pp. 325-335 = CA ep. 94, pp. 357-368); JK 622 (Thiel ep. 10, pp. 341-348), etc. These terms for orthodoxy echo earlier usages by the Latin opponents of heresy, especially Arianism, such as Hilary of Poitiers who explicitly contrasts “Catholic” with “heretical” and often refers to orthodoxy as the “apostolic and evangelical doctrine” (e.g. de syn. 7, 8, 61, 78, etc.). Greek writers such as Theodoret use similar language, for example contrasting the “apostolic doctrines” with “the Arian blasphemy” and the “plague of Arius” (ep. 112). Theodoret also speaks of “rays of orthodoxy” emanating from the crown of Leo’s holiness (ep. 113). Gelasius too does use the term “orthodox” on occasion. See JK 626 (Thiel ep. 5, pp. 324-325 = CA ep. 96, pp. 398-400); JK 623 (Thiel ep. 7, pp. 335-337 = CA ep. 79, pp. 218-223); JK 638 (Thiel ep. 18. pp. 382-385 = CA ep. 101, pp. 464-468), §1. cf. the letter of the bishops of Dardania writing to Gelasius: “fides orthodoxa” (Gelasius, ep 11).
determining what lay beyond those limits.\textsuperscript{22} Heresy, then, cannot be reduced simply to the specific problematic content of a teaching. Rather, it was a question of how this teaching was perceived by the Christian community and its structures of authority.

Of course for Leo and Gelasius, heresy was not an academic or theoretical problem; it was part of a cosmic struggle between good and evil that touched on every aspect of the society in which they lived. Not only did incorrect belief have profound soteriological implications, it also had consequences for the proper organization of the church and Christian society. But in part because the definitions of what constituted heresy and orthodoxy were always imprecise, conditional, and shifted over time, the bishops of Rome were not in every case the unqualified enemies of heretics. Instead, their definition of heretical belief and their opposition to religious deviance were optative, complex, often qualified and always historically contingent. As we shall see in the case of Gelasius’ dealings with the non-Nicene Ostrogoths, accommodation could be found by minimizing differences between two distinct theological positions. In other cases, small variations could be maximized to cut off and exclude. In all cases, heresy and orthodoxy were malleable categories that could be expanded or contracted as circumstances required. Leo and Gelasius could modulate their views, fighting or ignoring heresy when it was advantageous to do so, and always seeking to present themselves as orthodoxy’s incorruptible defenders. To support their own claims, Leo and Gelasius appealed to the authority of scripture, of councils of the church (especially Nicaea, 325), and of the Fathers. They did this by collecting a wide range of texts into florilegia in order to support their views and were constantly seeking to place themselves in a chain of tradition linking the bishops of Rome with the celebrated teachers and councils of the past. This was a world in which texts had growing authority. The written word, especially in the form of letters, tractates, florilegia and even sermons preached, could be powerful weapons in the fight over the faith.\textsuperscript{23}

In the background of all of these debates lay the declining political fortunes of Roman imperial power and significant and growing divisions within the church. Latin-speaking Rome was becoming increasingly isolated from the Greek-speaking Constantinople. These tensions and uncertainties were exacerbated by the unprecedented interventionist role played by Leo in the

\textsuperscript{22} Boyarin, \textit{Border Lines}, 30.

\textsuperscript{23} In a slightly different context, see Averil Cameron, "Texts as Weapons: Polemic in the Byzantine Dark Ages," in \textit{Literacy and Power in the Ancient World}, ed. Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf (Cambridge, 1994); Nicholas Everett, "Literacy from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages, c. 300-800 AD," in \textit{The Cambridge Handbook of Literacy}, ed. David R. Olson and Nancy Torrance (Cambridge, 2009).
Christological controversy. Indeed Leo was the first Roman bishop to write any kind of major work on theology.\(^{24}\) Moreover, by the time Gelasius became bishop in 492, Italy and most of the west had been lost to the empire. The former imperial heartland was now under the control of the heterodox Ostrogoths and their king Theoderic (ruler of Italy, 493-526). These fifth-century political and religious developments meant that many of the certainties that had characterized Rome’s relationship with the larger church and with the empire seemed less sure than they had been even a century before. To have their views accepted, Roman bishops had to argue for it; the See of St. Peter had to convince Christians in the Latin west and the Greek east, as well as the imperial authorities that Rome’s interpretations were legitimate and binding. These claims tended to come not as part of a grand design to promote the primacy of the Roman Church, but rather as reactions against various challenges, both political and theological, that emerged in the fifth century.

**Scope and Plan**

We have already touched on a number of the potential interpretive difficulties that arise in a study of this nature. With this in mind, we will begin Chapter One by considering in greater detail the two concepts central to this dissertation: the bishop of Rome and heresy. First, we shall briefly consider the history of the institution of the Roman Church and the interrelated notions of primacy and orthodoxy and consider how these ideas developed and what impact they had in practice in the years before Leo and Gelasius. We will then turn to an evaluation of our second key idea: heresy. As we have already seen, heresy at first appears to be a relatively straightforward concept, easily, almost naturally, paired with its counterpart, orthodoxy. However, recent studies have undermined a simplistic dichotomy between heretics and true believers and instead have emphasized the unstable nature of both categories. Particularly crucial for this study is the development of the anti-heretical discourse of heresiology. The techniques used to categorize and exclude religious deviance established by Irenaeus, Justin Martyr and later by Augustine and Epiphanius of Salamis, would later be taken up by both Leo and Gelasius.

Having considered our central ideas and explored some the historiographical complications associated with a study of this kind, Chapters Two and Three turn to a detailed consideration of

\(^{24}\) Green, *Soteriology*, 249.
Leo the Great’s opposition to various heretical sects. Chapter Two begins with a discussion of the sources for Leo’s pontificate before investigating three heresies which appeared in the Latin West: Pelagianism, Manichaeism, and Priscillianism. For Leo, the problem with heresy was certainly theological in that these heretics were understood to have an incorrect understanding of the faith. But to understand Leo’s opposition to these groups, we must stretch our notion of theology to include concerns over private unregulated religious practice, the permeable boundaries between correct and incorrect faith, discipline, and debates over ecclesiastical governance and jurisdiction.

Chapter Three turns to the Christological debate that indelibly marked the fifth century and more specifically, the second half of Leo’s pontificate. This chapter is not meant as a comprehensive narrative of Leo’s role in the debate or as a detailed analysis of the development of his Christological theology. Rather, it investigates the evolution of Leo’s rhetoric in support of his teachings and against those of the Constantinopolitan monk Eutyches and his allies. As we shall see from a close reading of his sermons and letters, Leo made use of the language of heresiology to subsume Eutyches and his supporters into a genealogy of error, connecting them with some of Christianity’s most famous heresiarchs including Arius, Apollinaris, and Mani among others. Gradually, Leo came to describe Eutyches as a heresiarch himself, the founder of his own demonically-inspired sect of Eutychianism.

In Chapters Four and Five, we shall turn to the pontificate of Gelasius and here we will see both the rhetorical and optative nature of Rome’s opposition to heresy. Chapter Four will introduce Gelasius and consider the sources for his letters and tractates and their contents. But the focus of the chapter will be on Gelasius’ relations with the Greek East and in particular, on his defense of Chalcedon against the interference of emperors and their patriarchs in Constantinople. As we shall see, letters and tractates regarding the Acacian Schism (484-519), which developed due to Rome’s refusal to accept the Henotikon, a theological formulation created by the Patriarch of Constantinople Acacius in order to reconcile non-Chalcedonians in the East with the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon, comprise a significant portion of the Gelasian corpus. To protect Leo’s Christological formula from abrogation, Gelasius mobilized the same heresiological rhetoric as Leo had done decades earlier, only now it was applied against Acacius, the Henotikon and its supporters. In particular Gelasius emphasized the political nature of the Henotikon, but as importantly, he stressed the genealogical nature of heresy and
orthodoxy, both of which were linked by chains of transmission (one illegitimate and fraudulent, the other genuine and true) that were passed on through communion. This approach allowed Gelasius, as Leo had done during the late 440s and 450s, to collapse any positions that opposed Leo’s Christology and the Council of Chalcedon into a single heretical category of ‘Eutychian’ – which in turn could be associated with condemned heretics from the past. Gelasius represented his own position, and by extension that of Leo, as representing complete continuity with the patristic tradition all the way back to Nicaea. And in all his letters and tractates in defense of Chalcedon, Gelasius was keen to stress the bishops of Rome, usually described as the *sedes apostolica*, as the locus and guardian of orthodoxy.

In Chapter Five, we will turn to Gelasius’ pontificate as it pertains to his own ecclesiastical province of *Italia suburbicaria*. Here, Gelasius guided the Italian Church through the potentially difficult transition to barbarian rule in Italy, first under the general Odoacer and eventually under the Ostrogoths and their king, Theoderic. While recent scholarship has emphasized the continuities between Imperial and Ostrogothic Italy, in the context of the Vandal persecutions against Catholics in Africa Theoderic’s kingdom too posed a potentially significant problem. This was because the Ostrogoths like the Vandals were largely non-Nicene Christians, usually referred to in secondary works as ‘Arian’ but more accurately *Homoian*, a form of the faith that had been widely accepted in the mid-fourth century. Interestingly, Ostrogothic heterodoxy did not even merit the slightest note in Gelasius’ large body of surviving epistles and tractates. This cannot be explained away by claiming that the Goths’ barbarian and heretical nature precluded a relationship with the bishops of Rome. Indeed as we shall see, there were plenty of interactions between Gelasius and Theoderic and his family as well as with members of the Ostrogothic court. Instead, it will be argued that Gelasius’ relationship with Theoderic and the Gothic court must be understood in the wider context of late-fifth century Italy which was far more diverse than is sometimes imagined. There were important Jewish as well as pre-Gothic non-Nicene communities, as well as Pelagians and Pagans of various sorts. And at least in the case of the Jews, they could transgress many of the boundaries imposed on them by Roman law.

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25 Gelasius’ predecessor Felix III was in fact bishop when Odoacer took control of Italy. Gelasius may have played some role during Felix’ pontificate; some scholars speculate that he even drafted some (or all) of the letters that come down to us in Felix’s name. This, however is disputed. See below, pp. 135ff.

26 A term taken from the Council of Rimini (Ariminum) which took place in 359: Jesus was “like the Father (*homoios*) as the divine Scriptures teach.” Theodoret *HE* 2.21 Nicaea had accepted the formula that Jesus was of the same essence or substance *homoousios*, (in Latin, *consubstantialis*) as the Father.

Gelasius’ primary concern in his own ecclesiastical province was the management and administration of the large and growing patrimony of the Roman Church. And it was in the context of questions of administrative authority and jurisdiction that Gelasius most frequently came into contact with Theoderic and his court. For Gelasius, the nature of Ostrogothic beliefs was largely irrelevant; but if the Gothic administration of justice threatened to blur the distinct jurisdictions of the clergy and the laity, it must be opposed. It was the desire to preserve traditional jurisdictional boundaries that was the primary filter through which the late fifth-century Roman episcopate saw the Ostrogoths and their king.

Despite his relatively friendly relations with the Goths, for Gelasius as well as other important members of the wider Italian Church at the end of the fifth-century, Arianism remained, in the words of Maurice Wiles, the archetypal heresy.28 Indeed, Gelasius condemned the *pestis Ariana* in a number of his letters and tractates.29 And he certainly recognized that Theoderic was not Catholic, although he was not exactly a heretic either. Gelasius made use of the ambiguous nature of Ostrogothic *Homoianism* in his fight to protect the church’s jurisdiction, sometimes rhetorically incorporating the Goths into the wider Christian community, and at other times dividing them off as alien. Indeed, Gelasius’ interactions with the Goths are illustrative both of the essentially rhetorical nature of heresy and the optative nature of Rome’s opposition to it. Whereas in Leo’s attacks against Manicheans, Pelagians and Eutyches, any departure from normative Christianity was maximalized in order to cut off and exclude, Gelasius found accommodation with the Ostrogoths by minimizing differences between Nicene orthodoxy and Gothic *Homoianism*. If, as circumstances dictated, the particular nature of Gothic heterodoxy could be ignored or re-categorized, then orthodox writers like Gelasius could continue to criticize the Arian heresy while remaining friendly with Theoderic and his court.

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Chapter One: Terminology and Context

Introduction

The history of heresy and the use of anti-heretical rhetoric in the writings of Leo and Gelasius pose some significant methodological questions. Perhaps most pressing are issues of language. Words such as ‘the papacy,’ ‘heresy’ and ‘orthodoxy’ are so commonplace and so widely used that they seem unproblematic. But despite their familiarity, these terms do not represent static ideas or categories. Rather, they are concepts that were being developed, articulated and elaborated precisely in the period of interest of this study. Thus the goal of this chapter will be to define these key terms and to examine their historical context. What will become clear is that although Rome’s bishops were generally not active participants in many of the formative theological controversies of the second, third and fourth centuries, Rome’s self-perception and its importance for the rest of Christendom was from a very early period profoundly tied to its orthodoxy. Indeed, the history of the development of the ideas of heresy and orthodoxy were intimately connected with Rome’s emerging importance as a locus of authentic Christian teachings; the history of the bishops of Rome cannot be told without telling the history of heresy and orthodoxy and vice versa.

To place Leo and Gelasius’ pontificates in context, this chapter begins by considering the position of the bishop of Rome in the fifth-century. We shall examine the Roman Church, its officers, the nature of its administration, and the jurisdiction of its bishop. Moreover, Rome’s enormous wealth and the need to more efficiently administer its patrimony prompted the development of a bureaucracy out of which Leo and Gelasius both emerged. We shall then turn to the Roman Church’s position in the wider Christian world. In this section, we will see that although Rome was widely thought to possess primacy relative to the other churches of Christendom, what exactly this entailed was vague and shifting.

Next, we will investigate the important relationship between Rome and orthodoxy and contextualize Leo and Gelasius’ opposition to religious deviance. In this section, we will consider the categories of heresy and orthodoxy which evolved out of the interaction between the language found in the Gospels and that of the Greek philosophical traditions that were increasingly invoked in the second century and beyond to explain and elucidate Christian beliefs.
Here, the contributions of Justin Martyr (†165) and Irenaeus of Lyon (†202) are crucial. In their debates with Jews and especially with Gnostic Christians, Justin and Irenaeus helped define orthodoxy and developed the basic foundations for later understanding of religious deviance. Several aspects of their contributions are especially important for our study. To counter the claims of his theological opponents, Justin, mobilizing Greek philosophical, historiographical and medical writings, developed a view of heresy as a succession of deviant ‘schools’ or ‘sects.’ Heretical teachings were thought to be passed down from master to student in a chain of transmission that reached back to an eponymous founder and ultimately to the devil himself. The inverse of this model was also true. Irenaeus in particular emphasized the concept of apostolic succession as a guarantor of orthodoxy. He claimed that the authentic teachings and traditions of Jesus were passed down to his apostles and ultimately to the bishops of the contemporary church who preserved and protected the true faith from corruption. This doctrine had the particular effect of emphasizing the importance of Rome’s bishops who succeeded Peter, the Prince of the Apostles. Because of this connection, more than any other see, Rome was thought to be closest to the authentic traditions and teachings of Jesus himself.

The last section of this chapter will consider important aspects of the genre known as heresiology – the science of heresy. Emerging from the writings of Justin, Irenaeus and other Christian polemicists in the second century, the categories of heresy and orthodoxy and the rhetorical techniques employed to delineate these categories were mobilized by later writers including Leo and Gelasius in order to label, marginalize and ultimately proscribe their theological enemies.

1. The Bishop of Rome in the Fifth Century

Today, the bishop of Rome is commonly referred to as the pope (Latin, *papa* from the Greek), and the institution of the Roman Church is often simply called the papacy. However in the fourth century, the bishops of Rome were more commonly referred to as *summus sacerdos* (or rarely, *summus Pontifex*), *rector ecclesiae*, *praesul*, or *pontifex*. Pope was in fact a title in use from a very early period, but originally it was not exclusive to the bishop of Rome. Rather, it was

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widely applied to various leaders of the early church in order to highlight a personal relationship with a spiritual superior. By the later fifth and especially sixth centuries, *papa* began to lose some of its earlier paternal nuance and instead was increasingly becoming a title specifically associated with Rome, usually in the formula “*Romanus papa*” or “*Urbs papa*.” There were other variants as well and there was no consistency in the titles applied to the bishop of Rome during the fifth century. For instance, Leo’s successor Hilary, as well as Felix III, Gelasius and Symmachus, are all referred to in the proceedings of various synods held during their respective pontificates as *dingus papa*, *dingus doctor*.

In the *acta* of the Roman synod of 495, Gelasius is variously called *venerabilis vir papa*, *vicarius beati Petri Apostoli*, and most frequently, simply *episcopus*. In his famous letter to Emperor Anastasius, Gelasius refers to himself as the *apostolicae sedis vicarius*. The relatively uncommon *summus Pontifex* is also used by Gelasius on at least two occasions. *Pontifex Maximus*, the ancient pagan office title for the chief priest of Rome, was still held by Roman emperors until Gratian officially gave it up, likely in 379 or perhaps in 382. It was then applied to the bishops of Rome during Leo’s time and afterwards.

Rather than pope, Emperor Theodosius II used the term *reverendissimus patriarcha* as a special title for Leo in two letters. Indeed, *papa* was still used for bishops of Gaul and even for the Patriarch of Constantinople in the sixth century as we can see in the writings of Gregory of Tours; this practice lasted at least into the Carolingian period. Because the term is anachronistic to the period under discussion in this dissertation and closely associated with developments that occurred in the later medieval Middle Ages, ‘pope’ and ‘papacy’ will generally be avoided. To put it simply, Leo and Gelasius were bishops of Rome.

In its narrowest sense, the Roman Church (the *sancta Romana ecclesia*) comprised the twenty-eight titular churches (the *tituli*) and the basilicas in and around the city. It was in these

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2 Pietri, *Roma Christiana*, 1609-1611; Jean Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'Empire romain (IVe-Ve siècles)* (Paris, 1958), 412-413. The shift in the usage of *papa* likely began as early as the late fourth century. Siricius (384-399) is called *papa* in a letter from Ambrose (*ep*. 42); here, Ambrose uses the word as a title rather than a term of deference.


5 *JK* 636 = *generale decretum Gelasii* (*Thiel ep*. 14, pp. 360-379), §14; *JK* 643 (*Thiel ep*. 25, pp. 391-392 = Ewald Coll. Brit. Gel. ep. 7, which gives the name of the addressee). However, only the second example can unambiguously be said to refer to the bishop of Rome.

6 *Pontifex* was being used at least from the later 4th century to refer to Rome, although not exclusively so, as can be seen in CT 16.1.2 (Feb., 380): “pontificem Damasum…”

7 See *epistola Theodosii imperatoris ad Valentinianum Augustum* (PL 54, preserved as Leo *ep*. 62); *epistola eiusdem Theodosii ad Gallam Placidiam Augustum* (PL 54, preserved as Leo *ep*. 63). On the title patriarch, see below, n. 65.

buildings that the religious life of the city took place from the time of Constantine onward.\textsuperscript{9} As far as the organization of the Roman Church is concerned, we are better informed about its inner workings in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries than we are in the fifth century. It was in this later period that the church in Rome became a relatively well-organized and stable organization with a sophisticated bureaucracy, partially in response to the collapse of imperial administration in the west and subsequently, the fall of the Ostrogothic Kingdom in Italy and the deleterious Gothic Wars that followed.\textsuperscript{10} But exactly how and to what degree this later bureaucracy operated in earlier centuries is still an open question.\textsuperscript{11} In Leo and Gelasius’ time, it was certainly less well developed than it would later become. Nevertheless, in comparison to the other churches throughout the empire, Rome had for centuries been the largest and best organized. As early as the mid-third century, it already consisted of 46 priests, seven deacons, seven subdeacons, 52 exorcists, lectors and ostiaries (doorkeepers), and was sufficiently wealthy to support 1500 widows and paupers.\textsuperscript{12} By the fifth-century, this had risen to about 75 priests (three for each of the 25 tituli), seven deacons, perhaps as many as 49 sub-deacons and acolytes, as well as approximately 90 others in the junior grades.\textsuperscript{13}

In its structure and administration, the Roman Church consisted of two distinct yet overlapping areas.\textsuperscript{14} The first was concerned primarily with teaching and preaching and was staffed, obviously enough, by priests. Each of the tituli had two and sometimes three priests and it was these men who were responsible for pastoral care of their congregants. They helped prepared catechumens, heard confessions, celebrated the mass, and in general saw to the spiritual

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\textsuperscript{9} Thomas F. X. Noble, \textit{The Republic of St. Peter: The Birth of the Papal State}, 680-825 (Philadelphia, 1984), 213-216. Rome was of course filled with other churches besides the tituli and basilicas. As Noble notes (p. 213), by the end of the eighth-century Rome had over 130 churches; only about three dozen of them constituted the sancta Romana ecclesia.


\textsuperscript{14} Noble, \textit{The Republic of St. Peter}, 217. Rome in particular was distinct for the separateness’ of the pastoral and administrative functions within the church.
wellbeing of Roman Christians. Interestingly, these titular priests were not ordained to serve in one particular titulus; rather, they made up the Roman presbyterium and served the sancta Romana ecclesia more generally. This was likely a consequence of the relatively large size of Rome’s Christian population, even from an early period, which made it next to impossible for any single bishop to personally exercise all the traditional pastoral, liturgical and sacramental functions traditionally associated with his office. Many of these responsibilities were delegated to the city’s titular priests who by the fifth-century were playing a crucial role in the liturgical services of the city’s great basilicas, celebrating mass at St. Peter’s, St. Paul’s, St. Lawrence’s, and probably at the Lateran as well. Like other churches across the Empire, the Roman Church was governed by its bishop who acted as a preacher for his flock and a teacher to new initiates. He baptized converts and was crucial for the performance of the sacred liturgy. Men like Leo and Gelasius also had to oversee and potentially discipline their clergy (which, in their role as metropolitan, included other bishops) in order to ensure that they were correctly carrying out their spiritual tasks.

By and large Italian bishops in this period were not drawn from the aristocracy. This was also generally true of Rome’s episcopacy with the exception of Gelasius’ predecessor Felix III (483-492). Felix was the first demonstrably aristocratic bishop of Rome and in all likelihood the uncle of Agapitus (535-536) and the great-great grandfather of Gregory the Great (590-604). Despite the connection between Felix and Gregory, episcopal dynasties were relatively rare (and became increasingly so) in Italy in the 4th-6th centuries. Claire Sotinel’s painstaking prosopographic work has shown that men of senatorial rank constituted less than 3% of all bishops in Italy (whose backgrounds are known) between 350 and 450. The paucity of

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15 Pietri, Roma Christiana, 634-638.
18 For a general background on the role of the bishop in late Antiquity, see Rapp, Holy Bishops, 23-24. On the bishop of Rome’s authority over the Roman clergy, see Rita Lizzi Testa, Senatori, popolo, papi: il governo di Roma al tempo dei Valentiniani (Bari, 2004), 102.
20 For the situation in the sixth century and after, see Federico Marazzi, "Aristocrazia e società (secoli VI-XI)," in Roma medievale, ed. André Vauchez and Giulia Barone (Roma, 2001).
aristocratic bishops is even more pronounced when the relatively low origins of the bishops of Rome (and of Italy more generally) are contrasted with the backgrounds of bishops in fifth-century Gaul who tended to be drawn from the local Gallic aristocracy.\textsuperscript{22}

The second important area of ecclesiastical governance was the administration of the church’s material wealth and property. By the fifth century, the Roman Church had become exceedingly rich. This was crucial for the long-term viability of the church as an organization since the amount of money that was needed was truly staggering; if we believe Jones, it cost more to run the empire’s churches in Late Antiquity than it did to maintain the political administration of the empire.\textsuperscript{23} Beginning with Constantine and continuing throughout much of Late Antiquity, emperors and affluent individuals made massive contributions to their local churches both in kind, in cash and in property.\textsuperscript{24} And because these donations were considered gifts to God, they were deemed inalienable.\textsuperscript{25} These assets were employed to pay for day-to-day operations including the construction, renovation, expansion and upkeep of ecclesiastical property, salaries for bishops, priests and the various orders of the lower clergy, and for the massive program of poor relief.

While churches throughout the empire benefited from the generosity of a Christianizing populace, the Roman Church benefited out of proportion to the rest.\textsuperscript{26} The amazing growth of its wealth can be clearly seen in the collection of biographies known as the \textit{Liber Pontificalis}. The biography of Sylvester (314-335) alone documents the establishment of many of Rome’s most famous cathedrals and martyrial churches by the Emperor Constantine (or perhaps Constans) including St. John Lateran (\textit{basilica Constantiniana}), St. Peter’s, and the Basilica di Santa Croce


\textsuperscript{23} Jones, LRE, 934.

\textsuperscript{24} Because church property and wealth came from so many different sources, its legal status was often unclear. See Federico Marazzi, \textit{I Patrimonia Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae nel Lazio (secoli IV-X): Struttura amministrativa e prassi gestionale} (Roma, 1998), 25-46, 50ff. On early donations to the church, see also Pietri, \textit{Roma Christiana}, 77-84; Gaudemet, L'Église, 291-299.


\textsuperscript{26} Jones, LRE, 904-910.
in Gerusalemme (the basilica in palatio Sessoriano). Not only did Constantine found these and other churches; he also donated elaborate decorations and vast endowments of land to support their upkeep. Unsurprisingly, the support of the imperial family and the aristocracy was carefully cultivated by the Roman Church, perhaps most notoriously by Damasus (366-384) who was characterized by an admittedly hostile source as the matronarum auriscalpius for his ability to talk rich Roman ladies out of their wealth. By the sixth century, the Roman Church possessed immense tracts of land known as the patrimonio sancti Petri or the patrimonio Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae. It was located within Italy, especially in Sicily, but also consisted of property as far afield as southern Gaul and North Africa. By the eighth century, the Roman Church was the largest landholder in the whole of Italy and perhaps even within the Byzantine Empire.

To manage this large and growing patrimony, an increasingly complex bureaucracy emerged, some of which is detectable during the pontificate of Gelasius. By the fifth century, the Roman Church employed various officers, the most important of which were the deacons and the defensores ecclesiae. The defensor was an ecclesiastical version of the defensor civitatis and had been an important ecclesiastical office since the fifth century. Initially drawn from the laity, by the later fifth century defensores were increasingly (perhaps almost exclusively)...

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27 On the possible role of Constans rather than Constantine as the founder of St. Peter’s, see the comments in G. W. Bowersock, "Peter and Constantine," in St. Peter's in the Vatican, ed. William Tronzo (Cambridge, 2005).
28 Roman church foundations in the biography of Silverster, LP, I.172-184. See also Federico Marazzi, "I patrimoni della chiesa romana e l’amministrazione papale fra tarda antichità e alto medioevo," in Roma medievale: aggiornamenti, ed. Paolo Delogu (Firenze, 1998), 33-34.
30 Noble, The Republic of St. Peter, 10 with refs, esp. nn. 46, 47 and 48. On what constituted the patrimony of the church (the buildings, churches, lands), in the fourth century, see Sotinel, Le personnel épiscopal, 114ff.
31 Evidence for the distribution, composition and management of the Roman Church’s patrimony is scanty until the pontificate of Gelasius and then to a much greater extent, that of Gregory the Great. Gelasius may well have instrumental in the development of the mechanisms by which the patrimony of the Roman Church was administered. See Marazzi, I Patrimonio, 69-79. But cf. Gelasian evidence for the patrimonio Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae in Dominic Moreau, "Les patrimoines de l’Église romaine jusqu’à la mort de Grégoire le Grand," Antiquité Tardive, 14 (2006), 81-84.
clerics. But it was the deacons in particular who came to exert a great degree of influence. By tradition and perhaps in reference to the famous hills of the city or to the Jerusalem Church described in the Acts of the Apostles, Rome had seven deacons; these were in place perhaps as early as the third and certainly by the fifth century. The most senior of these was the archdeacon. The diaconate came to constitute something of an aristocracy within the church.

In particular, they aided Rome’s bishop with his liturgical functions and oversaw the administration of the church’s rapidly growing patrimony. Roman deacons also acted as liaisons between ecclesiastical and imperial authorities and were sometimes used on diplomatic missions on behalf of the state. And despite the fact that one might expect promotions to have proceeded from the diaconate to the priesthood and only then to the episcopate, it seems to have been relatively common for deacons to rise directly to become bishops in Late Antiquity.

For instance, Leo had been archdeacon of Rome and an important advisor prior to his elevation as bishop. Siricius (384-399), Boniface (418-422), Hilary (Leo’s successor, 461-468) and Felix III (483-492) had also all been archdeacons. Indeed as Llewellyn notes in his study of the Roman clergy during the Laurentian Schism (498-506), no priest became bishop of Rome between 432 and 533.


35 Rome’s seven deacons were mentioned in the above-noted mid-third century letter of Cornelius, n. 12. Cornelius’s predecessor Fabian (236-250) is reported in the LP (I.148) to have “divided the regions [of the city] among the deacons and created seven subdeacons who were to watch over the seven notaries so they would faithfully collect the complete acts of the martyrs.” Trans. The Book of Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis): The Ancient Biographies of the First Ninety Roman Bishops to AD 715, trans. Raymond Davis, Revised ed. (Liverpool, 2010), 8. On the deacons of the Jerusalem church, see Acts 6:1-6. cf. Eusebius, Hist. eccl., trans. G. A. Williamson, VI.43. On the history of Rome’s diaconate, see John Moorhead, "On Becoming Pope in Late Antiquity," JRH, 30, no. 3 (2006), 285-286.

36 In Pietri’s words, “L’aristocratie Diaconale.”

37 Richards, Popes, 289. Much of a Roman bishop’s energies must have been dedicated to managerial rather than pastoral concerns and he needed all the help he could get. According to Thomas F. X. Noble, "Paradoxes and Possibilities in the Sources for Roman Society in the Early Middle Ages," in Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West: Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough, ed. Julia M. H. Smith (Leiden, 2000), 57, 54% of Gregory the Great’s letters deal with the “minutiae of patrimonial management”.

38 As Leo himself had done in Gaul when he mediated between Aetius and Albinus. See below, p. 56.

39 Pietri, Roma Christiana, 716-717. This was still the case in subsequent centuries and in other Italian churches. See Moorhead, "On Becoming Pope in Late Antiquity," 284-285.

40 Many scholars have argued that Gelasius had also been a deacon, although there is no firm evidence to support this supposition. Still, it seems likely that he held some influential position in the Roman Church as well. On our evidence for Gelasius’ career before he became bishop of Rome, see below, p. 145.

41 Llewellyn, “The Roman Church during the Laurentian Schism,” 248.
This brings us to the notaries who comprised the Roman bishop’s secretariat. These men worked in the *scrinium*, a term that seems to have come to designate both the archives and notarial office in which letters were drafted. Notaries are attested as early as the mid-third century; however they were only organized into a college or *schola* in the time of Gregory the Great or perhaps slightly earlier. By the mid-seventh century, the college of notaries was headed by a *primicerius* and a *secundarius notariorum* who were responsible for writing documents, overseeing the archives and even acting as envoys for Roman bishops.

The archive itself had probably existed since the earliest days of the church. However, it was only after the legalization of Christianity in the first part of the fourth century that it could be organized in a more professional and bureaucratic fashion. The *scrinium* was located in the Lateran Palace by the seventh century at the latest and it would have contained the registers of letters of the bishops of Rome, the decrees of synods and councils, a collection of books and other important material, and the account books for the holdings of the Roman church. The archive did not simply preserve documents for posterity; these texts could be consulted when disciplinary or theological questions arose. We know, for instance, that in 453 Leo had access to important letters of Cyril the Great in the archive that had presumably been sent to one of Leo’s predecessors. The Patriarch of Constantinople Acacius (471-489) writing to Simplicius before March, 478, also directly mentions the existence of archives in both Constantinople (*nostra archiva*) and in Rome (*vestra scrinia*).

The preservation of the letters of the bishops of Rome are in particular interesting and relevant to this study. Walter Ullmann suggested that the conscious decision to preserve registers of the letters of the bishops of Rome in the archives dates from at least the early fifth-century and was related to a growing sense of the importance of the bishop of Rome. Their pronouncements now needed to be carefully safeguarded in the archive; this material eventually came to form the

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44 Richards, *Popes*, 290.
45 As Leo informed Maximus of Antioch: JK 495 = ep. 119 (ACO II.4, pp. 72-75).
46 Acacius ad Simplicius (preserved amongst the letters of Simplicius as ep. 8, Thiel pp. 192-195), §2. “Sicut et in nostris archivis inventum est et de vestris scriniis si dignaminini require, poteritis agnoscere quae in tempore de eodem subsecuta ab Alexandrino episcopo ad Romam alterutram sint relata.”
legal precedents upon which later Roman bishops ruled. Other scholars posit that registers existed as far back as the early fourth-century or possibly even earlier. Whatever the case may be, no complete or even partial register of letters survive in its original form before the time of Innocent III (1198-1216). The 850-plus letters of Gregory I (590-604), the largest collection of epistles to survive for any Roman bishop to date and indeed, for centuries to come, are almost entirely copied from his register which was extant at least until the end of the ninth-century. Unfortunately it too was subsequently lost and with it possibly many more Gregorian letters which were likely contained in his original register. The oldest original complete letter from a bishop of Rome dates to the pontificate of Paschal I (817-824).

The growing visibility and increasing sophistication of the ecclesiastical structure of the Roman Church in the fourth century onwards was also evident in the urban landscape of the city of Rome itself. This change corresponded to the city’s declining political significance within the empire. In the fifth century, Rome was less and less a city of emperors and more and more an explicitly Christian city intimately connected to its bishops. This transformation was so profound that it led Charles Pietri to end his massive two-volume study of the development of the Roman Church with the accession of Leo in 440, a point by which “l'Eglise de Rome s'établit deja en capitale chrétienne.” Or in the words of Richard Krautheimer, “Rome by the early fifth century was a Christian city, as any visitor could see.”

The physical manifestation of these changes can be seen in the massive program of church construction which began to transform the sacred buildings of the city, especially in the fifth

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47 Ullmann, Gelasius, 35ff.
48 The most important collection of letters made from his register took place during the time of Hadrian I (772-785). The total size of Gregory’s original register cannot be reconstructed with any degree of reliability. On this question and on the distribution of Gregory’s correspondence more generally, see the appendix in Markus, Gregory the Great, 206-209.
49 For a detailed analysis of papal registers, see Thomas F. X. Noble, "Literacy and the Papal Government in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages," in The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge, 1990), 86-89.
51 Pietri, Roma Christiana, 1653.
century. Begun in earnest under Sixtus III (432-440) and continuing throughout Leo’s pontificate, many important churches were constructed, repaired or redecorated in this period, most famously S. Maria Maggiore, but also the Lateran baptistery, the oratory of S. Croce in the Lateran, S. Stefano Rotondo and S. Paul’s. Gelasius too dedicated a number of churches, largely on the outskirts of the city. This program of church construction, the last in Rome until the eight-century, created a Christian urban topography focused on suburban martyrrial shrines, catacombs and tombs. Inside the boundaries of the city, the *tituli* churches served the day to day spiritual needs of the populace. These buildings were more than simple places of worship. As the pagan temples had been before them, churches emerged as the focal point of the community. They acted as meeting places, sanctuaries and even places of business whose presence helped infuse the new faith into all aspects of everyday life.

However, the Christianization of Rome (or of the Empire, for that matter), too often imagined as a systematic transformation or as the outcome of a struggle between Christians and pagans, was in fact a much more complex process. Inside the city, old Imperial Rome’s official buildings and triumphal arches survived alongside new Christian building projects. The large processional and pilgrimage churches such as St. Peter’s and St. Paul’s were largely outside the walls of the city leaving the ancient “sacred heart” of Rome untouched. Examples of classical art and architecture such as the Theater of Pompeii and the innumerable monuments and statuary often still dedicated to pagan gods and emperors continued to impress Cassiodorus and Procopius long after the period of interest of this study. Nor was the inhabitants uniformly Christian. And as we shall see in a later chapter, Jews and pagans continued to populate Rome and the rest of Italy throughout the period. Moreover, the term ‘Christianization’ presupposes a monolithic Christian identity and world-view that sought to imprint itself upon the psychic and geographic landscape of the city. But as will become clear, various non-conforming Christian groups existed side-by-side (and often intermixed with) orthodox believers. The sacred landscape

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53 On the control of church construction by the bishops of Rome and their obligations to these new foundations, see Pietri, *Roma Christiana*, 569-73.
55 On the building program of Sixtus III and Leo, see their biographies in LP, I.232-233, 238-239.
58 i.e. Cassiodorus, *Variae*, IV.51.2. Procopius lists the treasures of Rome in BG vii.11.12-14. These references are noted in Krautheimer, *Rome*, 37-38 and notes.
of Rome that was created by the official church in the fourth, fifth and sixth-centuries competed with and ultimately overwhelmed a parallel, although less grand, non-Christian and heterodox topography.59

2. Rome’s Authority and Position in the Christian World

In Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, the organizational hierarchy of the church tended to mirror established imperial organizational divisions. Since the days of the Republic, the province had been the key Roman administrative unit, headed by either a provincial governor or a proconsul and a procurator. In the late third and early fourth centuries under the Emperor Diocletian, provinces were grouped into larger units called dioceses. Originally 12 in number, each diocese was under the control of a vicarius. Dioceses were further grouped into four even larger divisions, the praetorian prefectures.60 A parallel hierarchical structure emerged in the church. Over the course of the third and fourth centuries, the bishop of the provincial or diocesan capital came to exercise authority over the other bishops in that province. This ‘metropolitan’ bishop presided over local synods and confirmed the ordination of new bishops within his territory. This structure was confirmed by the Council of Nicaea in 325.61

Paralleling the secular organizational divisions of the Roman Empire, the ecclesiastical diocese of Italy was itself subdivided into two distinct administrative regions: Italia Suburbicaria and Italia Annonaria. The ordinary episcopal jurisdiction of the bishops of Rome was as metropolitan of Italia Suburbicaria, an area that extended north of Rome into what is now Tuscany and Umbria and south to include the rest of the Italian peninsula as well as Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. As the only metropolitan in Italica Suburbicaria, Rome’s bishops were directly responsible for almost 200 bishoprics by the end of the fifth century. These churches were direct dependants of Rome; their bishops were usually consecrated at Rome. In all internal

59 Maier, “Topography of Heresy”: 235.
60 Rome and Constantinople stood outside the provincial/diocesan/prefecture hierarchy; instead, they were controlled by urban prefects who were notionally equal in rank to the praetorian prefects. On Diocletian’s reforms (and the equally important developments that took place under Constantine and afterwards), see Jones, LRE, 42-50, 370-377.
disputes (often over episcopal elections) as well as in other disciplinary issues including appeals from the judgment of a local bishop, the bishop of Rome had final jurisdiction.62

The northern part of modern Italy comprised the second administrative region of the peninsula called Italia Annonaria. It included Liguria, Aemilia, and Venetia et Histria. The churches in this region were not dependants of Rome – or at least no more than other churches of the empire. Indeed, both Milan and Aquileia were metropolitan sees independent of Rome whose bishops, by tradition, consecrated each other. When Milan began to decline as an ecclesiastical capital in the first years of the fifth century, Ravenna rose up to take its place.63 However despite the at times fiercely independent outlook of the northern churches, in comparison to Rome their wealth and influence was limited. At the end of the fifth century, fifty-three bishoprics were subject to the bishop of Milan; fourteen were subject to the bishop of Ravenna.64

While the Roman Church and its bishops were certainly concerned with affairs in its own episcopal province, Rome was more than just another metropolitan bishop; it was also an apostolic foundation and one of five Patriarchal Churches that included Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople.65 Together, these cities comprised Christendom’s leading sees. But even amongst these churches, Rome was long understood to have a special place. Only Rome could claim two apostles. Both Peter and Paul were seen as the founders of the Roman Church and both men were said to have been martyred in Rome.66 The city’s dual apostolicity

62 Jones, LRE, 883-884. Sardinia, unlike the rest of suburban Italy, did have a metropolitan bishop who consecrated other bishops on the island; however he was ultimately a suffragan of Rome. See also Sessa, *Papal Authority*, 28-30 on the structure and responsibilities of the Roman Church in this period.
64 Gaudemet, *L’Église*, 325. By the year 600, the number of bishops in Italia suburbicaria had fallen to approximately 140.
65 The sedes apostolicae were churches either founded by apostles or were located in places where apostles were known to have preached and/or where their tombs were located. These churches included Antioch, Philippi, Ephesus, Corinth and Thessalonica and Rome. The word patriarch is used generally in the fourth and fifth centuries as an honorific title. It eventually acquired its technical meaning in Justinian’s *Novella 123 (de diversis capitibus ecclesiasticis)* in which the “blessed archbishops and patriarchs of Ancient Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem” are named and given specific privileges including the right to appoint metropolitan bishops, to hear appeals and to judge canonical issues within their jurisdictions. On the Apostolic Sees, see Klaus Schatz, *Papal Primacy: From its Origins to the Present* (Collegeville, 1996), 7-8.
66 The historicity of Paul’s and Peter’s martyrdoms in Rome and especially Peter’s role as the city’s first bishop is debatable. For instance, despite the claims of later thinkers such as Irenaeus, the Roman Church was not founded in the strict sense by Peter, but rather it had almost certainly evolved out of the pre-existing Jewish community in the city. Indeed, while there is evidence that Rome had, from a very early period, a person who acted as a monarchic bishop, the title ‘bishop’ does not appear to have been employed before the second century. Nevertheless, it seems clear that from a very early period, both Peter and Paul were understood as crucially important to the Roman Church. On this question of Peter and Paul in Rome, see the extremely detailed analysis of the available evidence in Otto Zwierlein, *Petrus in Rom: die literarischen Zeugnisse. Mit einer kritischen Edition der Martyrien des Petrus*.
and Jesus’ special commission to Peter as leader of the church differentiated Rome from other sees. Moreover Rome was also the only patriarchal church in the west; thus for the Latin-speaking half of the empire, Rome was the Apostolic See - a title that was first consistently employed in the pontificate of Damasus. All of these factors meant that the bishops of Rome gradually came to be understood as possessing primacy with respect to the other churches of Christendom.

Although the status of the Roman Church had long been recognized as in some sense special, modern scholars have marked out Leo’s reign as a turning point for the claims of the bishops of Rome. For instance according to Erich Caspar’s monumental early twentieth-century study, in the fifth-century the decay and eventual collapse of Roman imperial power essentially left the monarchical bishop and the organizational institution of the church with Leo at its head as the only functioning administrative structure in the west. For the Catholics of the former western provinces, the old gods and the governance of the Empire were effectively replaced by St. Peter and his successors. Walter Ullmann likewise emphasized the growing importance of Peter as a locus of legitimacy which emerged during Leo’s pontificate. In particular, Ullmann pointed to Leo’s attempt to explicitly link his own pontificate with that of Peter and thus claim a leadership role within the church. Other scholars have argued that Leo held a relatively inclusive or ecumenical theory of papal primacy, while Gelasius’ conception was more exclusive and aggressive. However as recent scholarships has demonstrated, the Roman Church was far from the only functioning institution in the post-imperial west. Moreover, we must be careful not to equate the claims of the later bishops, the medieval papacy and its jurists with the reality of

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67 Jesus’ commission to Peter: Mathew 16:16-18, John 21:15. For Leo’s view of Peter’s position of leadership over the church, see for example JK 411 = ep. 14 (PL 54, p. 666).
69 Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttums, I.561-564.
70 For instance, Ullmann, Papal Government chapter 1 and pp. 359ff; on Leo in particular, see Ullmann, "Papal Primacy," 33ff., but esp. 43-44.
Leo and Gelasius’ reigns.\textsuperscript{72} The doctrine of \textit{plenitudo potestatis}, which can be traced to a letter of Leo and was later understood to equate Petrine/papal powers with those of Christ, or Gelasius’ oft-quoted letter to Emperor Anastasius, which emphasized the superior \textit{auctoritas} of priests over the mere \textit{potestas} of kings, were only retrospectively employed as precedents to justify later claims of medieval popes. And even if Leo and Gelasius intended these pronouncements to constitute authoritative statements of Rome’s preeminent position in the Christian world, many of their contemporaries would not have accepted these claims as they were later interpreted in the Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{73}

Nonetheless, it is certainly true that both Leo and Gelasius understood that it was their right and responsibility to provide guidance and leadership for the church as a whole. In his sermons, Leo in particular liked to imagine the bishop of Rome as the living successor of Peter, his vicar on earth and the heir of his jurisdictional authority.\textsuperscript{74} Peter’s special relationship with Christ and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{72} For instance, Gelasius’ letter to Emperor Anastasius cited immediately below, which seemed to distinguish between the authority of the priests and the power of earthly rulers, was not only mobilized by medieval popes; it was also used by ecclesiastics such as the Carolingian bishop Hincmar of Rheims († 882) as a critique of secular kingship. As Janet Nelson notes, Hincmar used Gelasius’ letter “both to model an idea of kingly office on a pre-existent idea of episcopal office and to link the bishops’ role as consecrators with their superior dignity...Moreover, where previous clerical theorists had been unable to project the Church’s authority beyond spiritual responsibility for the king as an individual Christian, Hincmar could assert the bishops’ jurisdiction over the king’s conduct of an office to which they had consecrated him.” Janet Nelson, "Kingship and Empire in the Carolingian World," in Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge, 1994), 66-67.
\item \textsuperscript{74} e.g. \textit{tr.} 4 (CCSL 138, pp. 16-21), §3. Leo as Peter’s successor, e.g. \textit{tr.} 2 (CCSL 138, pp. 7-9), §2: \textit{inparis haeres}; \textit{tr.} 3 (CCSL 138, pp. 10-15), §4: \textit{indignus haeres}. 
\end{itemize}
his later leadership of the universal church meant that the judgements of Peter’s successors, the bishops of Rome, were in turn universally applicable to all Christians. But the exact nature of the authority derived from these claims was unclear and was articulated only slowly over centuries. In the later middle ages, the auctoritas of the sedis apostolica came to be used in a technical sense to designate the legal juridical rights claimed by the bishops of Rome. But in the fifth century, these legal distinctions had not been fully elaborated. Moreover, Leo and Gelasius’ assertions of primacy may well have been prompted by a deep apprehension regarding the radically changing world and by the awkward fact that all too often Rome’s influence was resisted or even ignored entirely both within suburbicarian Italy and in other ecclesiastical provinces. While most Christians in Late Antiquity would have acknowledged that Peter’s successors possessed preeminent authority in the church, the nature of this authority could not be expressed in purely juridical terms.

Despite the caveats mentioned above, Roman bishops did, at least in one way, exercise a kind of primacy within the church. Throughout antiquity, Rome’s special status (especially in the west) meant that it gradually became a place to appeal difficult disciplinary and theological problems that arose in local churches. The Council of Sardica (343) seemed to confirm this tradition, making Rome the ultimate ecclesiastical court of appeal. A related development was

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75 As Leo notes in tr. 4 (CCSL 138, pp. 16-21), §4. “[Peter], quem totius Ecclesiae principem fecit…” See also Ullmann, Papal Government 7-9; Wessel, Leo the Great, 288-289. Rome’s claims were based on its apostolicity whereas those of Constantinople were based on its status as capital and the centre of political power in the Roman world. See McShane, Romanitas, 160-163.
76 Cottrell, “Auctoritas and Potestas: A Reevaluation of the Correspondence of Gelasius I on Papal-Imperial Relations,” 103-104.
77 Bronwen Neil, Leo the Great, The Early Church Fathers (London, 2009), 40. The mixed results achieved by Leo in his conflict with Hilary of Arles are a good example.
78 We must divorce Rome’s primacy, which as we have seen was variously recognized from a very early period, from what we might call ‘monarchy’, a hierarchical form of government. Or to put it another way, primatus or principalitas must be distinguished from later claims to principatus. R.A. Markus, “Papal Primacy: The Early Middle Ages,” The Month, 229 (1970), 356, 359-360; Gaudemet, la primauté romaine, 97; Myron Wojtowytsc, Papsttum und Konzile von den Anfängen bis zu Leo I. (440-461): Studien zur Entstehung der Überordnung des Papstes über Konzile, Päpste und Papsttum 17 (Stuttgart, 1981), 392. Ullmann’s analysis of principalitas and principatus can be found, for example, in Ullmann, Papal Government 5ff., esp. 5-10. According to Ullmann, principatus represents the jurisdictional powers given to St. Peter and thus, to the bishops of Rome. Moreover, whereas Innocent I had used the word auctoritas, Leo preferred principatus.
the emergence of the decretal (*epistola decretalis*), in essence a rescript from the bishop of Rome expounding upon or creating canon law in reply to a *relatio* from another bishop in a process that may well have been influenced by, or was in imitation of, imperial legal procedure.\(^{80}\)

The first decretal recognized as such by historians was a letter of Siricius (384-399) to the Spanish bishop Himerius of Tarragona in February, 385 which responded to a series of disciplinary questions including the rebaptism of Arian converts.\(^{81}\) Decretals such as this one were widely quoted, copied and copied again, and gradually they came to be seen by the Roman Church as equivalent to the decisions of church councils. It was these two elements that formed the basis for canon law.\(^{82}\) Decretals were not intended to be legislation in a modern sense because they were not understood as presenting new solutions to problems that had arisen within the church. Even when this was precisely what was occurring, decretals invoked tradition, the bible, and the great councils of the church (usually Nicaea). It was as if Rome’s bishops were, in the words of Jasper, “only reminding Christians of the propositions and rules that had always existed under divine law.”\(^{83}\) This approach would have been familiar to anyone acquainted with the law in antiquity. Indeed, the idea that a court could, indeed should, do something new is a


\(^{81}\) On modern definitions of “papal decreetsal,” see esp. Fuhrmann and Jasper, Fuhrmann and Jasper, *Papal Letters, 11-12 and nn. 34 and 35. Defining what does and what does not constitute a decretal or a collection of decreetsals is problematic before Gratian. The word itself is derived from the Latin decretum, something that has been decided. A comprehensive definition is given by Charles Duggan, “Decretals,” in *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* (1967), 707. He states: “[a decretal is] a letter containing a papal ruling, more specifically one relating to matters of canonical discipline, and most precisely a papal rescript in response to an appeal. The decretal is distinguished from the solemn privilegia, confirming rights or jurisdiction, and from other litterae touching on matters of political or nonjurisitic interest.” Jean Gaudemet, *Les sources du droit de l’Église en Occident du IIe au VIIe siècle* (Paris, 1985), 58-59 and n. 1 notes that various other term were also used for what we commonly term a decretal. These include constitutio, responsio, rescriptum, and praeceptum. Note here the similarities to the language of Roman law. However defined, these letters gradually became important cornerstones of canon law, especially in the western church. Gelasius, in his *Generale decretum* from the Roman Synod of 494, includes decretals in a list of works that were to be considered authoritative that included Christian scripture, the Councils of Nicaea, Ephesus I, and Chalcedon (omitting the Council of Constantinople I) as well as various other church fathers: “likewise, the decreetsals (decretales epistolas) which the most blessed popes had sent at various times from Rome for the consultation of diverse fathers, ought to be taken up with due reverence (venerabiler susciplendas esse). JK 636 = generale decretum Gelasii (Thiel ep. 14, pp. 360-379), §§1-3, Gelasius quoted at §3.

\(^{82}\) Siricius, *ep. 1; JK 255 = “Directa ad decessorem” (PL 13, pp. 1131-1148). The so-called *Canones Romanorum ad Gallos episcopos* is also claimed by some historians to have been a decretal of Siricius’ successor, Damasus (366-384). See the discussion in Pietri, *Roma Christiana,* 660-671, 764-772; Gaudemet, *Les Sources,* 60-63; Fuhrmann and Jasper, *Papal Letters,* 28-32; and most recently the overview in Yves-Marie Duval, *La décrétale Ad Gallos episcopos: son texte et son auteur, texte critique, traduction française et commentaire,* Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae (Leiden, 2005), 1-7.


\(^{83}\) Ibid., 20.
very recent development; for much of western legal history, innovation was precisely the opposite of what courts ought properly to do.

In sum, appeals to Rome and the evolution of the decretal represented a kind of primacy to be sure, but one that was executed passively and reactively rather than by commanding obedience. Despite these limitations, Rome was nevertheless increasingly seen to be a legitimate arbiter of the faith by many Christians throughout the empire. In 380, the Emperor Theodosius famously identified orthodoxy with “the religion that is followed by the Pontiff Damasus and by Peter of Alexandria, a man of apostolic sanctity.”

Here, the emperor not only declares that his subjects ought to be Christians, but a particular kind of Christian, to be measured against the faith of Rome and Alexandria. Indeed, from a very early period the Roman Church was considered (and considered itself) to be a “bastion of orthodoxy,” in the words of Jeffrey Richards.

It was this belief in its uncorrupted and scrupulously observed faithfulness to the message of Jesus that in part bolstered the claims of its bishops. By the beginning of fifth century, Innocent (401-407) could claim that no case, no matter its origins, was settled until it came before Rome.

This fact was particularly significant in matters pertaining to the question of heresy and orthodoxy. For if a Christian was found to hold and to teach incorrect doctrine by his local church, he could appeal this condemnation to Rome, a fact which gave Roman bishops a great degree of say in the shape of correct faith. Over the course of the century, the model of Rome as an ecclesiastical court of appeal still pertained; but it had begun to transform into something slightly less judicial. Gradually, Rome’s bishops began to think of themselves as a doctors tending to a sick patient rather than as impartial judges adjudicating between contending parties.

At times, harsh medicine was needed, and Rome’s bishops were increasingly there to administer it.

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84 February 28, 380: CT 16.1.2 (cunctos populos). On this law, see Pedro Barceló and Günther Gottlieb, "Das des Kaisers Theodosius Glaubensedikt vom 27. Februar 380. Adressaten und Zielsetzung," in Klassisches Altertum, Spätantike und frühes Christentum: Festschrift für Adolf Lippold, ed. K Dietz and D Hennig (Würzburg). Valentinian I had a slightly different view of Damasus and his clergy: CT 16.2.20 (July, 370) a law that forbade priests and monks from visiting the homes of “widows and female wards.” This law also banned churchmen from inheriting money and/or property from these rich heiresses.

85 Richards, Popes, 12.

86 Innocent I, JK 321 (PL 20, p. 583).

3. The Categories of Heresy and Orthodoxy

To understand the fundamental relationship between Rome and correct belief, we must briefly consider what is meant by ‘heresy’ and ‘orthodoxy’. Crucial here are the contributions of two Christian polemicists: Justin Martyr († ca. 165) and Irenaeus of Lyon († ca. 202). These men not only helped shape the basic outlines of how later Christians understood and opposed heresy, but because they defined orthodoxy as the tradition embodied by the apostles, Rome came to be understood as a crucial locus of correct teaching.

The basic elements of the categories of orthodoxy and heresy were developed in the second century as part of the conflict with Gnosticising Christians. Men such as the Gnostic teacher Valentinus († ca. 160) taught that redemption came not by accepting the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, but rather through access to hidden knowledge.\(^{88}\) Of course, those who subscribed to the beliefs of Valentinus or the followers of any of the various other Gnostic, dualistic or Judaising forms of the faith explicitly or implicitly considered themselves to be Christians. Men such as Irenaeus and Justin, the representatives of the tradition that would emerge as orthodox, disagreed. But who had the authority to decide what was and what was not authentic, salvific Christianity? What constituted legitimate faith?

Against the Gnostics, but also as part of the construction of Christianity as a religion that was not Judaism, polemicists such as Justin Martyr and Irenaeus claimed that the true faith was open and accessible to all and that it was based on tradition and scripture.\(^{89}\) Its authenticity – that is, the correct interpretation of tradition and scripture – was guaranteed by the contradictory

\(^{88}\) Valentinus was the purveyor of “knowledge [gnosis], falsely so-called”, in the words of Irenaeus. Valentinus, as well as other men including Basilides and Bardesanes are often said to belong to a group of Christian “Gnostic” heretical sects that flourished in the first centuries after Jesus. However, recently scholars such as King have questioned the validity of Gnosticism as an accurate category, noting that it depends on the dubious connections between these quite different systems drawn by later Christian polemicists such as Irenaeus, Eusebius and Epiphanius. On Gnosticism as a category of Christian heresy, see, for example M. J. Edwards, Catholicity and Heresy in the Early Church (Farnham, England, 2009), 12; King, What is Gnosticism; Birger A. Pearson, "Is Gnosticism a Religion?" in The Notion of "Religion" in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (Rome, 3rd-8th September, 1990), ed. Ugo Bianchi (Roma, 1994); Michael A. Williams, Rethinking "Gnosticism:” An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category (Princeton, N.J., 1996).

notions of the faith’s universality and its preservation by a continuous line of teachers connecting Jesus to his Apostles and the Apostles to the clergy of the later church, especially the bishops.

To describe this view of orthodoxy, Justin Martyr used the traditional Greek historiographical theory of the succession of philosophical schools. As ancient thinkers examined their world and attempted to explain the multiple different ideologies they encountered – be they philosophical, medical, political, or religious – they categorized them according to who supposedly invented a particular way of thinking about the world or discovered some underlying fact or system about how that world worked. The second-century physician and medical theorist Galen, for example, discussed various philosophical schools of thought or ‘sects’ (*heiresis*), especially the Platonic, Aristotelian, Epicurean and Stoic ‘schools,’ ascribed to each of them an established system of beliefs and criticized people for adopting this or that sect without closely examining its doctrines (*doxai*). In fact, the arrangement of Greek philosophy into a series of successions of schools dated back to the fourth century BC, an inheritance of the Athenian scholastic system. This type of taxonomical organization is commonly called doxography – a neologism coined in the nineteenth century to describe the process of categorizing thinkers into discreet groups and traditions based on their beliefs, practices and/or pedigree by ancient philosophers and historiographers. The ‘schools’ or ‘sects’ that they describe are almost certainly idealized constructs rather than actual historical agents. However as one recent study has noted, the classification of individual thinkers “as members of a particular school provided a

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90 The history of medicine came to be divided by ancient writers into various schools such as the ‘Dogmatists’, the ‘Herophileans’, the Erasistrateans’ and others, each of which was thought to adhere to a particular set of beliefs and was imagined to be in constant competition with all the others. Philip J. van der Eijk, “Historical Awareness, Historiography and Doxography in Greek and Roman Medicine,” in *Ancient Histories of Medicine: Essays in Medical Doxography and Historiography in Classical Antiquity* (Boston, 1999), 7, esp. n.23. The notion of a succession of philosophical or medical schools was quite common in antiquity; the Emperor Marcus Aurelius founded chairs in philosophy at Athens for the four great philosophical ‘sects’ or ‘schools’ mentioned above. John Glucker, *Antiochus and the Late Academy* (Göttingen, 1978), 187-192; Marcel Simon, “From Greek Hairesis to Christian Heresy,” in *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition: In Honorem Robert M. Grant*, ed. William R. Schoedel and Robert L. Wilken, *Theologie historique* (Paris, 1979), 104; citing Henri-Irénée Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (London, 1956), 405.
91 This phenomenon may well have dated back to archaic Greek literature but was fully expressed by the Peripatetics and afterwards. Jaap Mansfeld, *Heresiography in Context: Hippolytus' Elenchos as a Source for Greek Philosophy* (Leiden, 1992), xv.
convenient historiographical pattern”—a way to talk about, to compare and contrast, what were in reality a far more complex set of beliefs and ideas.93

Doxography provided Justin Martyr with a model that could both explain religious deviance and describe authentic Christianity. In his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, Justin tells his interlocutor that at first, great men dominated philosophy. However, they were succeeded by inferior thinkers who were less concerned to investigate the truth and instead were content to admire the teachings of their predecessors. These men uncritically accepted as true what they had received from their teachers. Eventually they too “transmitted to their successors such opinions [of their teachers], and others like them, and so they became known by the name of him who was considered the father of the doctrine.”94 Later in the dialogue, Justin adapts this model to explain the proliferation of sects who have taken up the moniker ‘Christian’ but who seemed to do very un-Christian things. Justin describes a world full of false-prophets, schismatics and heretics, just as the Gospel warned:

My friends, there were, and still are, many men who, in the name of Jesus, come and teach other atheistic and blasphemous doctrines and actions; we call them by the name of the originator of each false doctrine…These men call themselves Christians in much the same way as some Gentiles engrave the name of God upon statues and then indulge in every kind of wicked and atheistic rite. Some of these heretics are called Marcionites, some Valentinians, some Basilidians, and some Saturniliens, and others still by other names, each designated by the name of the founder of the system just as each person who deems himself a philosopher, as I stated at the beginning of this discussion, claims that he must bear the name of the philosophy he favors from the founder of that particular school of philosophy.95

Passages such as this prompted Alain Le Boulluec to proclaim “Il revient à Justin d’avoir inventé l’hérésie.”96 In this extract, Justin presents a classic genealogy of error: each deviation from the true faith had its origins in a single heresiarch who subsequently gave that particular sect its name. It was thus possible to uncover the ancestors of a contemporary modern heresy by

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93 Philip J. van der Eijk, “Historical Awareness, Historiography and Doxography in Greek and Roman Medicine,” ibid. (Boston, 1999), 13-14.
95 Ibid., 35.4-6, pp. 54-56. See also Justin’s discussion of Jewish sects in chapter. 80, pp. 125ff.
96 Le Boulluec, La notion d’hérésie, 1.110. For an overview of the debate sparked by Le Boulluec’s conclusions, see also Iricinschi and Zellentin, Selves and Others, 7-9.
looking to past analogues. Elsewhere, Justin emphasized both the demonic nature of heresy and its multiplicity: there were a wide variety of different kinds of error, all of which were ultimately human creations inspired by the devil. Orthodoxy was the unchanging, unitary truth of God.\^{97}

However, it was Irenaeus, writing a few years after Justin’s death, who helped crystallize the understanding of heresy and orthodoxy that would persist throughout Late Antiquity.\^{98} His strategy was three-fold.

First following Justin, Irenaeus constructed a genealogy of heresies whereby all deviations from his own definition of orthodoxy were said to have evolved from a common source. In particular, the myths surrounding Simon Magus (or Simon the Sarmatian) evolved into a demonic succession of error; whereas Christ’s authentic teachings were transmitted from Jesus through the apostles to their successors, Simon Magus was the origin “from which all the heresies originated.”\^{99} Elsewhere, Irenaeus claims that the Gnostic Valentinus’ teachings were merely an imperfect Christianization of the philosophical teachings of Anaxagoras, Democritus and Epicurus - in essence suggesting that Valentinus himself was no better than a pagan Greek and that philosophy had contaminated Jesus’ original message.\^{100} Later polemicists adopted this strategy and it became standard to refer to various heretical sects by the name of their supposed founder or eponymous master; thus the followers of Valentinus became Valentinians; the Judaizing Ebionites were supposedly founded by Ebion; Marcionism was the sect founded by Marcion of Sinope.\^{101} Indeed, denying the name ‘Christian’ to theological opponents was a

\^{97} Aline Pourkier, *L’hérésiologie chez Épiphane de Salamine*, Christianisme antique 4 (Paris, 1992), 56-59. Christian polemicists also, in the words of Richard Lim, were apt to compare the “monolithic universalism of their religion with the plurality of divergent philosophical and religious practices found among their polytheist competitors. Richard Lim, *Public Disputation, Power, and Social order in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1995), 108 and nn. 1 and 2.


powerful way Christian polemicists delegitimized religious traditions that they did not recognized as authentic. The name ‘Christian’ supposed a connection to the teachings, life and death of Christ. ‘Valentinian’ or ‘Marcionite’ on the other hand, suggested a mere parody of the faith based on the recent ramblings of a mere man. Because Valentinus, Marcion and their followers had deviated from the true faith, they had no claim on the name Christian and its legitimacy. In the words of Tertullian († ca. 225), writing in the generation after Irenaeus, they were nothing more than “imaginarii Christiani”- imaginary Christians. As the heresiologist Epiphanius of Salamis noted in the fourth century, “Even today in fact, people call all the sects, I mean Manicheans, Marcionites, Gnostics and all others, by the common name of “Christian” though they are not Christians.” These groups and many others were to be cut off, marginalized and eventually destroyed. They had become heretics.

The second important contribution of Irenaeus was to describe the heretic not simply as an outside challenger, but also as an intimate, internal adversary who either enthusiastically betrayed the true faith or who only simulated orthodoxy, hiding behind false claims of conformity. The heretic who outwardly appeared orthodox was a sinister development; for one, an accusation of doctrinal deviance concealed behind a veil of conformity was essentially impossible to refute. It also paradoxically allowed Irenaeus to point to heresy’s variety as a marker of its falsehood while simultaneously collapsing any and all opponents of his understanding of the faith into a single group (‘the heretics’) regardless of their diverse beliefs and practices.

Third, Irenaeus contrasted the multiplicity of fractious, shifting and devious heretical teachings with the supposed unity and doctrinal harmony of the true church. According to this view, Jesus had revealed his pure teachings – an ‘original orthodoxy’ - to his disciples. Following Jesus’ death, the apostles traveled throughout the world carrying with them his unadulterated teachings; after the death of the apostles, a number of those who had been brought to authentic faith in Christ began to deviate from the true Gospel, consciously corrupting the

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102 On the use of the name Christian, see, for example, Lyman, Heresiology, 302.
103 In Tertullian, Adv. Marc., 3.8, arguing against Marcion’s docetism, he states that “Christ's death, wherein lies the whole weight and fruit of the Christian name, is denied although the apostle asserts it so expressly as undoubtedly real, making it the very foundation of the gospel, of our salvation and of his own preaching.”. In his discussion of Valentinian docetism (ad. Val. 27), Tertullian states “ita omnia in imagines surgent, plane et ipsi imaginarii Christiani.”
104 Epiphanius, Pan., 29.6..6. In this passage, Epiphanius is attacking the so-called Nazoreans.
message of Jesus. Thus what differentiated orthodoxy from its varied opponents was its apostolic roots. Orthodoxy predated heresy, which in every case was a later, derivative, and fraudulent variation of the original orthodoxy. The apostles and their successors, the bishops, preserved and protected the faith and in turn passed it on to their successors. This idea became known as the doctrine of apostolic succession. As stated by Irenaeus, orthodoxy was the tradition, “which originates from the apostles, [and] which is preserved by means of the succession of presbyters in the churches.”

As an apostolic foundation (indeed, a dual-apostolic foundation), Rome was thought to possess a stronger connection to the original traditions and teachings of the church than other sees. Thus it was, from a very early period, thought to be a bulwark against innovation and a guardian of orthodoxy; Rome was a place where the authentic teachings of Christ and the apostles were venerated and preserved. According to Irenaeus, the Roman Church was “the greatest, most ancient, and known to all, founded and set up by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul at Rome.” He goes on to state that,

the tradition and the faith it [Rome] proclaims to men comes down through the successions of bishops even to us; thus we shall put to shame all who in any way, though infatuation or vainglory or blindness and a wicked doctrine, gather together wrongly. For it is necessary for every church – that is, the believers from everywhere – to agree with this church, in which the tradition of the apostles has always been preserved by those who are from everywhere, because of its most excellent origins.

Irenaeus argued that the authentic faith was transmitted in a continuous and unbroken line from Peter and Paul down to the Roman Church in his own day. He emphasized the unbroken link between the apostles and Rome because he wished to claim that Rome’s traditions (and his own) were older and therefore more authentic than the teachings advanced by contemporary Gnostic heretics who in his view threatened Christian unity. To drive his point home, Irenaeus provided his readers with a thorough genealogy of bishops: after Peter (and Paul), Linus became bishop, who was succeeded by Anacletus, who in turn was followed by Clement, Evaristus, Alexander, Sixtus and the rest down to Irenaeus’ own day, each preserving and passing on the traditions

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107 Rome was “a privileged locus of tradition” in the words of Schatz, *Papal Primacy*, 7-17.
from the apostles. “This,” says Irenaeus, “is a complete proof that the life-giving faith is one and the same, preserved and transmitted in truth in the church from the apostles up till now.”

The close connection between Rome’s place in the Christian world and its orthodoxy was also enthusiastically adopted by the Roman Church itself and led to the development of episcopal lists such as the one created or preserved by the Christian chronicler Hegesippus († ca. 180) enumerating bishops from Peter to Pope Anicetus († ca. 168). Slightly later, Christian thinkers such as Tertullian also echoed the doctrine of apostolic succession as an assurance or correct belief. Gradually, Rome’s view of itself as the ultimate arbiter of correct belief was concretized by a subtle radicalization of the doctrine of apostolic succession that can be detected as early as the third-century Hippolytus of Rome († 235). Hippolytus had asserted that the presbyters of his generation were the direct successors of the apostles. Therefore, when a new Roman bishop was consecrated, he did not succeed his immediate predecessor but Peter himself. Of course, this idea was equally applicable to any apostolic foundation. But it did have special importance to the Roman Church because of Peter’s unique position of leadership amongst the apostles. This claim came to be accepted in Rome and was widely used in the late fourth and early fifth centuries in order to connect earlier ideas of a universal faith safeguarded by a chain of transmission with the seemingly contradictory notion of individual juristic and administrative power centred in the person of the bishop. According to Walter Ullmann, Leo the Great provided a legal imprimatur for this new conception of episcopal power by developing similar ideas already present in Roman Law – in particular that there was no difference between the rights and responsibilities of an heir and those of the deceased – and applying them to the Petrine office. Leo was the first bishop of Rome to call himself the indignus haeres of Peter and thus, claim the

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110 Fragments of Hegesippus are preserved in Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History. See William J. La Due, *The Chair of Saint Peter: a History of the Papacy* (Maryknoll, N.Y., 1999), 26. It is unclear whether Hegesippus created or simply preserved such a list. Unfortunately, the vast majority of his writings are lost. What remains are preserved in the church history of Eusebius of Caesarea.
112 A useful outline of Hippolytus’ heresiological methodology can be found in Pourkier, *L’hérésiologie*, 70-75.
113 Hippolytus, *Ref. Omn. Haer.*, Proem. “But none will refute these [heresies], save the Holy Spirit bequeathed unto the Church, which the Apostles, having in the first instance received, have transmitted to those who have rightly believed. But we, as being their successors, and as participators in this grace, high-priesthood, and office of teaching, as well as being reputed guardians of the Church, must not be found deficient in vigilance, or disposed to suppress correct doctrine.”
entirety of Peter’s jurisdictional and legal rights and privileges.\textsuperscript{114} If this was the case, then the powers invested in Peter by Jesus were identical to those invested in each bishop of Rome.\textsuperscript{115}

These theoretical and legalistic claims had profound implications. If Damasus I († 384), Siricius I († 399), Innocent I († 417), Zosimus († 418) and their successors governed the church as St. Peter himself, then the notion of the bishop of Rome as guarantor of a static and unchanging orthodoxy was functionally immaterial. As Peter’s representative, the Roman Church could profoundly transform the institution, make novel juristic claims, declare certain versions of the faith heretical, and elaborate new teachings while paradoxically claiming to preserve the authentic teachings of the Apostles. This was, in the words of Morrison, an “imperishable and immediate, rather than an inherited, apostolicity.” Everything, even the judgements of the Fathers, must give way if “the spirit of St. Peter, dwelling in his successors, intended to correct an ancient error commonly accepted as truth.”\textsuperscript{116} Because Rome’s bishops were comparatively detached from many of the theological controversies that troubled the early church (in part because it was isolated in the west whereas Christendom’s other great sees were concentrated in the eastern Mediterranean), Rome’s bishops were retrospectively seen as free from ever having deviated from the true faith. Theodoret of Cyrus, writing in the mid-fifth century, claimed that Roman primacy was supported by the fact that its see had never been polluted by heresy. The point is especially clear when Rome is contrasted with the various Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem who had all, at one time or another, supported a version of the faith that came to be condemned. For his part, Leo argued that it was Rome’s authentic apostolicity that had efficaciously protected its bishops from heresy rather than the other way around.\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{114} Ullmann, ”Papal Primacy,” 34-36, notes that according to Roman law, there is no legal difference between the privileges and responsibilities of the heir and the deceased. He goes on to note that “from the legal point of view the death of the latter merely entailed a change of the physical person but not a change of the rights and duties which are simply transferred to a different individual.” However according to Ullmann, Leo clearly distinguished between the personal merit of Peter and that of his heirs, thus distinguishing between the person and the office: “It is the action or judgement or disposition…flowing from the exercise of Petrine functions which bears the (official) Petrine stamp, and not the actions or judgements or dispositions flowing from the pope as a mere person.” However, cf. Neil’s pertinent critique of Ullmann’s assumption that Leo borrowed the notion of the \textit{indignus haeres} from Roman Law: \textit{Leo the Great}, 39.
\textsuperscript{115} Ullmann, ”Papal Primacy,” 46.
\textsuperscript{116} Morrison, \textit{Tradition and Authority}, 80.
\textsuperscript{117} Noted in Wessel, \textit{Leo the Great}, 287-288.
4. Heresiology

Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and the anti-agnostic polemic that developed in the second century not only created a theory of heresy; it also helped define normative Christianity and created the discursive and intellectual tools to oppose and refute forms of the faith that came to be seen as deviant. In the writings of Christian polemicists, heresy and orthodoxy evolved as the positive and negative categories used to differentiate Christian from non-Christian and to discriminate the right and wrong kind of Christian. Indeed, as will become clear in this study, heresy and orthodoxy were situational and relational constructs – that is, their meanings shifted depending on who used them, when they were used, and who they were being used to describe. As the faith grew and changed, so too did the definition of what constituted acceptable teaching about that faith, or perhaps more accurately, what was no longer considered acceptable and thus must be amputated from the body of the church. Orthodoxy, or rather the process by which orthodoxy was invented, was a matter of developing a narrative that explained and justified beliefs and social practices of some by locating their origins in the apostolic past.

However, the problem with heresy for Late Antique Christian polemicists was that it tended to look a lot like orthodoxy – or to put it slightly differently, so-called heretics considered themselves and their beliefs authentic and they often shared basic assumptions, practices and even scriptures with those who in retrospect successfully claimed the title orthodox. It was precisely this fact that prompted the development of the rhetorical genre known as heresiology which emerged as a crucial way Christians defined their own faith by naming, categorizing, explaining and ultimately refuting those beliefs considered inauthentic. As we saw above, heresiology as derived from the writings of Irenaeus and Justin Martyr had its antecedents in Greco-Roman classical rhetoric, invective, philosophy and historiography.

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120 A point made in a slightly different context by Daniel Boyarin and Virginia Burrus, "Hybridity as Subversion of Orthodoxy? Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity," *Social Compass*, 52, no. 4 (2005), 434.
122 Heresiology also had a precedent in late classical Judaism. See, for example, Iricinschi and Zellentin, *Selves and Others*, 13-16, with numerous refs; see also the interesting discussion of Christianity as a Jewish heresy in Rabbinic literature in Boyarin and Burrus, "Hybridity," 436-439.
There are a number of interesting elements of heresiological rhetoric, but let us here note some of the most important. The first component, which we have already touched on above, is the genealogy of error. According to this view, orthodoxy was ancient, authentic and apostolic; similarly, heresy was understood through its relationship with previous errors. Indeed, the sheer multiplicity of heretics could be contrasted with the universalizing unity of the Catholic faith. And we have already seen how Tertullian, Irenaeus and others sought to claim the name Christian and deny it to theological opponents. Other common heresiological tropes include personal attacks and insults, especially accusations of stupidity, obstinacy, close-mindedness, corruption and nefarious and anti-social behavior including sexual improprieties. It was particularly common to charge theological opponents with greed or ambition. This perspective can clearly be seen when we consider the stories that circulated in the second, third and fourth centuries about Christianity’s most dangerous heresiarchs, many of whom were said to have begun as orthodox and only later deviated from the truth. Mani, the eponymous founder of Manichaeism, is supposed in the *chronicon Maroniticum* and in the account of Michael the Syrian to have been a Christian presbyter before he abandoned the teachings of Christ because he took personal offence at the fact that his students were not being recognized. The Gnostic Valentinus is said by Tertullian to have broken with the church after a failed bid to become bishop. Marcion too allegedly began life inside the church before leaving to teach his own variant, heretical version of Christianity. This perspective is summed up in the fourth century by Augustine, who described a heretic as one who has advanced false teachings for personal benefits. In the fifth century, Eutyches is said by Gennadius to have introduced “novelties into the church” because of “his ambition for the episcopate.”

We should also note the development of an interesting heresiological sub-genre: the ‘catalogue of errors’ or ‘heresy list’ that endeavoured to sketch out complex genealogies for each error, tracing its origins and outlined its essential characteristics. Perhaps the best-known

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127 Augustine’s description of the heretic can be found in his *De vera religione*, ed. and trans. Josef Lössl, I.i.
example is Epiphanius of Salamis’ *Panarion*, written between 374 or 375 and 377. Epiphanius, who did not encounter the vast majority of the sects he catalogued, systematically described heresies as a botanist might record new and exotic plant life. This work and other similar works were not unlike classical medical and philosophical historiography in that it too presented a totalizing account of the opinions and teachings of various ‘schools’ as well as genealogies of their proponents. According to Averil Cameron, the structure may well come from the author’s familiarity with various classical medical treatises. The title of the work, *Panarion* (Greek for ‘the medicine chest’), does explicitly invoke a pharmacology metaphor in which Epiphanius compared heresy to a snakebite whose cure was the truth. Besides the *Panarion* we can also add Augustine’s *De haeresibus* (428) and Theoderet of Cyrus’ *Haereticarum fabularum Compendium* (post. 453). These works were not (and were not intended) as detailed theological treatises. Rather, they were produced as ‘hit-lists’ by which “interested believers could recognize any one of the variegated host of enemies that the orthodox faced.” These later heresiological texts point to a subtle change in the way heresy was confronted. Earlier anti-heretical writing was rooted in debate. Although at times vitriolic, writers such as Justin and Irenaeus nevertheless attempted to seriously engage with opposing conceptions of the faith. However in the fourth and fifth centuries, heretical condemnations appear increasingly formulaic. The falseness of theological opponents is assumed rather than argued. This period also marked a shift away from the acceptability of public disputation

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130 On catalogues of heretics, see W.A. Löhr’s excellent entry on the subject and bibliography in Dictionary of Early Christian Literature (New York, 2000), 276-277.


132 Epiphanius, *Pan*. Proem I.1.2: “I am drafting this Preface for the scholar to explain the “Panarion,” or chest of remedies for those whom savage beasts have bitten. It is composed in three Books containing eight Sects, symbolically represented by wild beasts or snakes.”


religion towards a greater emphasis on the authority of tradition.\textsuperscript{135} By the fifth century, it had become widely accepted that innovation – that is anything that was seen as transforming the faith of the Fathers - was akin to error. Orthodoxy was faithfulness to received tradition.

The understanding of heresy developed by heresiologists like Irenaeus and Justin and promoted by Eusebius, Epiphanius, Augustine and others had several consequences which are evident in the later writings of men such as Leo and Gelasius. Because deviations from the true faith were understood as successions of heretical ‘schools,’ theological adversaries could be described as expressions or amalgamations of earlier, universally condemnable doctrines. Thus the hubris, prideful disobedience and downright evil of the ancient heresiarchs could be used to condemn current opponents; past errors became prefigurations of contemporary ones. They could be considered together, compared and their characteristic traits freely interchanged regardless of the actual content of their teachings. Thus in the polemical writings of the third, fourth and fifth centuries, it became common to describe in great detail dubious genealogies that linked ideas deemed heretical back to previous, well-established heresiarchs and ultimately to the devil.

Moreover, if orthodoxy was the original teachings of Jesus and all heretics were linked at an essential level because of their deviance from these teachings, it followed that it was the heretics who were responsible for the divisions in the church even if it was the heresiologists on the border lines between what is and what is not acceptable belief who were actively seeking and condemning those they deemed to be in error.\textsuperscript{136} Furthermore, because poor morality was seen to be a consequence of poor theology, a fact that accounts for the accusations of depravity often leveled against heretics, heresy could be detected by doctrinal or social deviation, a concept that also crept into Roman legislation against heresy.\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{135} Lim, Public Disputation, 219ff.
\textsuperscript{136} Boyarin, Border Lines, 2: “‘Heresiology’...incribes the border lines, and the heresiologists are the inspectors of religious customs.”
From the perspective of modernity, we can look back at these developments and discuss them in terms of a discourse of heresy and orthodoxy that evolved as part of the process of Christian self-definition. Neither ‘heretic’ nor ‘orthodox’ can be accepted by the historian as invariable totalities. These were not lived historical phenomena. As one recent study concludes, “Heresy is not deviation from an already implicitly known truth, which orthodoxy preserves by the process of rendering it explicit at the points under challenge from heresy. Orthodoxy and heresy are rather alternative possible developments of an initially inchoate and variegated movement.”\(^{138}\) Or as Daniel Boyarin writes, “Orthodoxy cannot precede heresy, nor can heresy precede orthodoxy…orthodoxy and heresy must, of necessity, come into the world of discourse together. Orthodoxy and heresy are decidedly not things, but notions that must always be defined in each other’s context.”\(^{139}\)

This view is certainly reflected in the writings of our second-century heresiologists as well as the fifth-century bishops of Rome, all of whom denounced incorrect teachings as a way to help them define their own understandings of orthodoxy. But for polemicians like Justin, Irenaeus and later for bishops like Leo and Gelasius, heresy was a danger that had to be confronted because it threatened the unity and harmony of society. There was also a sense that there was some tangible, recognizable relationship between the punishments inflicted on society by God in the form of wars, famine, and the like and the behaviour and actions of that society. Religious deviance was not simply a social or academic problem; it was a cosmic, spiritual struggle against the devil who used heresy to seduce orthodox believers away from true faith just as the serpent had deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden. Error had to be vigorously opposed and the best way to safeguard the spiritual wellbeing of his congregation was, in the words of Leo, to preach the truth of the Gospel: “with pastoral care...we oppose these snares, dearly beloved, to the extent that the Lord helps us.”\(^{140}\) In Leo’s view, the cohesion of the church depended on a specific interpretation of scripture that followed what was understood as the tradition of the faith – a


\(^{139}\) Boyarin, Border Lines, 3. Emphasis in the original text. A similar sentiment is expressed in Wiles, Orthodoxy and Heresy, 201: “Heresy is not deviation from an already implicitly known truth, which orthodoxy preserves by the process of rendering it explicit at the points under challenge from heresy. Orthodox and heresy are rather alternative possible developments of an initially inchoate and variegated movement”. See also Rowan Williams, "Does it Make Sense to Speak of pre-Nicene Orthodoxy?," in The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick, ed. Rowan Williams (Cambridge, 1989), 9.

\(^{140}\) Leo I, tr. 16, §3-4; On various heresies of the third, fourth and fifth centuries, see Leo I, tr. 24, §3-5; Leo I, tr. 28, §4-5; On the diabolical nature of heresies, see tr. 30 (CCSL 138, pp. 152-159).
tradition that was considered immutable. But if this tradition was considered central, someone required the authority to define it and to impose it on those who disagreed. The question remained: who had this authority and how would it be exercised? Why was one version of the faith, such as that taught by the bishops of Rome, authoritative and others heretical? How would Leo and Gelasius convince others that their views were correct? Indeed, how did the bishops of Rome mobilize heresy as a means of anchoring their own authority in the Christian world?
Chapter Two: Leo the Great Part I

Introduction

In secondary literature, the pontificate of Leo the Great (440-461) is often described as a turning point for the institution of the bishop of Rome and Leo himself is remembered as a defender of orthodoxy against various non-conforming Christians. In the next two chapters, we will consider Leo’s different approaches towards heresy and his motives for opposing it. Four heresies will be considered chronologically as they appeared during Leo’s pontificate: Pelagianism, Manichaeism, Priscillianism and what Leo came to call Eutychianism. The present chapter will look at the first three of these heresies. It will begin with an examination of the extant source material for Leo’s pontificate. This will be followed with a brief introduction to Leo’s life and a consideration of the political situation within the Roman Empire in the mid-fifth century. The remainder of the chapter will consider Leo’s encounter with Pelagianism and his subsequent fight against two heresies that, although different in their origins and theologies, were often linked in antiquity: Manichaeism and Priscillianism.

In this chapter, we will see that in the early phase of his pontificate, Leo’s opposition to heresy reflected a profound concern over the possibly of hybrity between orthodoxy and heresy, private religious practice, and the related question of discipline and jurisdiction. Pelagianism, which had come to Leo’s attention in 442, provided him with an opportunity to link a hierarchical model of ecclesiastical governance with the fight against heresy. Religious deviance, which had come about due to disciplinary failures in the Aquileian Church, was too important to be left to the mismanagement of local bishops. And so Leo laid out a program to fight Pelagianism which emphasized the canons, stability and the authority of the Apostolic See. Above all, he opposed private or domestic religiosity and stressed the need for clear boundaries between heresy and orthodoxy and the Christian faith. Thus Leo insisted those accused of deviancy abjure and condemn their heresy and proclaim their acceptance of the faith as delineated by Rome both in public as well as in writing.

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As was the case with the Pelagians, Leo’s anti-Manichean campaign, which took place between 443 and 444, demonstrates a profound discomfort with the interrelated problems of religious practice that took place outside the control and observation of the official church and the perceived overlap of heresy and orthodoxy. On the one hand, Manicheans were accused by Leo of carrying out bizarre and disturbing rituals in private; on the other hand, despite his characterization of Manichaeism as utterly alien, Leo’s letters and sermons reveal an implicit anxiety that these heretics could and did pass for ‘real’ Christians in Rome. To prevent this, Leo organized and carried out a legal proceeding, taking on a role that had previously been reserved for Roman imperial officials and appealing to the coercive power of the state. Moreover he mobilized traditional heresiological rhetoric derived especially from Augustine in order to expose Manicheans and their rituals by creating an atmosphere of suspicion and denunciation, all the while emphasizing his own vigilance and authority to ultimately decide the boundaries of orthodox belief.

Finally, Leo’s brief encounter with Priscillianism in Spain highlights similar concerns over the mingling of heretics and Christians. As he had done with the Manicheans, Leo attempts to portray Priscillian teachings as antithetical to orthodoxy, a compilation of previous errors that needed to be exposed and condemned. But there were also social implications for heresy; according to Leo, Priscillian teachings undermined fundamental notions of human accountability which in turn destabilized human and divine law, the foundations of a stable society. A unified faith shared by all was essential for social harmony. Thus in Leo’s view and as had been the case in the fight against Roman Manichaeism, the use of secular power was legitimate for the coercion of religious dissidents.

1. Sources for Leo the Great

Leo’s writings survive in greater quantity than for any other Roman bishop before Gregory the Great. The vast majority are concerned with the Christological controversy that defined Leo’s pontificate after 448. Of the 143 extant letters written by Leo that are generally accepted as

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authentic,\textsuperscript{3} only seventeen were decretals containing disciplinary instructions. For comparison, over 100 letters, almost all of which were addressed to the east, can be categorized as ‘dogmatic’ – that is, they are concerned with correct teaching, particular Christology.\textsuperscript{4} This stands in contrast to the largely disciplinary concerns seen in the surviving letters of Gelasius and indeed, of other fifth and sixth century Roman bishops.\textsuperscript{5} Ninety-six of Leo’s sermons also survive and have been collected in an excellent edition by Antoine Chavasse.\textsuperscript{6} Leo may also have composed other liturgical texts. The so-called Leonine Sacramentary (also known as the \textit{veronense}) does contain Roman material from roughly 450 to 560; however, Leo was not its (only) author although it is possible that he made some contribution to it.\textsuperscript{7}

The length of Leo’s pontificate (over twenty-one years, one of the longest pontificates in antiquity) helps accounts for the existence of so much written material. But the preservation of Leo’s letters and sermons after his death was also a consequence of the Christological debate before and during Leo’s lifetime and its continuing significance well after his death. Especially in the west, the Council of Chalcedon (451) and Leo’s role at the Council was considered a crucial contribution to the church’s teaching which elaborated and defended the other great ecumenical councils of Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381) and Ephesus I (431). This view can be seen, for instance, in Leo’s biography in the \textit{Liber Pontificalis} which notes, “he [sc. Leo] frequently confirmed the synod of Chalcedon in his letters – twelve letters to [Emperor] Marcian, thirteen to Emperor Leo, nine to Flavian, eighteen to the bishops throughout the east; in these


\textsuperscript{4} Fuhrmann and Jasper, \textit{Papal Letters}, 41-42; McShane, \textit{Romanitas}, 335. McShane lists the 17 décrétales as \textit{epp.} 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 66, 108, 159, 166, 167, 168. On the definition of the Leonine decretals, see ibid., 333-335; Pietrini, \textit{Religio e ius}, 1-2 and nn. 1-2. But cf. Ullmann’s count of the same material. Rather than separating Leo’s doctrinal letters from those that contain disciplinary concerns with the Italian and western churches, he reads them all as ‘decretals’ through which Leo spread an ideological program of Petrine primacy. See \textit{Gelasius}, 61ff.

\textsuperscript{5} For a breakdown of Gelasius’ letters, see Chapter 4.


\textsuperscript{7} Noble, \textit{Literacy and the Papal Government}, 99; Studer, \textit{Leone Magno}, 598.
letters he confirmed the synod’s faith.” A similar view can be found in the Liber Diurnus, a collection of ecclesiastical formulae and instruction dating from between the fifth and sixth centuries. It contains a promissio fidei in which new bishops swear to hold, preach and defend Nicaea and the “three other blessed synods” (tres aliae sanctae synodi) – that is, Constantinople, Ephesus I and Chalcedon. The text continues, announcing that it was at Chalcedon that Leo, through his legates and vicars, overcame various heresies. Emperor Justinian echoed this sentiment in a letter written to Agapitus (Bishop of Rome 535-536). Justinian claimed Leo’s statements on the relationship between Christ’s human and divine natures constituted the regula fidei, along with the acta of the great Synods of Nicaea, Constantinople I, Ephesus and Chalcedon. The esteem in which Leo’s contribution to the teaching of the church was held in the centuries after his death helps account for the disproportionately large percentage of Leo’s works that survive, particularly on the issue of Christology. By the sixth century, Leo’s writings could be placed alongside the great councils and even the Church Fathers as touchstones of orthodoxy.

Crucially, despite the seeming finality of the Council of Chalcedon, the Christological controversy did not end in 451. During Leo’s own lifetime, opposition to the council led to a violent uprising in Palestine and Egypt. In Egypt, the Chalcedonian Patriarch of Alexandria Proterius was overthrown and brutally murdered. Then, almost 25 years after Leo’s death, the controversy exploded once again – this time in the form of the Acacian Schism (484–519)

9 The date for some of the material contained in the Liber Diurnus (as early as the third century?) and its function are still debated. Long thought to have been a book of formulae employed by the chancellery of the bishops of Rome between the ninth and eleventh century, Santifaller in articles republished in a 1976 collection, argued against this notion, preferring to see it as a classroom exercise book and/or a canon collection. Amongst his collected essays on the topic, see especially Leo Santifaller, "Die Verwendung des Liber Diurnus in den Privilegien der Päpste von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 11 Jahrhunderts," in Liber diurnus: Studien und Forschungen, ed. Harald Zimmermann (Stuttgart, 1976), passim, but 18 ff; Leo Santifaller, "Bemerkungen zum Diurnis," in Liber diurnus: Studien und Forschungen, ed. Harald Zimmermann (Stuttgart, 1976).
between Rome and Constantinople. And perhaps most importantly for the preservation of Leo’s letters, Chalcedon’s status was challenged yet again in the years before and after the Second Council of Constantinople (533) that precipitated the Three Chapters controversy. Believing that council constituted an assault on Chalcedon and the teachings of Leo, the bishops of Milan, Aquileia and Istria went into schism with Rome; Aquileia only re-entered into communion with Rome in 698.\(^{13}\)

It was as part of the ongoing debate over the Three Chapters that many of Leo’s letters were first systematically preserved. In order to defend his teachings and the decisions made at Chalcedon, northern Italian bishops commissioned various collections of Leo’s writings. This was the likely stimulus for the creation of the Collectio Grimanica (Paris, Bib. Mazarine 1645), the most comprehensive collection of Leo’s letters to survive, and possibly the Collectio Ratisbonensis (Clm. 14.540, sixth century) as well.\(^{14}\) The Collectio Grimanica and the Collectio Ratisbonensis contain respectively 104 and 72 of Leo’s letters.\(^{15}\)

\[\text{a. Canon collections}\]

Leo’s dogmatic letters can be found in most of the canon collections from the sixth century.\(^{16}\) As the above example of the Three Chapters controversy demonstrate, synodal acta were translated, preserved and transmitted in collections that were compiled for specific, frequently polemical, reasons.\(^{17}\) The most important of these are the Collectio Quesnelliana and

\(^{13}\) See for example, Claire Sotinel, “The Three Chapters and the Transformation of Italy,” in The Crisis of the Oikoumene: The Three Chapters and the Failed Quest for Unity in the Sixth-Century Mediterranean, ed. Celia Chazelle and Catherine Cubitt (Turnhout, 2007).

\(^{14}\) Grimanica: edited by Schwartz in ACO II.4, pp. 1-104. Ratisbonensis: edited in ibid., pp. 105-107; see also Schwartz’s introduction in ibid, xxiii-xxv. For an overview, seeFuhrmann and Jasper, Papal Letters, 46-49.

\(^{15}\) The Collectio Grimanica is contained in a single ninth-century manuscript; the collectio Ratisbonensis dates from the eight or ninth centuries. See Silva-Tarouca, Die Quellen, 26ff; Silva-Tarouca, “Nuovi studi,” 147ff. See also Friedrich Maassen, Geschichte der Quellen und der Literatur des Canonischen Rechts im Abendlande bis zum Ausgange des Mittelalters (1870), 737-738.

\(^{16}\) Silva-Tarouca, Die Quellen, 25ff. Various other smaller collections such as the Collectio Corbeiensis (Paris, B.N. lat. 12097, first half of the sixth-century, southern Gaul, possibly Vienne), the related Collectio Pithouensis (Paris, B.N. lat. 1564, late-sixth/early seventh-century) and the collectio Coloniensis (Koln. Dombibl. 212, mid-sixth century) are discussed with complete and up to date bibliographies in Fuhrmann and Jasper, Papal Letters, 44-45; Lotte Kéry, Canonical Vollections of the Early Middle Ages (ca. 400-1140): A Bibliographical Guide to the Manuscripts and Literature (Washington, D.C., 1999), 44-45,47-49.

\(^{17}\) As emphasized by Eduard Schwartz. See also Aloys Grillmeier, CICT 2.1, 22-23.
the Collectio Hispana. The Quesnelliana dates to the time of Gelasius or shortly thereafter. It was likely produced in Rome and may have served as a source for Dionysius Exiguus’ collection, although a Gallic origin is also possible. The Hispana, which in its first recension dates to the first half of the seventh century, also contains a large number of Leo’s letters. A handful of letters are also contained in Dionysius’ own collection, which similarly dates to the turn of the sixth-century, as well as in the Collectio Avellana.

It was through these collections, especially the Hispana and the Quesnelliana via the eight-century Collectio Dionysio-Hadriana and the work of Pseudo-Isidore, that Leo’s letters entered into the later medieval collections of canon law. Interestingly, it was the relatively small number of Leo’s surviving decretals – that is his letters making pronouncements on issues of church discipline, organization and morals – rather than his dogmatic letters that were included into later canon law collections. As the preliminary analysis of Detlev Jasper shows, of the over 100 letters pertaining to the Eutychian controversy, only sixteen were excerpted into pre-Gratian canonical collections. On the other hand, almost all of Leo’s seventeen decretals sent to various bishops were widely excerpted. In every case, these decretals were copied more frequently than Leo’s dogmatic letters pertaining to the Christological conflict.

Nevertheless, Leo’s dogmatic letters including his Tomus were almost certainly in circulation during his lifetime and Leo himself may well have responsible for the creation of

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18 The collection itself is edited in the PL as an appendix of Leo’s works (PL 56, pp. 359-746). Hubert Wurm, Studien und texte zur Dekretalsammlung des Dionysius Exiguus (Bonn, 1939), 240-257, contains a list of the decretals contained in the collection. See also Maassen, Geschichte, 486-500.
19 Roman origin is argued by Wurm and K.C. Silva-Tarouca, "Beiträge zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Papstbriefe des 4.-6 Jh.,” Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie, 43 (1919), 661-662; Silva-Tarouca, "Nuovi studi,” 552-559. Van der Speeten argues that the collectio Quesnelliana was used as a source in Rome by Dionysius Exiguus. See “Le dossier de Nicée dans la Quesnelliana,” SEJG, 28 (1985); however Friedrich Maassen argues for a Gallic origin, as do the Ballerini: Geschichte, 499-500. A full bibliography and a list of extant manuscripts of the Collectio Quesnelliana can be found in Canonical Collections, 27-29.
21 Dionysiana: A full list of the available editions and extant manuscripts can be found in Canonical Collections, 9-13. The Collectio Avellana (henceforth, CA) is edited by Otto Günther in CSEL 35.1-2. See also Maassen, Geschichte, 442-440, 960-965 and 787-792 on the CA.
22 Fuhrmann and Jasper, Papal Letters, 57-58.
23 On decretals in the late fourth century onwards and the growth of the authority of the Bishop of Rome, see Ullmann, Gelasius, 35ff; McShane, Romanitas, 333-341. Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum, I. 297. Decretals, beginning with Siricius (384-399), but especially those of Innocent I (402-417) and after, were crucial for the canon law of the church through the 12th and thirteenth centuries.
24 Fuhrmann and Jasper, Papal Letters, 57-58. As Detlev Jasper notes, “without exception the decretals were used more frequently than Leo’s letters about dogmatic conflicts.”
important collections such as the *Collectio Novariensis de re Eutychis*.\(^{25}\) Other important contemporary letter collections are lost, however they were in part preserved in the various canonical collections we have already mentioned.

**b. Sermons**

Leo’s sermons were preserved in three main collections, two of which were the product of Leo’s own lifetime. Indeed, Leo at times employed his own writing in his later letters and sermons, a fact which demonstrates that both were being actively preserved in the 440s and 450s and which points to an interrelationship between the Leonine epistles and homilies.\(^{26}\) Chavasse’s detailed study of the manuscript tradition of Leo’s sermons argues convincingly that the first collection was produced between 440 and 445 and contains fifty-five sermons.\(^{27}\) Understandably, the focus is on issues of importance to the early part of Leo’s time as Bishop of Rome including attacks against the Manicheans,\(^{28}\) the theme of Peter,\(^{29}\) Leo’s difficult relationship with Hilary of Arles,\(^{30}\) and the Vandals.\(^{31}\) The second collection, which is not attested in a single manuscript, contains sermons preached between 446 and 461. These focus on various issues related to the

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\(^{25}\) Novara, Bibl. Cap. XXX (66). This manuscript, dating from the second half of the ninth century, preserves various letters including the *Tomus* (ep. 28) that were presented to the Roman Synod of October, 449 which had been called by Leo in reaction to the Council of Ephesus II (the Robber Council). Edited by Schwartz in ACO II.2, pp. 1-81. That it was compiled at Leo’s request is suggested by a line appended to the *Tomus*: “Et alia manu: Tiburtius notaries iussu domini mei venerabilis papae Leonis edidi.” (ACO II.2, p.33). On Tiburtius and his note, Schwartz’s introduction in ibid, vi; Silva-Tarouca, “Nuovi studi,” 368. On the formula “in alia manu”, ibid., 361-374; and in a slightly different context, Alan Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (New York, 2011), 433. On *Collectio Novariensis de re Eutychis*, see Fuhrmann and Jasper, *Papal Letters*, 43-44, n. 182 with refs; Eckhard Wirbelauer, *Zwei Päpste in Rom: der Konflikt zwischen Laurentius und Symmachus (498-514)* (München, 1993), 189-190; Dominic Moreau, "Notes pour servir de complément à la « nouvelle édition » du tome à Flavien (E. Schwartz et E. Mühlenberg, in CCCOGD 1 [2006] 127-132),” *CrSt*, 29 (2008), 482-483 and nn. 22-23.

\(^{26}\) The manuscript tradition for Leo’s sermons is also detailed in Trevor Jalland, *The Life and Times of St. Leo the Great* (London, 1941), 495-499. However Jalland largely reproduces the 18\(^{th}\) century assumptions of the Ballerini. See the warning in *tractatus*, ed. Chavasse, ix. On Leo’s use of his sermons in later letters, see Chavasse’s index of sources, ibid., 612-613, §IV: index fontium Leonis; Studer, *Leonie Magno*, 596-598. On the style and language of the sermons, see C Nardi, "Lingua e stile dei sermoni," in *I sermoni di Leone Magno* ed. Giuseppe Cremaconti and Mario Naldini (Fiesole, 1997), 101-119.

\(^{27}\) Preserved in the so-called Reichenau manuscript, *cod. Augiensis* 227, ninth-century. See the comments in *tractatus*, ed. Chavasse, xiv-xvii, clxxvi-cxiii. On the other witnesses to the Reichenau manuscripts, see ibid., xix-xlv. The breakdown of the sermons that follows is based on ibid., clxxvii ff.

\(^{28}\) tr. IX, XVI, XXIV, XXXIV, XLII, LXXII, LXXVI.

\(^{29}\) tr. III, I, LX, LXXII, LXXIV, LXXXIII.

\(^{30}\) tr. IV, Sept. 444.

\(^{31}\) tr. II, XXXIX, LXXVIII, LXXXIV, LXXXVI.
Christological controversy.\textsuperscript{32} The third collection is an amalgam of the first two and circulated widely in the twelfth-century and after.\textsuperscript{33}

Having surveyed the survival of Leo’s letters and tractates, we can draw some basic conclusions. While it is possible that some of Leo’s extant letters were copied directly from his register at Rome, the vast majority, if not all, are copies of copies, preserved in collections compiled for very specific reasons often touching on particular disciplinary concerns or dogmatic questions.\textsuperscript{34} This conclusion relates as much to Leo’s letters and sermons as it does to those of Gelasius, and indeed, to all our written evidence from antiquity: while some letters and tractates undoubtedly survived by pure luck, in many cases our surviving evidence was at least in part curated in antiquity or the Middle Ages. Canon collections like the \textit{Collectio Avellana} mentioned above, and other sources such as the \textit{Liber Pontificalis}, the series of biographies of the bishops of Rome initially written or compiled in the first half of the sixth century, were not simply dispassionate witnesses to a historical process. Rather, they were at least in part deliberately constructed discursive tools mobilized by Roman bishops and their supporters in order to communicate a particular image of the Roman Church as an authoritative Christian institution free of lay control and interference. This “selective transmission” of our source material, in the words of Kate Cooper and Julia Hillner, reflects nothing less than an attempt to “shape Roman memory.”\textsuperscript{35}

\textit{c. Modern Editions}

For modern scholars investigating the world of Leo the Great, the only essentially complete edition remains that of the Ballerini published in the \textit{Patrologia Latina} vol. 54.\textsuperscript{36} Despite its age

\textsuperscript{32} There is no single manuscript for this second collection. Rather, Chavasse convincingly hypothesizes its existence: \textit{tractatus}, ed. Chavasse, xlvi-lxix, cvc-cci.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., lxxxiv-cxlix.
\textsuperscript{36} Ballerini, ed., \textit{Sancti Leonis Magni Opera Omnia}, PL 54 (1881), 293-1218, henceforth PL 54. The PL includes thirty letters not written by Leo in its Leonine collection including various letters addressed to Leo by members of the imperial family and various bishops including Flavian of Constantinople. It also includes two imperial edicts: that of Valentinian III (445) supporting Leo’s anti-Manichean purge in Rome, and a \textit{constitutio} against Hilary of Arles. For a complete breakdown of Leo’s correspondence and the other material included in the Leonine corpus, see esp. Casula, \textit{Conflitto}, 57-58.
and shortcomings, it remains standard and is still widely cited, especially for Leo’s decretals.\(^{37}\)

However, two early twentieth century editions of Leo’s letters pertaining to the Christological controversy are generally to be preferred when possible: Eduard Schwartz edited Leo’s epistles contained in the *Collectio Grimanica* as part of his monumental *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, whereas Karl Silva-Tarouca published his collection of the same letters based on the eight/ninth century *Collectio Ratisbonensis*.\(^{38}\)

In addition, many individual letters have also been edited in various publications.\(^{39}\) Leo’s anti-Manichean letters and sermons have also recently been edited with an English translation by Hendrik Schipper and J. Gerhard van Oort.\(^{40}\)

Leo’s ninety-six sermons can also be found in the *PL*,\(^{41}\) however the best edition is now that by Antoine Chavasse and it is this edition that is cited throughout the present study.\(^{42}\)

**d. Prosper and the Authorship of Leo’s sermons and letters**

There is a longstanding debate over Prosper of Aquitaine’s role in the composition (or perhaps drafting and editing) of some of Leo’s most important works including his three most complete statements of his Christological teachings\(^{43}\) (the *Tomus ad Flavianum*,\(^{44}\) the letter to the

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\(^{38}\) ACO II.4, p. 2-132; Silva-Tarouca, ed., *S. Leonis Magni Epistulae*. In Textus et Documenta. Vol. 9, 15, 20, 23. Rome, 1932-1935. Both the *Collectio Grimanica* and the *Collectio Ratisbonensis* likely originated in the sixth century. Schwartz also uses some letters form both the *Ratibonensis* (ACO II.4, pp. 134-140) and the *Casinensis* (ibid., 142-152).

\(^{39}\) For individual letters, see the comprehensive list in the CPL, *op. cit*. Because Leo’s letters are still commonly cited according to the PL, in what follows I have given both the JK and PL numbers, together with the edition from which they were actually taken. e.g. JK 420 = ep. 23 (ACO II.4, pp. 4-5). In general, I have followed the CPL for the best editions (the PL for Leo’s decretals and usually Schwartz for the dogmatic epistles), but see also Casula’s notes: Casula, *Conflitto*, 52-60.


\(^{41}\) Migne, ed., *Sancti Leonis Magni Opera Omnia*, PL 54 (1881), 141-468.

\(^{42}\) Cited above, n. 6. There are also various translations of Leo’s sermons: *The Letters and Sermons of Leo the Great*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. C.L. Feltoe, NPNF 12 (1894 (reprint 1989)); *Leo I, Sermons*, trans. Jane Patricia Freeland and Agnes Josephine Conway, vol. 93, FOTC (Washington, DC, 1996); in French, see *Sermons*, trans. René Dolle, SC 22, 49, 74, 200 (Paris, 1949, 1957, 1961, 1973). Biblioteca Patristica has also recently published editions of Leo’s sermons with Italian translations (vols. 31, 33, 38; 1998, 1999, 2001) to be supplemented by the various letters and sermons translated in Casula, *Conflitto*. It should be noted that although the Freeland and Conway translation of Leo’s sermons are useful, they are sometimes stilted (due no doubt to the difficulty of rendering some of the more complex constructions into English) and unclear. In particular, caution must be used when considering the translations of the anti-Manichean sermons which are at times confused and even misleading, as noted in H.G. Schipper, "Book Review: St. Leo the Great: Sermons by Jane Patricia Freeland; Agnes Josephine Conway," *VChr*, 54, no. 1.

\(^{43}\) The debate has been taking place since as early as the seventeenth century and is usefully summarized in the short article by Francesco di Capua, "Leone Magno e Prospero di Aquitania," in *Scritti Minori*, vol 2 (Roma, 1959), 184-190. cf. the recent account in Neil, *Leo the Great*, 13-15.
monks of Palestine\textsuperscript{45} and the \textit{Tomus} to Emperor Leo\textsuperscript{46}. Most recently in 1993, Norman James argued that Prosper was intimately involved with the production of Leo’s Christological epistles as well as \textit{tractates} 1-5 and Leo’s anti-Pelagian letters.\textsuperscript{47} However, this view has been firmly and convincingly rejected by Bernard Green.\textsuperscript{48} Yet the debate points to an interesting aspect of Leo’s writing that is sometimes overlooked. Although he was almost certainly responsible for the letters and sermons that come down to us in his name, we need not imagine that Leo worked in a vacuum. He was surrounded by people who could provide advice and guidance not unlike Leo himself had done as archdeacon of Rome during the pontificates of his immediate predecessors.\textsuperscript{49}

Besides his trusted advisors, Leo also had access to various written texts which he considered authoritative. As we will see below, Leo’s anti-Manichean and anti-Priscillianist writings were largely derived from earlier sources, particularly Augustine’s \textit{de haeresibus}. To take another example, in his letter to Emperor Leo (\textit{ep.} 165, August 453, sometimes called the ‘Second Tome’), Leo not only cites liberally from the New Testament, but also from the Nicene symbol.\textsuperscript{50} Moreover, he appended a florilegium of texts that include excerpts from Hilary of Poitiers (\textit{de fide}, which was eventually integrated into his \textit{de Trinitate}), Athanasius (a Latin translation of the \textit{ep.} 59 to Epictetus), Ambrose (\textit{de Fide ad Gratianum} and \textit{de Incarnationis Dominicae Sacramento}), Augustine (\textit{ep.} 187, \textit{de praesentia Dei ad Dardanum}; \textit{ep.} 137 \textit{ad Volusianum}; \textit{in Evangelium Ioannis tractatus}), John Chrysostom (Latin translations of the \textit{homilia de cruce et Latrone}; \textit{homilia de Ascensione Domini}), as well as Theophilus of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Basil the Great, and a long excerpt from Cyril of Alexandria’ letter against Nestorius.\textsuperscript{51} Leo also had access to some complete translations of the Greek Fathers

\textsuperscript{44} JK 423 = \textit{ep.} 28 (ACO II.2, pp. 24-33).
\textsuperscript{45} JK 500 = \textit{ep.} 124 (ACO II.4, pp. 159-163).
\textsuperscript{46} JK 542 = \textit{ep.} 165 (ACO II.4, pp. 113-119).
\textsuperscript{47} The Tomes to Flavian, to the monks of Palestine, and the Tome to Leo as well as other important Christological letters: N. W. James, "Leo the Great and Prosper of Aquitaine: a Fifth Century Pope and his Adviser," \textit{JThS}, ns 44 (1993), 561-564; letters against Pelagianism: ibid., 565-567; tractates: ibid., 570-574.
\textsuperscript{48} Green, \textit{Soteriology}, 193-201.
\textsuperscript{49} For the important role of the Roman deaconate, see above, p. 20f.
\textsuperscript{50} JK 542 = \textit{ep.} 165 (ACO II.4, pp. 113-119), §3. On the reception of the ‘second tome’, see Grillmeier, CICT 2.1, 149-172.
\textsuperscript{51} Appended to \textit{ep.} 165: \textit{Testimonia excerpta pro re supra scripta de libris Catholicorum Patrum a Leone papa collecta Leonique imperatori directa} (PL 54, pp. 1174-1190 = ACO 2.4 pp. 119-131). In Leo’s time, there were clearly a number of florilegia containing Latin translations of the Greek Fathers in circulation at Rome. Leo also had access to at least three close bilingual advisors: Marius Mercator, John Cassian and Julian of Cos. On the Fathers and their authority in Leo’s thought, see Casula, \textit{Conflitto}, 76-7.
since he at times references parts of their works that are outside known Latin florilegia. Elsewhere he makes extensive use of Augustine and to a lesser extent, Gaudentius and Chromatius of Aquileia. Leo clearly was able to consult a wide variety of texts and use them to argue his perspective in his own writing.

While the textual evidence is not strong enough to support the claim that Prosper was directly involved in the production of Leo’s correspondence or his sermons, we can certainly imagine that Leo consulted with Prosper on questions of Christology and of the Pelagian debate, or at a minimum, may have read his relevant tractates and subsequently incorporated Prosperian ideas into his own polemics against Pelagians and the supporters of Eutyches. Besides texts, Leo could also confer with other learned members of the church, especially the Roman clergy who ministered to the spiritual wellbeing of the laity, as well as a growing bureaucracy responsible for administration of church lands and buildings and a secretariat who oversaw episcopal correspondence. In sum, no bishop in late antiquity worked alone.

2. Leo the Great: Life and Context

Before we begin our investigation of Leo’s opposition to heresy, let us briefly consider the historical context in which he lived. The twenty-one year pontificate of Leo the Great (September, 440 – November, 461) was a time of transformation for the Roman world, yet we know very little about the pre-ecclesiastical career of the man who would guide the western church through this period. He was an Italian; the son of a Tuscan named Quintianus who is otherwise unattested. Later tradition would mark the place of his birth as the ancient Etruscan city of Volterra south of Pisa, although there is no evidence to support this assertion. He was likely born at the end of the fourth century but the details of his early life are almost completely

52 Maria Bernard de Soos, *Le mystère liturgique d'après Saint Léon le Grand*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen (Münster Westfalen, 1958), 12 ff.
54 Green, *Soteriology*, 201. Green certainly dismisses the idea that Prosper was actively involved in the construction of Leo’s letters and sermons; however, he does leave open the possibility that Leo had read certain of Prosper’s works.
55 See my summery of the administrative structure of the Roman Church in Chapter 1.
56 LP, I.238. “natione tuscus ex patre Quintiano.”
57 Jalland, *St. Leo the Great*, 33 and n.1. The tradition, reported in Jalland, that Leo was a native of Volterra (others suggest Cortona) is not supported by literary evidence. The inhabitants of Volterra celebrated a festival for S. Leo and claimed their city as Leo’s birthplace at the end of the 18th century. On the Tuscan traditions of Leo’s birth, see Casula, *Conflitto*, 39 and notes.
unknown. Whatever the place and circumstances of his birth, later in life Leo considered his ‘patria’ to be the city of Rome and perhaps Italia more generally. We know about Leo’s life and his teachings largely from his surviving letters and sermons which we discussed above. Other details can be gleaned from his short biography in the Liber Pontificalis as well as from the information provided by the already-mentioned Prosper of Aquitaine. There is also a late and anonymous Greek vita that survives in a single manuscript from southern Italy.

Leo’s first appearance in the historical record is possibly as an acolyte identified by Augustine in 418, sent by the future Bishop of Rome Sixtus to deliver a letter of Zosimus to Aurelius of Carthage condemning the teachings of Pelagius. He later became archdeacon of Rome, likely during the reign of Celestine I (422-432) and soon was active in the fight against the Christology promoted by Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople. Later, Leo became a trusted advisor to Sixtus III (432-440). According to Prosper, Leo was in Gaul in 440 mediating between the feuding general Aetius and the Praetorian Prefect of Gaul Albinus when Sixtus died. “With wondrous peace and patience,” according to Prosper, the Roman Church awaited Leo’s return from Gaul, and a little over a month after the death of his predecessor, Leo was elected Bishop of Rome.

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58 Leo’s patria: JK 425 = ep. 31 (ACO II.2, p.12-15), §4; JK 459 = ep. 79 (ACO II.4, pp. 37-38). Gelasius is also said by the LP (I.255) to be natione Afer; yet he too calls himself a Roman (Romanus natus) in his famous letter to the Emperor Anastasius: Gelasius, JK 632 (Thiel ep. 12, pp. 349-358), §1. Leo seems to refer to Rome when he uses patria; however McShane, Romanitas, 46 sees it as a reference to Italy. On Gelasius, see below, p 146.
59 Gennadius, de viris inlustribus, §84, p. 89. “Epistolae quoque papae Leonis adversus Euthen de vera Christi incarnatione ad diuersos datae ab isto dictatae dicuntur.”
60 From the eleventh or twelfth century. The vita is of limited historical value for reconstructing Leo’s life. La Vie grecque de S. Leon le Grand, ed. C Van de Vost, Extrait des Analecta Bollandiana 29 (1910), 400-401; Neil, Leo the Great, 3-4.
61 Augustine, ep. 191, §1. For Leo as the acolyte mentioned by Augustine, see Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum, I.423-424. Sixtus, as well his predecessor Celestine, had been supporters of Pelagius in Rome. Sixtus’ letter carried by Leo to Augustine (referred to in Augustine’s reply) declared the author’s abandonment of Pelagian teachings. If the letter carrier really was Leo the Great, we might suspect that like Celestine and Sixtus he too, as a youth in the Roman Church, was sympathetic to Pelagius. John Cassian, an associate of Leo’s, was a well-known enemy of Augustine and later became associated with ‘semi-Pelagianism.’ Both Sixtus and Leo would later be described as vocal enemies of Pelagian ideas. In Prosper’s chronicle, for instance, Sixtus is said to have opposed Julian of Eclanum, “the most boastful defender of the Pelagian error.” According to Prosper, Sixtus, “at the urging of Leo the deacon” prevented Julian from regaining his see and re-entering into communion with the church. Prosper of Aquitaine, epit. chron., ed. Theodor Mommsen, a. 439.
62 Gaudemet, L’Église, 125.
63 Gennadius, in his biography of John Cassian, states that Cassian was asked “a Leone archidiacono postea Urbis Romae episcoopo” to write a tracate against Nestorius. Gennadius, de viris inlustribus, §61, p. 82.
64 Prosper of Aquitaine, epit. chron., a. 440. Prosper’s entry does not give a good sense of the nature of Leo’s mission or the reason for the presumed disagreement between Aetius and Albinus. cf. Andrew Gillett, Envoys and Political Communication in the Late Antique West, 411-533 (Cambridge, 2003), 114-115.
From his sermons and surviving letters, Leo’s intellectual world appears to have been almost entirely Christian and Latin. In this respect, he parts ways with the previous generation of traditionally educated Christian intellectuals. Ambrose, the dominant figure in western Christianity at the end of the fourth century, for example, had been educated in both Greek and Latin and was knowledgeable in Greek philosophy. Augustine too had received a solid Roman education and had been brought to Christianity through the works of Cicero, the Neo-Platonists, and finally by Ambrose himself. Jerome famously accused himself (in a dream) of being a follower of Cicero rather than of Christianity and vowed to never again to read pagan authors (a vow which he broke) – a testament to his complex, ambivalent but important relationship to the works of pagan antiquity. But for Leo, classical literature does not seem to have prompted an existential crisis. If it did, he did not discuss it in his letters or sermons which are almost completely devoid of classical allusions, allegory and metaphor. On the whole his vocabulary was conservative; he avoided new coinages and instead favoured the language of the Latin Church established by men like Ambrose and Augustine in the previous generation. Nevertheless, Leo was certainly familiar with a variety of classical rhetorical techniques including the use of *clausulae*. Green, citing Halliwell, nicely asserts that the rhythm of Leo’s writing reveals a “mastery of the art of rhetoric” written in a “distinctive but impersonal Latin. The overall impression of Leo's sermons and letters is finality.”

If Prosper’s account of Leo’s mediation between Aetius and Albinus is to be believed, Leo was deeply implicated in secular affairs prior to becoming bishop. This continued to be the case after his elevation to the see of Rome. Indeed, bishops throughout the western half of the empire in particular had, by the mid-fifth century, taken on important roles in the day-to-day running of their cities – from church construction to the repair and maintenance of public monuments and buildings and even diplomacy. Leo was no different. He was deeply concerned not only with the

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66 Jerome, *ep. 22.* “Domine, si umquam habuero codices saeculares, si legero, te negavi.”
68 Mary Magdeleine Mueller, "The Vocabulary of Pope St. Leo the Great" (PhD diss., Catholic university of America Press, 1943), 240-242.
70 Green, *Soteriology*, 75.
spiritual, but also the material wellbeing of his flock. Indeed for Prosper, Leo was nothing less than the key figure of recent history.\textsuperscript{71}

But this history was increasingly marred by economic uncertainty, internal strife and barbarian incursions.\textsuperscript{72} Leo had become bishop of Rome not long after the Visigoths, Suevi, and Burgundians had been settled in previously Roman territories in Gaul and Spain, and the Vandals under Gaiseric had taken control of the empire’s bread basket in North Africa. On at least two occasions, if we believe Prosper, Leo himself was forced to deal directly with a barbarian force threatening Rome itself. The first was in 452 when Leo famously confronted Attila who, after having devastated northern Italy, seemed poised to sack Rome.\textsuperscript{73} The second was three years later in a somewhat less impressive (and less publicized) intervention with a barbarian king. Prosper tells us that Leo managed to persuade Geiseric and his Vandals not to torture and murder all the inhabitants and raze the city to the ground.\textsuperscript{74}

Despite the drama that seemed to be unfolding around him, worldly affairs outside Rome are largely absent from the Leo’s own letters and sermons, which generally do not exhibit obvious pessimism about the state of the empire. This may well be an accident of survival. As we saw above, Leo’s dogmatic letters were cherished long after his death and were carefully copied and preserved. But it might also reflect Leo’s own view that Rome and the wider secular world were subordinate to and a consequence of God’s providential plan for salvation. It was the church which had the ultimate responsibility for spreading the word of God and for the salvation of humanity.\textsuperscript{75} The empire was important to the degree that it facilitated the church’s mission. This perspective is reflected in Leo’s concern for the unity of the church and in his devotion to his pastoral responsibilities within the city of Rome.\textsuperscript{76} The world was changing and Leo

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\textsuperscript{71} Steven Muhlberger, The Fifth-century Chroniclers: Prosper, Hydatius, and the Gallic Chronicler of 452 (Leeds, 1990), 131 and n. 163. As Muhlberger describes, Propser’s portrayal of Leo as the key figure in recent history “was similar to that of the hagiographer, focusing on the deeds of a single holy individual as proof of God’s effective interevntion in this world.”

\textsuperscript{72} Economic crisis: Jones, LRE, 204 ff; McShane, Romanitas, 11-13.

\textsuperscript{73} Prosper of Aquitaine, epit. chron., a. 455.

\textsuperscript{74} Two years before Gaiseric’s sack, Leo had preached a sermon at the annual commemoration of gratitude for Rome’s ‘deliverance’ from Alaric’s sack of 410. He reminded his flock that it was not the “games of the circus” (\textit{ludus Circensium}) but the “care of saints” (\textit{cura sanctorum}) that had restored and protected Rome and protected it from slaughter. Yet the people, who in previous years had attended in great numbers, seem to have become complacent and Leo’s sermon was delivered to only a few faithful. The first of two variants, \textit{tr.} 84 (CCSL 138a, pp. 524-526), §1.

\textsuperscript{75} Armitage, Twofold Solidarity, 209.

\textsuperscript{76} On Leo and the City of Rome, see Soos, \textit{Le mystère liturgique}, 20; Green, Soteriology, 58, 61ff; Armitage, Twofold Solidarity, 185-186, 198-203.
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unceremoniously took up the task of reimagining and redefining the role of the bishop of Rome for a new age.

3. Pelagianism

\textit{a. Pelagianism before Leo}

The first heresy that Leo confronted after his election as bishop of Rome was Pelagianism. The crux of the controversy centred on the question of God’s grace. Pelagius, born in Roman Britain around 350, taught that grace was an aid or assistance for humanity on its road to salvation.\textsuperscript{77} This conflicted with the teaching of Augustine who would come to claim that grace was a gift unknowably and mysteriously bestowed by God.\textsuperscript{78} In 415, Pelagius’ teachings were exonerated at local councils in Palestine; however he was condemned in 416 by two synods of the African Church that subsequently petitioned Rome to accept their judgement and likewise condemn Pelagius.\textsuperscript{79} Then-bishop of Rome Innocent I convoked a Roman synod that somewhat reluctantly upheld the decision of the African Church and confirmed the excommunication of Pelagius, although Innocent was prepared to hear Pelagius’ appeal either by letter or in person.\textsuperscript{80} Innocent died soon after and the case fell to the new Roman bishop Zosimus who overturned his predecessor’s ruling and acquitted Pelagius\textsuperscript{81} In the spring of 418, Augustine and the African Church then called yet another (and even larger) council which predictably condemned Pelagius.


\textsuperscript{81} In two letters to Aurelius of Carthage and the African Church, March, 417: JK 329 = \textit{ep.} 2 (PL 20, pp. 649-654); JK 330 = \textit{ep.} 3 (PL 20, pp. 654-661).
once again. This time, the African bishops avoided consultation with Rome altogether and instead went directly to the imperial court at Ravenna. Here, they found the support they were looking for in the form of an imperial rescript which condemned Pelagianism as a heresy and banished Pelagius and his disciple Caelestius from Rome. Faced with immense pressure from Augustine and the African Church and now from the secular authorities at Ravenna, Zosimus reversed himself and finally condemned Pelagius once and for all. Pelagius subsequently disappeared from the historical record.

It is worth emphasizing that in the early years of the Pelagian controversy, Roman bishops Innocent and Zosimus played important roles, but the opposition to Pelagius and his supporters was driven primarily by the African Church and to a lesser extent by Jerome in Palestine. Rome was certainly not seeking out heretics, nor was it actively involved in the debate around the theology of grace. Rather, Roman bishops heard appeals from a council which had condemned Pelagius and his teachings, and in the end, Innocent and Zosimus lent the weight of Roman authority to a sentence which had already been pronounced. Moreover, Zosimus had been outmaneuvered by the African Church and his changeability made Rome look indecisive and weak in its opposition to heresy, especially when contrasted with Africa’s steadfastness. The African Church was happy to have Rome confirm its own rulings, but it fiercely opposed any Roman intervention in its affairs that contradicted its own councils. Although appeals to Rome were common and the authority of Rome was recognized, it could also be opposed or ignored if its rulings were not seen as appropriate. Rome’s reputation had been seriously damaged and its authority undermined by Zosimus’ mismanagement of the Pelagian controversy.

b. Leo and Pelagianism

The situation had changed by the time Leo had become Bishop of Rome and his interaction with followers of Pelagius do not conform to the earlier passivity of Innocent and Zosimus. Rather than waiting for appeals, Leo acted vigorously, intervening directly in the affairs of

82 The Council of Carthage, May 1, 418.
84 March, 418. JK 342 = ep. 12 (PL 20, pp. 675-678). The so-called Tractoria of Zosimus is lost.
85 As in the case of Apiarius, deposed and excommunicated by Urbanus of Sicca Veneria, but reinstated by Zosimus based on his faulty copy of the canons of Nicaea.
86 Green, Soteriology, 18-22.
churches which were not traditionally part of his prevue. Moreover, if there was any question as to the status of Pelagius’ teachings during the pontificates of Innocent and Zosimus, by the 430s the “Pelagian heresy” had been condemned by the church at large, specifically at a number of local synods which had subsequently been approved by Rome.\(^87\) The significance of this fact is two-fold. Firstly, Pelagianism was now subject to the full arsenal of classical heresiological polemic. Second, the presumed inability of provincial bishops to prevent the spread of Pelagius’ teachings signaled to Leo a failure of church leadership at the local level. The issue of Pelagianism was directly related to this failure and thus the question of Pelagianism became one of discipline and jurisdiction. Where discipline was lax, churchmen and their congregants were liable to take up (or to relapse into) the foolish and above all arrogant (from Leo’s perspective) Pelagian notion that “the grace of God is given according to the merits of the recipients.”\(^88\)

Leo’s encounter with Pelagianism came soon after his election as Bishop of Rome. In 442, he dispatched a letter to the bishop of Aquileia.\(^89\) Leo informed the bishop that he had received a report from bishop Septimus\(^90\) that “certain priests and deacons and clergy of various orders” who had been implicated in the “Pelagian or Coelstinian heresy” remained in communion with the Church without having publicly abjured their error. These men had taken up their offices (or in some cases regained them, presumably after having been disbarred for Pelagianism) without being subject to any test of their orthodoxy. Worse still, these crypto-Pelagians, according to Leo, had left their churches, loving to wander (\textit{amantes sempre errare}) from place to place preaching their error as if they were legitimately in communion with the church.\(^91\)

\(^87\) Leo himself terms the error “Pelagian or Coelestian.” See below.

\(^88\) \textit{JK} 398 = \textit{ep.} 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597), §3. “Cumque omnes definitiones suas ad subrependi facilitatem, improbare se simulent atque deponere, hoc sibi tota arte fallendi, nisi intellegantur excipiunt ut gratia dei secundum merita dari accipientium sentiatur.”

\(^89\) Although the bishop is not named in the letter as it survives, the recipient may have been Januarius, Bishop of Aquileia from at least 447-449, to whom Leo addressed \textit{ep.} 18 (dated Dec. 30, 447). However, PCBE 2.1, pp. 1026-1027, notes that there is no definitive reason to connect Januarius with the bishop in question here. Casula, \textit{Conflitto}, 57 accepts Januarius as the recipient of both letters. See also Caspar, \textit{Gesch. des Papsttum}, 431-432.

\(^90\) Septimus’ letter is not extant; Leo’s reply to Septimus thanking him for his vigilance is preserved in \textit{JK} 399 = \textit{ep.} 2 (PL 54, pp. 597-598).

\(^91\) \textit{JK} 398 = \textit{ep.} 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597), §1. Note the two-fold meaning of “errare” – to err, and to wander.
c. Jurisdiction and Church Discipline

In this relatively long letter, Leo only briefly attempted to refute the Pelagian doctrine of grace.\(^{92}\) Rather than focusing on theology, his primary concern was the leadership of the Aquileian church who had failed to enforce discipline amongst its clergy; or as Leo illustratively puts it, “when the shepherds who were to keep watch fall asleep, the wolves, who had not set aside their bestial nature even though they were dressed as sheep, entered into the Lord's sheepfold.”\(^{93}\) Again and again, Leo condemned the deficiencies amongst those responsible for overseeing the church of Aquileia. He claimed that had the bishops of the provincial churches (Leo uses the word *praesules*) exercised the necessary diligence in the first place, the intolerable situation of heretical preachers wandering the countryside would never have occurred. According to the canons, as Leo complains in his letter, no one – not even perfectly orthodox members of the clergy – was permitted to leave their home churches.\(^{94}\) Ultimately Leo concluded that the presence of potential heretics amongst the clergy and the blatant disregard for the canons were a result of “lazy and negligent leaders who encourage pestilence when they avoid administering bitter medicine.”\(^{95}\)

While at first glance it might seem obvious that Leo would write to an Italian bishop in order to correct him and encourage reforms in his ecclesiastical province, Milan and Aquileia (that is, *Italia Annonaria*) as well as the churches of Gaul, North Africa, Spain and the rest of Christendom, were not directly subject to the metropolitan authority of Rome. The sees of

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\(^{92}\) In only one short section, ibid., §3. Following from above, n. 88: “Quae utique nisi gratis detur, non est gratia, sed merces retributoque meritorum…Omnis itaque bonorum operum donatio, divina praeparatio est: quia non prius quisquam justificatur virtute, quam gratia, quae unicus quippe principiumjustitiae et bonorum fons atque origo meritorum est. Sed ab ipsis ideo per naturalem industrium dicitur praeveniri, ut quae ante gratiam proprio clara sit studio, nullo videatur peccati originalis valere sauciata; falsumque sit quod Veritas ait: ‘Quoniam Filius hominis venit quaerere et salvare quod perierat.’” cf. Augustine, *de haeresibus*, in CCSL 46, Brepolis, 1969, §88.4, p. 341. “Haec [Pelagians] quippe non ab ipso [God] accipere, sed a seipsis homines habere contendunt, gratiam Dei qua libereamur ab impietate dicentes securum merita nostra dari.”

\(^{93}\) JK 398 = *ep.* 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597), §1. “et pastoralibus excubiis nimium dormitantibus, lupos ovium pellibus tectos in ovile Dominicum non depositis bestialibus animis introisse.” Leo uses the same imagery in his second letter to Aquileia in 447: JK 416 = *ep.* 18 (PL 54, p. 706).

\(^{94}\) JK 398 = *ep.* 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597), §4. On wandering clerics, see also Leo’s letter to Ravennius of Arles, JK 435 = *ep.* 42 (PL 54, pp. 815-816).

\(^{95}\) JK 398 = *ep.* 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597), §4. “Non autem dubitet dilectio tua nos si quod non arbitramur neglecta fuerint quæ pro custodia canonom, et pro fidei integritate decernimus vehementius commenondos, quia inferiorum ordinum culpæ ad nullos magis referendum sunt quam ad desides neglegentesque rectores, qui multum sepe nutriunt pestilentiam, dum necessarium dissimulant adhibere medicinam.” Leo makes exactly the same statement in closing his second letter to Aquileia in 447, JK 416 = *ep.* 18 (PL 54, p. 706). Indeed, he is fond of medical imagery in general.
northern Italy in particular were fiercely independent.  

Outside of suburban Italy, the See of St. Peter was usually (although somewhat ambivalently) acknowledged as the final court of appeal, the arbiter of last resort for unresolvable disputes within a province or between two jurisdictions. This was what occurred when Pelagius was initially condemned; Rome (eventually) confirmed the decision of a local African council.

However, throughout the fifth century and especially under Leo, a very different model of ecclesiastical jurisprudence was gaining ascendancy in the west. Whereas the first, exemplified by the various African councils that had condemned Pelagius, emphasized the power and authority of local synods, the second model was far more hierarchical and stressed an integrated system of church governance with the bishop of Rome at its centre. Both conceptions recognized Rome’s power and authority. But as Susan Wessel notes, the former interpreted this power as “diffuse and relational,” to be “reconstituted by local officials who were granted the autonomy needed to resolve disputes.” The latter saw Rome’s authority in more absolute terms. Its decisions were to be administered rather than interpreted. Leo, of course, subscribed to this second, hierarchical model. While local councils remained important, significant or difficult cases were to be transferred into Roman jurisdiction. Elsewhere, Leo states that no council could overturn the rulings of previous councils and all legal rulings ultimately required the assent of Rome.

But provincial churches could not simply be coerced into accepting Roman hegemony; rather, they would have to be convinced. And Leo’s intervention against Pelagianism perfectly connected his hierarchical model of ecclesiastical governance and the fight against religious deviance. By explaining heresy as the result of a failure of leadership at the local level, Leo justified his intervention in the affairs of an ecclesiastical province outside his normal jurisdiction. According to Leo, those in positions of authority within the Church of Aquileia had not performed their duties attentively and taken the necessary care to reprimand and correct those...

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96 Sotinel, *The Three Chapters*, 86; Sotinel, *Les évêques italiens dans la société de l’Antiquité tardive: l’émergence d’une nouvelle élite?* By the sixth century, there were two metropolitan bishops in northern Italy – that of Milan and Aquileia. Relations between Rome and the northern Italian metropolitans varied, hitting their low point during the ‘Three Chapters’ controversy.

97 These churches, eventually including that of Sicily, were direct dependants of Rome. It was as metropolitan that Roman bishops consecrated all bishops elected in this territory (in many cases, this was done by a proxy). Moreover, cases heard in these local episcopal courts could be appealed to Rome.

98 Wessel, *Leo the Great*, 63.


100 *ep.* 106.2; JK 495 = *ep.* 119 (ACO II.4, pp. 72-75), §5; JK 539 = *ep.* 162 (ACO II.4, pp. 105-107), §1.
who had been under their care. Thus, it fell to Rome, who had a duty to intervene in order to protect the integrity of the faith. To correct the problem, Leo invoked his own authority (hac nostri auctoritate) and ordered that a synod be summoned at which clerics of any rank who had associated with Pelagians or Coelestians and, who subsequently had been allowed to return into communion with the church without having publicly abjured their error, now be forced to do so. Those who agreed should be permitted to return to their churches at their former rank without any chance of future promotion. Finally, Leo demanded that the canons regarding the movement of clergy be enforced in northern Italy: the lower orders of the clergy should not under any circumstances be permitted to move freely.

The theme of ecclesiastical discipline and church governance turns up in a number of Leo’s letters, largely written to bishops within Leo’s own ecclesiastical province. He implemented greater oversight, attacking a number of issues that violated “canon law and ecclesiastical discipline” including the ordination of slaves and men of low status as priests (an ongoing problem that would also vex Gelasius later in the century). He also sought to regulate the ordination of bishops and ensure that they properly observed the Christian calendar of festivals so that there would be no deviance in ritual or calendar. Promotions to positions in the church were also strictly regulated and the failure of even one bishop in a single church to observe the canons threatened to contaminate “every rule of ecclesiastical law.” Leo also undertook other organizational reforms which endeavoured to establish a strict ecclesiastical hierarchy. For instance, he restructured the churches of Illyricum and placed them under the authority of the Metropolitan bishop of Thessalonica who was in turn subject to Rome. No provincial bishops were to be ordained without Leo’s consultation and all troubling cases were to be referred to Rome. Leo also attempted to rein in the independent-minded Hilary of Arles. Indeed, there

101 JK 398 = ep. 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597), §2. Pelagian teachings were “per quorumdam negligentiam introducta pernicies...”, a reference to the leadership of the Church of Aquileia.
102 Ibid., §5. cf. JK 416 = ep. 18 (PL 54, p. 706).
103 It was precisely these disciplinary letters that were most copied by later canon lawyers.
104 JK 402 = ep. 4 (PL 54, pp. 610-614), §§1-4. He also banned men who had been married twice from becoming priests.
105 JK 408 = ep. 12 (PL 54, pp. 645-656).
106 JK 414 = ep. 16 (PL 54, pp. 675-704), esp. §2. Leo’s concern here is that the bishops of Sicily have “departed from the practice of the Apostles’ constitution” by baptising on the Feast of the Epiphany rather than Easter. Leo also commands that the Sicilian Church is to report in person to Rome twice a year.
may well have been a Pelagian dimension to the ostensibly jurisdictional dispute between Leo and Hilary.\footnote{Wessel, Leo the Great, 77-79 and on the Hilary-Leo affair, 51ff. Wessel makes an interesting connection between the ascetic sensibilities of Hilary (and many monastic communities of Gaul) and Pelagianism or Semi-Pelagianism – both of which Leo considered arrogant. “Leo may have been wary of the image of asceticism that Hilary championed and the view of grace that his Vita Honorati espoused.”}

\textit{d. Heretical mimicry of Orthodoxy and Private Religion}

But besides jurisdiction and discipline, Leo’s letter to the unnamed bishop of Aquileia reveals two additional and interrelated worries: the overlap of heresy and orthodoxy and religious practices that took place in private or domestic spaces. This first concern is clearly expressed by Leo in his letter: as a result of poor episcopal oversight, clerics who were implicated in the “Pelagian or Cælestian heresy” remained in communion with the church and continued to preach and teach as if they were orthodox. It seems as if a degree of syncretism between sanctioned religious practice and belief and those propagated by Pelagius and his supporters whereby the two, seen as mutually exclusive to Leo, were coexisting, even amalgamating, in Northern Italy. The threat they posed was particularly acute because the most dangerous heretic was one that effectively simulated orthodoxy, hiding behind false claims of conformity.\footnote{The accusation of doctrinal deviance concealed behind a veil of conformity was essentially impossible to refute. In a slightly different context, see Burrus, The Making of a Heretic, 15-16.} It was precisely when it was most difficult to differentiate one from the other that the boundary between heresy and orthodoxy had to be inscribed all the more forcibly. And if heresy was almost indistinguishable from orthodoxy, its detection and exposure was dependent on the authority of the accuser, in this case Leo himself.

The deceitful teaching of these wandering preachers was thought by Leo to be part of deliberate effort to undermine the faith of the innocent.\footnote{The preaching of these crypto-Pelagians is described as a deliberate attempt to corrupt the innocent: “…under a false name [sc. ‘Christian’], they corrupt the hearts of many men.” “…per falsi nominis scientiam multorum corda corrumpant.” JK 398 = \textit{ep.} 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597), §1. cf. Ibid., §5. “…if anyone, seeking his own interests rather than those of Jesus Christ…” “ita ut si quis sua quaereus, non quae Jesu Christi…” Following the norms of heresiological rhetoric, the heretic is portrayed as selfish, greedy and ambitious.} Uncovering the crypto-Pelagians would require denunciations, public and written confessions, declarations of the true faith, and above all, strict oversight by those in authority to ensure that deviance was destroyed and conformity enforced. Leo’s call for an investigation into the religious fidelity of any priest,
deacon or cleric of any rank who had previously been implicated in Pelagianism was intended to re-establish a clear border between officially sanctioned correct beliefs and to demarcate and proscribe unauthorized teachings. “Let them,” instructed Leo referring to these crypto-Pelagians, “with a declaration made clearly, in public and signed in their own hand, proclaim that they in every way embrace and approve of all the synodal decrees which have been confirmed by the authority of the Apostolic See for the elimination of this heresy. Let nothing be discovered in their statements that is obscure or ambiguous.”

If any should refuse, they should be excommunicated. Particularly significant is Leo’s description of orthodoxy as conformity to the decrees confirmed by Rome. Moreover, anyone who was suspected of Pelagian sympathies was to be considered guilty until proven innocent: “Those who wish to appear corrected must purge themselves of all suspicion: and by obeying us, they prove themselves ours.” In a second letter written to Bishop Januarius of Aquileia in 447, Leo repeated many of the same demands he had made in 442. Priests, deacons or clerics of any rank must openly confess and condemn their errors. They would then be permitted to return to the church in their previous rank (a *magnum beneficium*); however they would never be eligible for promotion. Mere suspicion of heresy would be enough to end one’s ecclesiastical career. And although the tone of this second letter is less accusatory than the first, it nonetheless ends with a thinly veiled threat: “do not doubt, beloved, that we will be severely disturbed/provoked (vehementius commovendos) if that which we have decreed for the protection of the canons and the integrity of the faith is neglected [by you] – something we do not foresee occurring.”

The private or domestic nature of Pelagianism must only have added to Leo’s suspicions. For one, especially after the second half of the fourth century, many Christian leaders felt a profound anxiety over private or secretive religious practice that took place outside the control

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112 The authority of Rome is invoked. Ibid., §2. “omniaeque decreta synodalia, quae ad excisionem hujus haereseos apostolicae sedis confirmavit auctoritas, amplecti se et in omnibus approbare, plenis et apertis, ac propria manu subscriptis protestationibus eloquentur. Nihil in verbis eorum obscurum, nihil inveniantur ambiguum.” The “decreta synodalia” presumably refers to the canons of the African Church approved by Rome.
113 Ibid., §4.
114 Ibid. “Qui correctos se videri volunt, ab omni suspicione se purgent et obediendo nobis, probent se esse nostros.”
115 The heresy is not named; however the language of the letter and its instructions closely mirror his previous correspondence with the see and thus it seems reasonable to conclude that Pelagianism is also the topic of this second letter.
116 JK 416 = *ep.* 18 (PL 54, p. 706). “Non autem dubitet dilectio tua, nos si, quod non arbitramur, neglecta fuerint, quae pro custodia canonum et pro fidei integritate decernimus, vehementius commovendos.”
and observation of the official church. While emperors and bishops had largely pushed various non-conforming sects out of the imperially supported public religious spaces such as the great basilicas and martyrial shrines through anti-heretical legislation, groups such as the Manicheans and Donatists were known to meet in private households.\textsuperscript{117} Domestic space provided a safe and secluded venue for the discussion and propagation of ideas that were perhaps outside the mainstream of the established order. Moreover, private households could also function as a domain of social protest.\textsuperscript{118} For the official church, private religion could easily be associated with illicit and heretical religion.

Episcopal concern regarding private religious practice was only heightened in the case of ascetically minded groups such as the Pelagians and Priscillianists, especially if they were associated with the aristocracy. Asceticism threatened to produce an elite class of Christians, secluded from society, separated from the masses by their pious renunciation of wealth and sex, while aristocratic households became loci of Christian piety that potentially ran parallel (and sometimes contrary) to the public ecclesiastical spaces controlled by bishops.\textsuperscript{119} Like asceticism, private worship also had the potential to create and maintain a community separate from that led by a bishop and his ecclesiastical hierarchy. This was because an elite household in antiquity was not ‘private’ in the sense we associate with modernity, but rather it was a liminal space through which the householder came into contact with the community and by which he or she was judged by that community.\textsuperscript{120} Thus private Christianity had the potential to become quite public.

Although titular and domestic churches, staffed through the longstanding system of aristocratic patronage, were supported by the aristocracy, their congregants were drawn from the complex web of neighbourhood, \textit{clientela} and familial connections that formed the backbone of traditional Roman social relations. Moreover, as greater numbers of nobility enthusiastically adopted Christianity, they patronised various (and potentially questionable) teachers – all outside the control of the established church. Especially in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, the

\textsuperscript{117} Christian Roman emperors had consistently legislated against private meetings of the ‘heretics’, especially the Donatists, Manicheans and Arians, but also others. For representative examples from the Theodosian Code, see Harry O. Maier, "Religious Dissent, Heresy and Households in Late Antiquity," \textit{VChr}, 49, no. 1 (1995), 60, n. 8.
\textsuperscript{118} Maier, "Topography of Heresy ": 241-243. Maier, "Religious Dissent, Heresy and Households," 55-56.
individualistic impulses of asceticism and domestic religiosity seemed more and more at odds
with a centralizing episcopate that sought to subsume all the faithful, in the words of Kim
Bowes, under a single “salvific umbrella.”121

These tensions can clearly be seen in the Pelagian controversy in the generation before Leo.
Peter Brown has highlighted the domestic and social aspect of Pelagius’ teachings in the last
decades of the fourth century and the first decade of the fifth, especially in the homes of
powerful Roman aristocratic women such Anicia Juliana and her daughter Demetrias, members
of the prominent patrician gens Anicia.122 Likewise, Virginia Burrus has pointed to the role
shifting boundaries of public and private spaces played in the Priscillianist controversy of the
380s. Priscillian’s public role as bishop was delegitimised by his opponents on account of his
supposed fondness for meeting in private household space – a fact which “demonstrated the
illegitimacy of his public role and indeed unmasked his true identity as a heretic or sorcerer.”
Priscillian’s enemies within the leadership of the Spanish church sought to portray Priscillian and
his supporters as “anarchic or rebellious, members of a subversive and immoral secret society
who not only distained the authority of public office but also ignored the fundamental hierarchy
of genders.”123 And like the followers of Priscillian documented by Burrus, the Roman acolytes
of Pelagius were also accused of rebelliousness and of provoking factionalism due to their
radical private asceticism. Their enemies claimed that Pelagius’ followers imagined themselves
as members of a spiritual elite aspiring to rise above what was common and mundane. Or, as the
imperial rescript in which Roman Pelagians were condemned states, “they consider that it is a
sure sign of being low-born and commonplace to think the same as everyone else and a token of
expertise to undermine what is unanimously agreed.”124

This unease over private and unsanctioned religious practice and teaching is evident in Leo’s
first letter to the bishop of Aquileia. The crypto-Pelagian clerics were preaching and ministering

121 Kimberly Diane Bowes, Private Worship, Public Values, and Religious Change in Late Antiquity (Cambridge,
2008), 102.
122 Peter Brown, “Pelagius and his Supporters: Aims and Environment,” in Religion and Society in the Age of Saint
Augustine (London, 1973); Peter Brown, "The Patrons of Pelagius,” in Religion and Society in the Age of Saint
also Elizabeth A. Clark, The Origenist Controversy: the Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate
123 Burrus, The Making of a Heretic, 6-12, quotation at 11-12.
to sympathetic men and women in private homes under the guise of legitimate Christianity.\textsuperscript{125} This was problematic because of the suspect nature of the clerics’ faith and because the clerics were not subject to episcopal oversight. As Leo notes, the canons forbid even perfectly orthodox clerics from wandering the countryside, teaching in private homes. We can see similar concerns with illicit preaching elsewhere in Leo’s correspondence. In a letter written regarding the Christological controversy, Leo informs the Bishop of Antioch that only authorized men of the rank of priest should be permitted to preach and teach. The concern here is both unauthorized teaching and the preservation of a strict hierarchy within the church, since in “the Church of God all things should be orderly.”\textsuperscript{126} Private teaching constituted a challenge to Leo’s episcopal authority and to the centralized and hierarchical ecclesiology he was attempting to implement.

In Leo’s relatively limited dealings with Pelagianism, we can see a number of important elements that would appear in his later fight against other heresies. Firstly, Leo linked church organization and ecclesiastical discipline with orthodoxy. The failures of local churches made it possible heretical ideas to grow. This in turn provided Leo an opportunity to insinuate the authority of Rome, based on its apostolicity and its orthodoxy, into churches not traditionally part of its direct administrative prerogative. Leo’s disciplinary and organizational reforms were intended to impose stricter and more centralized control over the church in order to ensure greater uniformity of worship, avoid scandal and corruption, and of course, to prevent the spread of doctrinal deviance. A strong, centralized church with clear and organized lines of communication with Rome at its centre was an important way to ensure the enforcement of the canons at the local level – a key factor in the fight against incorrect belief. A second crucial element in Leo’s anti-Pelagian rhetoric was a strong emphasis on the danger of almost undetectable forms of doctrinal deviance that lay concealed behind a veil of apparent conformity. Heresy was most dangerous when it resembled orthodoxy, blurring the lines between what was acceptable belief and what was not. Finally, there was the related concern over private religious practice that took place outside of the supervision of the official church. This anxiety concerning

\textsuperscript{125} JK 398 = \textit{ep}. 1 (PL 54, p. 593-597), §1. “Quoniam qui nullo discussi examine, nullo sunt praecidicio suae professionis obstricti, hunc maxime expetunt fructum, ut sub velamento communiosis plures domos adeant…”

\textsuperscript{126} That is to say, Leo does not want members of the lower clergy, monks and/or laymen to preach. JK 495 = \textit{ep}. 119 (ACO II.4, pp. 72-75), §6.
heretical mimicry of orthodoxy and private religion would be fully expressed in Leo’s attack against the Manicheans.

4. Leo and Manichaeism

In 443, one year after his letter to the bishop of Aquileia, Leo embarked on the systematic persecution of Manichaeism in Rome. As we shall see, many of the concerns Leo expressed regarding the Pelagians are also present in his fight against the Manicheans. To combat this newest heresy, Leo would mobilize traditional Christian heresiological rhetoric and the Roman legal system. But his understanding of the Manichean faith was likely influenced far more by Augustine than actual encounters with the sect in Rome. Leo’s Roman Manicheans were echoes of those described by the great bishop of Hippo: depraved and immoral men and women who engaged in perverted sexual rituals, all the while feigning their orthodoxy and participating in the communal life of the Roman Church. To combat this shadowy enemy of the faith and to ensure religious conformity, Leo encouraged a culture of denunciation and condemnation. It was only by careful scrutiny of one’s neighbours, friends, and even of one’s self, that orthodoxy could be protected and preserved.

a. Manichaeism before Leo

As early as the third century, Manicheans had been viewed by Roman secular authorities as a dangerous and foreign cult. Emperor Diocletian (284-305) proscribed Manichaeism because of what he perceived as the anti-social and ‘Persian’ nature of this novel religious movement. A rescript from 302 from Diocletian to Julianus, proconsul of Africa, orders that the sect’s leaders and writings be burned; unrepentant followers were to be sentenced to death and their goods forfeited to the imperial treasury while those of the higher social orders were to be sentenced to the mines (essentially the same as a death sentence). The sect was later repeatedly condemned

127 On Manichaeism as a Persian threat, see J. Gerhard van Oort, "Mani and Manichaeism in Augustine's de haeresibus," in Studia Manichaica. IV. Internationaler Kongress zum Manichäismus, ed. R. E. Emmerick, Werner Sundermann, and Peter Zieme (Berlin, 2000), 458, in particular n.34; Samuel N. C. Lieu, Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China, 2 ed. (Tubingen, 1992), 121-123.

128 Rescript of Diocletian to Julianus, preserved (in Latin) in the Collatio Legum Mosaicarum et Romanorum (also known as the Lex Dei), 15.3, published as part of Salvatore Riccobono et al., Fontes iuris Romani anteiusitiani, 3 vols. (Florentiae, 1968), II, pp. 580ff. This rescript is traditionally dated to March 31, 297. However the recent scholarly consensus places it in 302. See John Kevin Coyle, "Foreign and Insane: Labeling Manichaeism in the Roman Empire," in Manichaeism and its legacy (Leiden, 2009), 4-5, n. 8 for numerous refs. According to ibid., 5
under the Christian emperors beginning in the fourth century under Valentinian I (364-375) and Valens (364-378). In 381, Theodosius I (378-395) branded Manicheans with *infamia*, which removed their right to testify in court and make wills to transfer property. A year later, he authorized the praetorian prefect to receive the reports of denunciators without the dishonour of *delatio* and to establish a special tribunal in order to investigate Manicheans in Rome. By the early fourth century, Manicheans suffered from an increasingly severe variety of social and legal restrictions.

The sect was also opposed by orthodox religious authorities. Manicheans were particularly loathed by heresiologists - not simply for their ‘questionable’ theology, but also owing to their unique ability to challenge many of orthodoxy’s central tenets. Its austerity and self-denial appealed to the spirit of the age in which holiness was increasingly identified with asceticism. Its dualism seemed to provide a straightforward answer to the problem of the origins of evil, while its philosophical nature and perceived intellectualism appealed, at least initially, to educated Romans such as Augustine. Of course Augustine, as Bishop of Hippo, became Manichaeism’s most famous adversary; various other bishops also took up the fight against heresy in general, and against Manichaeism in particular. In Rome, three bishops prior to Leo are reported in the *Liber Pontificalis* to have opposed the sect, the first of which is Miltiades (310-314). Seventy years later, two consecutive references appear in the biographies of Siricius (384-399) and Anastasius (399-401/2). Siricius is particularly concerned about the overlap between the Manichean and orthodox communities in Rome. He banned Manicheans from taking

citing Van der Lof, Diocletian’s rescript is our first piece of evidence of the official reaction to the spread of Manichaeism in the west.

Here, we might also add the Donatists. Both Manicheans and Donatists are jointly given the opportunity for amnesty if they abandon their ways and return to the Catholic Church – a fact which suggests that these two sects were considered related, at least for the purposes of this law. November 15, 407: CT 16.5.41 issued in the name of Theodosius II, Honorius and Arcadius.

CT 16.5.3 (March 2, 372).

Ibid., 16.5.7.pr (May 1).

Ibid., 16.5.9.1 (March 31, 382).

For more detail on the evolution of legal proscriptions against heretics and Manicheans in particular, once again see chapter 2.

Peter Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Boston, 1978), passim, but in particular ch. 4.


Lieu, *Manichaeism*, 192-204. There are many excellent works on Augustine and the Manicheans; but to mention just one recent collection, see the final seven essays in John Kevin Coyle, *Manichaeism and its Legacy* (Leiden, 2009), 209-328.

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communion with the orthodox, a fact which certainly implies that there were Manicheans participating in church services and that at least for some, Manichaeism and orthodox Christianity were not mutually exclusive propositions. Moreover, Siricius was concerned with Christians who had ‘converted’ from Christianity to Manichaeism and subsequently wished to return to orthodoxy. Celestine (422-432) may also have actively opposed the sect. This is suggested by a law of Theodosius II and Valentinian III published in 425 that banned Manicheans from Rome along with many other heretics, schismatics, astrologers (mathematicii) and anyone else who had withdrawn themselves “from communion with the venerable pope [of Rome].”\(^{136}\)

Who exactly were the Manicheans confronted by Roman law and Christian bishops? This is a more difficult question to answer than it might initially appear. Recent research, especially by Richard Lim, has emphasized the decentralized and fluid nature of the Manichean religion, especially in North Africa. Manichaeism almost certainly was not the monolithic challenger to Christianity portrayed by the orthodox polemicists. Instead, it is better understood as a relatively diverse set of related beliefs and practices.\(^{137}\) Even the term ‘Manichean’ (that is, the followers of the sect’s eponymous founder Mani) was not one that was used by its followers; it was in fact the invention of the sect’s enemies. ‘Manicheans’ in the Roman Empire called themselves ‘the church.’\(^{138}\) But these details were unimportant for their enemies; as we shall see what defined Manichaeism for Leo often came from heresiology rather than actual experience.

\section*{b. Trial in Rome: Leo’s Manichean Persecution}

Leo’s encounter with Manicheans began shortly after he became bishop of Rome. By the end of 443, Leo had become sufficiently concerned that he preached a sermon in which he warned his listeners that there were Manicheans living in their midst. According to Leo, these heretics denied the cornerstones of Christian beliefs. They repudiated the Old Testament and denied that the universe was in fact created by the one true God. Moreover, they were Docetists -

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\(^{136}\) CT 16.5.62 (July or August, 425). “…qui pravis suasionibus a venerabilis papae sese communione suspendunt.” cf. Lieu, \textit{Manichaeism}, 204.

\(^{137}\) See, for example, Richard Lim, "Unity and Diversity Among Western Manichaeans: A Reconsideration of Mani’s sancta ecclesia," \textit{Revue des études augustinienes}, 35 (1986); Richard Lim, "The Nomen Manichaeorum and Its Uses in Late Antiquity," in \textit{Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity}, ed. Eduard Iricinschi and Holger M. Zellentin (Tubingen, 2008).

\(^{138}\) Coyle, \textit{Manichaeism}, xiii and n.2.
that is, they rejected the corporality, death and resurrection of Jesus. To please God (and thus ensure their own salvation) Leo’s listeners were encouraged to accuse and denounce the Manichean heretics “wherever they are hiding” to their priests. “It would be an act of supreme piety,” Leo preached to his listeners, “to disclose the hiding places of the ungodly and to vanquish in them the devil they serve.” By helping the church expunge this pernicious enemy of the faith, Leo claimed, faithful Christians would be rewarded when they themselves stood in judgment before the Lord.

Shortly after he preached this sermon, Leo instigated a public investigation (inquisitio) into the sect. In a sermon preached for Advent, 443, Leo informed his listeners that Manicheans, “who are execrable and pestiferous in all things,” had come to Italy in great numbers due to “disturbance in other places” – almost certainly a reference to the Vandal invasion and conquest of North Africa. Like a disease incubating in an unknowing host, Manichaeism had arrived in Rome along with the large number of North African Catholics who had fled their former homelands in search of stability and peace. Leo was determined to stamp the contagion out before it could corrupt his own flock.

Those denounced as Manicheans were brought before a court (in iudicio) that consisted of ecclesiastical and civil authorities: bishops, presbyters and members of the Senate. Leo does not clearly describe the procedure, but it seems to have been a mixed tribunal in which elements of Roman secular and religious law and procedure overlapped. Nevertheless, do to the nature

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139 tr. 9 (CCSL 138, pp. 32-38), §4.
140 Ibid. trans. St. Leo the Great, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 25.
141 This tribunal must have taken place in Rome sometime before Advent, 443 – that is, after tr. 9 but before tr. 16 in which he relates the details of the case to his congregants. See below.
142 Inferred from tr. 16 (CCSL 138, pp. 61-67), §5: “Hos itaque homines, dilectissimi, per omnia exsecrabiles atque pestiferos, quos aliarum regionum perturbatio nobis intullit crebriores”. Leo’s vita in the LP, 239, also refers to the “Vandal disaster” (clades Wandalica), a reference to the sack of Rome in 455 after which Leo replaced the consecrated silver services for all the tituli churches which had been carried off by Genseric and his men by melting down six water jugs. On Manichaeism’s spread into the Roman Empire, see Lieu, Manichaeism, 115ff.
143 Advent, (roughly four weeks before Christmas) 443. tr. 16, §4. Further information on the case can be gleaned from a novel of Valentinian III which states that the Manicheans were brought “to court” (in iudicio). cf. NVal 18.1 (June 19, 445), preserved in the Leonine corpus as ep. 8 (PL 54, pp. 622-624): “Quae enim et quam dictu auditque obscena in iudicio beatissimi Leonis coram senatu amplissimo manifesta ipsorum confessione patefacta sunt?” In this period, the Senate occasionally operated as a special court, usually in cases of treason. See, for instance, Jill Harries, Law and Empire in Late Antiquity (Cambridge, 1999), 101.
144 Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum, I.433 termed it a “geistlich-weltliche Tribunal”. Pierre Batifoll, Le siège apostolique (359-451) (Paris, 1924), 437 called it “le premier moment de l’histoire de l’inquisition”. However according to Gaudemet, this was not, as Caspar thought, a usurpation of public legal norms by the church but rather the proper use of jurisdictional authority given to bishops over religious affairs under Gratian and Honorius. See Gaudemet, L’Église, 619, n.4.
of the accusations, the focus was essentially religious and it was the religious authorities who led
the inquiry; public officials, however, would carry out the punishments.145

Despite recent imperial legislation that permitted bishops to act as judges only in civil cases
and only when both parties agreed – the so-called episcopalis audentia, Leo himself seems to
have taken a leading role in the trial of the Manicheans. In general terms Roman law was not
consistent on the legal authority of bishops: the types of cases they could judge and the types of
people who fell under their jurisdiction (lay, clerical) shifted. Despite the changing official legal
framework, bishops could find themselves judging in various types of civil cases and even in
criminal cases, especially when they involved clerics.146 And by the end of the fourth and early
fifth centuries, bishops could and did take on judicial roles that had traditionally been reserved
for secular officials. In North Africa, for instance, the Council of Carthage (407) received
permission from the emperor to establish an official called the defensor ecclesiae – a parallel
office to the defensor civitatis. The defensor ecclesiae may have been created initially to enforce
anti-Donatist measures; defensores could arrest and detain on behalf of the bishop. Leo may well
have enjoyed similar discretion.147 Moreover local bishops would have necessarily been key
players in the implementation of imperial legislation against various heretical sects for it was
they and not civil officials who had the specialized knowledge needed to identify heretical
beliefs in individuals or groups accused of heretical assembly.148

Under questioning during Leo’s inquisitio, the Manichean leaders, both men and women
(electi and electae), “disclosed many things about the perversity of their doctrine and the
customary practice of their festivities.”149 Indeed, while Leo abhorred the doctrines of the
Manicheans, the crux of his investigation centred on their crimes (crimena, scelus), not the

145 That is to say, forced exile. Pietrini, Religio e ius, 93-96; Gaudemet, L’Église, 619.
146 Civil cases only: CT 1.27.2 (Dec 408). cf. NVal. 35 (452), discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4. Secular
officials were to enforce the decisions made by bishops in these cases.
147 As Noel Lenski suggests, North African bishops “had considerable latitude in the types of punishments they
could mete out and in the means they could use for enforcing their decisions.” Noel E. Lenski, “Evidence for the
Audientia episcopalis in the New Letters of Augustine,” in Law, Society, and Authority in Late Antiquity, ed. Ralph
W. Mathisen (Oxford, 2001), 92-93 (quote on p. 93). For an up-to-date bibliography on the episcopalis audentia, see
ibid., 83, n.1; and on a variety of cases judged by bishops, ibid., 84ff. For more on the office of defensor ecclesiae,
see above, Chapter 1, n. 33.
148 Lieu, Manichaeism, 199. For instance, in 381, Hydatius, bishop of Merida, very likely received from the Emperor
Gratian the authorization to investigate and identify those guilty of Manichaeism (here, directed against Priscillian
and his associates). Reported in Sulpicius Severus, Chronicorum libri duo, PL 20 (1845), 2.47. The rescript either
called for the enforcement of existing laws against heretics and Manicheans, or it may have been specifically written
with Priscillian in mind. See also Burrus, The Making of a Heretic, 54. For more on Priscillian and Leo, see below.
149 tr. 16, §4. On the Manichean ‘elect’ and the hierarchy of the Manichean Church, see Lieu, Manichaeism, 27-29.
heretical nature (from Leo’s perspective) of Manichean teachings. Possibly under torture, at least four people confessed to having carried out an obscure and debauched ritual at which a ten-year old girl was sexually violated in the presence of a Manichean ‘bishop’ (episcopus ipsorum) and the two women charged with her care (quae ipsam nutrierant). The details are sketchy. As Leo tells his parishioners, it would simply take too long to explain all their impieties and immoralities. Rather than offend his listener by detailing the many and depraved crimes of the Manicheans, the documents of the proceedings (gestorum documenta) would have to suffice both to prove the case as well as the demonic, immoral and impure nature of their religion. “In that most wicked doctrine of the Manicheans,” Leo preached at Christmas, 443, “there is nothing at all which could possibly be pronounced tolerable.”

According to Leo, this tribunal marked the beginning of a systematic purge of Roman Manichaeism. Many more Manicheans were discovered in Rome, Leo claims; some were convinced to abjure their former beliefs. These former heretics were compelled to publically condemn Mani and his teachings in church as well as in a written document. Those who refused were, in Leo’s words, “made subject to the laws in accordance with the constitutions of the Christian princes; and lest they pollute the holy flock by their contagion, they have been punished with a perpetual exile by the civil judges (per publicos iudices).” By early 444, Leo announced to the bishops of Italy that due to his efforts, the followers of Mani had been eradicated from the city (a nobis in urbe exstinguitur).

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150 Iudices in an inquisitio were entitled to submit the quaestio to slaves and increasingly freemen in criminal cases. Torture could also at times be used on members of the Roman elite. See Harries, Law and Empire in Late Antiquity, 122ff. If we believe the account in the Liber Pontificalis’ biography of Hormisdas (514-523, LP I.270-271), Manicheans were again investigated during his pontificate and torture was used to extract confessions: “Hic inuenit Manicheos, quos etiam discussit cum examinatione plagarum, exilio deportauit.”


152 tr. 16, §4.


154 JK 405 = ep. 7 (PL 54, pp. 620-622), §1. The trial and the resultant confessions are also described in Leo’s letter to Turibius Bishop of Astorga, 21 July, 447) on the question of Priscillianism: JK 414 = ep. 16 (PL 54, pp. 695-704), §16.

155 JK 405 = ep. 7 (PL 54, pp. 620-622), 1. trans., St. Leo the Great, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 47.

156 JK 405 = ep. 7 (PL 54, pp. 620-622). See also Lieu, Manichaeism, 204-5, nn. 51-55. “vigilantia divulgavit, auctoritas et censura coeruit.”
Prosper of Aquitaine’s chronicle for the year 443 relates many of the same details contained in Leo’s letters and sermons. Prosper notes, “At this time it became clear to the diligent perception of Pope Leo that many Manicheans were taking refuge in the city.” Leo “rooted them out from their hiding places,” exposing their wicked teachings to the world and forcing the Manicheans to abjure them in public. Finally, echoing early Roman persecutions which had targeted Christian writings, Prosper relates that Leo had “great piles of books that had been seized burned.” The result was shattering to the Manichean cause, according to Prosper. He goes on to state that,

This concern [for Manichaeism], inspired in the holy man [Leo] it seems, by God, was of the greatest benefit not only to the city of Rome but also to the whole world, inasmuch as the confessions of those arrested in Rome might reveal the identity of their teachers, bishops or priests, and the provinces or cities in which they lived. Many bishops in the east imitated the energy of the apostolic governor.¹⁵⁷

Interestingly, despite these claims of victory over the heretics, Leo nonetheless continued to attack the sect in sermons throughout the next year.¹⁵⁸ He condemned the sect as a demonic cult who rejected the Old Testament and edited the Gospel, taking out what disagreed with their teaching and adding other material.¹⁵⁹ Mani was the “minister of a diabolical fantasy.”¹⁶⁰ His followers engaged in extravagant fasting, perhaps related to their disdain for the human body, but also owing to their esteem for the sun and moon.¹⁶¹ They engaged in a plethora of sacrilegious and obscene rituals.¹⁶² And finally, they denied many of the basic tenets of Christianity: they do


¹⁵⁸ In four sermons: early Jan: *tr.* 34 (CCSL 138, pp. 178-187); Lent: *tr.* 42 (CCSL 138a, pp. 238-250); Good Friday: *tr.* 72 (CCSL 138a, pp. 441-448); Pentecost: *tr.* 76 (CCSL 138a, pp. 472-486).


¹⁶⁰ *tr.* 72 (CCSL 138a, pp. 441-448), §6.

¹⁶¹ *tr.* 34 (CCSL 138, pp. 178-187), §4; *tr.* 72 (CCSL 138a, pp. 441-448), §5; *tr.* 42 (CCSL 138a, pp. 238-250), §§4-5. Manicheans are often accused of extreme asceticism by orthodox polemicists including both Leo and Augustine. Fasting was, of course, also a part of orthodox Christian practice. Leo’s concern is with the motivation for fasting: for instance, the Manicheans avoid wine and meat because they consider it impure whereas Christians fast for spiritual renewal. On Manichean fasts, see “Excursus IV” in *St. Leo the Great*, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 92-94. Augustine also discusses Manichean avoidance of wine; see below.

not believe in the corporality of Christ, or his death and resurrection, and denied that the living and the dead will be judged at the end of days.\textsuperscript{163}

Leo’s actions in 443 and his continued preaching over the course of 444 was almost certainly the motivation for further action against the sect from the civil authorities in the form of an imperial rescript issued at Rome in June 445.\textsuperscript{164} The rescript pointed to the terrible crimes of the Manicheans that had recently been brought to light thanks to “the most blessed Leo.” Echoing earlier Theodosian legislation, Manichaeism, called a \textit{superstitio} that had been condemned even in pagan times, was declared a public crime.\textsuperscript{165} Like Leo had done a year earlier, the law encourages accusations and denunciations – in this case, a \textit{delator} would not become liable for the punishment that had threatened the accused should the prosecution fail (\textit{sine accusationis periculo}).\textsuperscript{166} Moreover, Manicheans were to be disbarred from the imperial service and banned from all cities throughout the empire. The condemnation of the sect as well as the punishments proscribed for its adherents echoes Leo’s own. The emperors, like Leo, also encouraged informants and expelled the guilty from urban areas. Indeed, as Kevin Coyle has noted, there is clear reciprocity both in terms of ideas and language between Roman legislation on Manichaeism and Leo’s homiletic material directed against the cult. Leo was likely influenced by earlier anti-Manichean legislation and the \textit{constitutio} issued by Valentinian III certainly reflects Leo’s recent anti-Manichean polemic.\textsuperscript{167}

c. Leo’s anti-Manichean rhetoric: precedents and techniques

Leo’s anti-Manichean campaign depended to a great extent on traditional heresiology. Specifically, Leo attacked the sect as an amalgam of previously condemned heretics, creating a genealogy of error that linked contemporary heretics in Rome with Mani and other heresiarchs. Another feature of Leo’s polemic was his stress on the immorality of the Manicheans. This too

\textsuperscript{163} tr. 34 (CCSL 138, pp. 178-187), §§4-5; tr. 42 (CCSL 138a, pp. 238-250), §5; tr. 72 (CCSL 138a, pp. 441-448), §7. As Leo tellingly notes in tr. 32§4, without all the basic elements of the faith epitomized in the creed (\textit{apostolicum symbolum}), “nullus metus terreat impios…”

\textsuperscript{164} NVal. 18, in the names of Valentinian III and Theodosius II, cited above.

\textsuperscript{165} The reference here is to Diocletian’s legislation against the Manicheans. See above, p. 70.

\textsuperscript{166} As required in a law falsely attributed to Constantine, CT 9.5.pr. cf. Corcoran 2002. On false accusations in Roman law in general, see Ulhalde, 2007, 16-43. Other laws against false accusations: for instance, in CT 9.1.19, pr.; Constantine also required a written accusation in criminal cases as another means to limit baseless or frivolous accusations: CT 9.1.5.

\textsuperscript{167} Coyle, \textit{Foreign and Insane}, 20-22. Compare, for instance, Leo, tr. 16, §4, 6; tr. 76 (CCSL 138a, pp. 472-486), §6; CT 16.5.35 (May 17, 399), 26.5.41 (Nov. 15, 407).
had been prominent in earlier condemnations of Manichaeism. Leo’s rhetoric was above all intended to enforce a rigid boundary between Manicheans and members of his church. He emphasized his own vigilance, reinforcing his claims to authority and leadership in the church. In all his attacks, Leo depended heavily on Augustine’s own condemnations of Manichaeism, especially those found in *de haeresibus*.

In a well-established heresiological technique, Leo described the faith of the Manicheans as a compilation of impieties collected from various ancient enemies of the faith including the Jews and *maleficii*. As he explained in a sermon preached at the end of 443, the “insanity of the Manicheans” far exceeded all other threats to the church:

> Whatever profanity exists amongst the heathen, whatever blindness among the carnal Jews, whatever illicitness in the secrets of the magical arts, in short – whatever sacrilege and blasphemy in all heresies: it has all flowed together into [the Manicheans] as if into a sort of sewage with a coagulation of all filth. Wherefore, it would take too long to explain in detail all their impieties and turpitudes, because the multitudes of their crimes exceeds the abundance of words.

Leo’s sermons preached against heresy and against Manichaeism in particular are, of course, examples of pastoral care, something he and other Roman bishops took very seriously. Indeed, preaching and teaching were cornerstones of any bishop’s job description, intended to ensure and protect the spiritual wellbeing of his congregants. But in this case, the sermon also represents a bold assertion of Leo’s authority to decide the correct boundaries of the faith and a demonstration of this authority. Leo does not even feel compelled to detail all the supposed crimes and transgressions of the Manicheans but rather depends on his own status as sufficient to act as a surety for his accusations.

The accusation of black magic is also particularly significant since by this period, magic and sorcery could be capital crimes equivalent to treason. Indeed, Leo follows closely in the tradition of earlier Roman law and Christian heresiologists who had depicted Manichaeism as anti-social, foreign, and associated with black magic. Moreover Manicheans are said to be in

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168 On the techniques of heresiology, see my introductory chapter.
170 *Maleficium* was akin to *maiestas* according to CT 9.16.6. Thus, people of any rank accused of *maleficium* could be subjected to the full extent of the law including torture. Harries, *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity*, 128.
league with the devil and are variously described with terms that evoke medical ideas such as contamination, uncleanliness, infection, sickness and disease. It was as if Manichaeism was, in the words of Harry O. Maier, “a highly contagious, not easily detected disease that seeks to gain entry to the community by surreptitious means; it represents a mortal danger to the Catholic community that must be dealt with decisively.”

Leo’s description of Manicheans as a mix of older errors also helps us understand his theory of heresy and points forward to a rhetorical technique that Leo would employ both against the Priscillians and later, against Eutyches as part of the Christological debate. Following the portrayal of heresy advanced by earlier apologists and polemicist such as Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, Leo described religious deviance in part by its relationship with previous error. Each type of heresy had an archetype, usually originating from an individual heresiarch who gave his name to his eponymous sect such as Arius, Sabellius, Paul of Samosata, and many others. For Leo, by examining the beliefs and practices of a contemporary heresy, it was possible to uncover its secret relationship to its sacrilegious antecedents. For example, any vaguely subordinationist Trinitarian theory must be in some sense ‘Arian;’ modalism was ‘Sabellian;’ monarchy and adoptionism must be related to the teachings of Paul of Samosata, and so on. This genealogy of error represented a demonic inversion of the theory of apostolic succession. Whereas Christ’s authentic teachings were transmitted from Jesus through the apostles to their successors, heresy too was connected from one generation to the next, passed on from heresiarch to heretic. The names change and the teachings may well be repackaged, but the error remains essentially the same. And if religious deviance could be understood through its relationship with previous errors, then old and new could be considered together, their characteristic traits freely interchanged, and ultimately they could be condemned together. This view not only provided a theory of the origins of heresy, but by associating contemporary opponents with past and universally condemned enemies of the faith, it also provided a rhetorical technique to

171 The devil: tr. 16, §4; tr. 24 (CCSL 138, pp. 109-116), §6; tr. 76 (CCSL 138a, pp. 472-486), §6. Disease, contagion, infection: tr. 16, §5; tr. 24 (CCSL 138, pp. 109-116), §4; tr. 34 (CCSL 138, pp. 178-187), §4; tr. 42 (CCSL 138a, pp. 238-250), §5. cf. JK 405 = ep. 7 (PL 54, pp. 620-622), §1. Leo sometimes uses medical imagery in his sermons to describe salvation brought by faith in Christ (a “remediorum medicina” offered to humanity in this life) tr. 9 (CCSL 138, pp. 32-38), §1. He also used similar imagery in his letter to the Bishop of Aquileia, cited above.
172 Harry O. Maier, "'Manichee!' Leo the Great and the Orthodox Panopticon," JECS, 4, no. 4 (1996), 444.
173 On Eutyches, see chapter 3, below.
174 Leo’s theory of heresy is perhaps most fully articulated in tr. 24 (CCSL 138, pp. 109-116), §5.
delegitimize and marginalize them. This was a technique that Leo would employ against Priscillianism, and especially against Eutyches and his supporters in the Christological controversy. ‘Manichean’ became a common epithet in Leo’s writing which he used to describe and denounce Eutyches’ understanding of the Incarnation of Christ which was, in Leo’s view, tantamount to Manichean Docetism.175

* d. Augustine as the source for Leo’s anti-Manichean Rhetoric*

The tribunal of Roman Manicheans discussed above and Leo’s subsequent investigations, denunciations, and coerced public confessions backed by the threat of imperially implemented punishments were justified by an accusation of gross sexual immorality, not theological error. Yet the line between theological and social deviance was becoming increasingly blurred by the fifth century by which time it had become standard fare in Christian heresiological writing to link heresy and immorality; Jerome, Ambrose, Ambrosiaster and even Eusebius writing in the fourth century, all emphasized Manichean depravity, corruption and impurity. Augustine in particular had condemned Manichaeism for various immoralities, many of which Christians themselves had been accused of during the persecutions.176 Indeed, the parallel between Augustine’s anti-Manichean rhetoric and that employed by Leo is so striking that it seems almost certain that Augustine was Leo’s primary source of information for the sect. Each theme and accusation found in Leo’s polemic has direct parallels in that of Augustine, particularly in *de haeresibus*, a catalogue of heresies written between 428 and 430 in response to a request from Quodvultdeus, bishop of Carthage. The book describes eighty-eight different heresies, but by far the largest section (close to 1660 words) is dedicated to the description and refutation of Manichaeism.177 Leo’s description of Manichean worship of the sun and moon; their asceticism and fasting; their editing of the biblical text and denial of the Old Testament; their docetic Christology and dualistic worldview – all were at least in part gleaned from the earlier writing of

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175 e.g. in a sermon preached February 25, 451: tr. 46 (CCSL 138a, pp. 269-273); also in various letters, for example to the people and clergy of Constantinople in a letter of 449: JK 447 = ep. 59 (ACO II.4, pp. 34-37); Manichaeism and Apollinaris in a letter to Julian of Cos, dated 452: JK 486 ep. 109 (ACO II.4, pp. 137-138). The use of ‘Manichean’ as well as other heretical epithets in the Christological controversy will be considered in greater detail in the next chapter.


177 van Oort, *Augustine’s de haeresibus*, 452-453. See also *St. Leo the Great*, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 11-15, 18.
Augustine. Leo makes the same pun as Augustine on Mani’s name, calling him *insania*, and even uses the same word to describe the Manicheans – *exsecramentum*.

Perhaps the most striking similarity can be found when we compare the *inquisitio* against the Manicheans as reported by Leo to a similar trial that took place in Carthage some years earlier related by Augustine in *de haeresibus*. Augustine states that number of Manichean Elect had been brought before a tribunal, accused of ritual sexual impropriety. The victim in this case was an eleven-year old girl named Margaret who, according to Augustine, gave disturbing evidence that,

she had been violated in the performance of this [Manichean] criminal rite. Then with difficulty she compelled Eusebia, some kind of Manichean nun to admit that she had undergone that same treatment in this regard…she likewise gave information on the whole loathsome business at which flour is sprinkled beneath a couple in sexual intercourse to receive and commingle with their seed.

In both the prosecutions at Carthage and Rome, the Manicheans were accused of sexually violating a young girl as part of a secret ritual and it was this accusation that was used to bring the Manicheans to court. However in Carthage, the local tribune Ursus was in charge of the legal proceedings. It was Ursus, according to Augustine, who judged the innocence or guilt of the accused and passed judgement. In Rome, however, Leo was in charge and it was Leo who forced confessions and passed judgement, although the punishments were enforced by civil authorities. Leo’s Manichean tribunal, then, resembles a municipal inquest headed by a bishop rather than a magistrate.

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181 The trial is described in *de haer.*, §§46.9-10, pp. 314-316., quoted at §46.9. trans. Liguori G. Müller, *The de haeresibus of Saint Augustine* (Washington, 1956), 89. “Ubi puella illa nomine Margarita istam nefarium turpitudinem prodidit, quae cum esset annorum nondum duodecim, propter hoc scelestum mysterium se dicebat esse vitiatam. Tunc Eusebiam quandam manichaeam quasi sanctimonialem, idipsim propter hoc ipsum passam, vix compulsit confiteri, cum primo illa se asseruisset integram, atque ab obstetricie inspici postulasset. Quae inspecta et quid esset inventa, totum illum turpissimum sceles, ubi ad excipiendum et commiscendum concumbentium semen farina sub Sternitur quod Margarita indicante absens non audierat similiter indicavit.”

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But the parallels between Leo’s reported persecution and the case detailed in *de haeresibus* seems unlikely to have been mere coincidence.\(^{182}\) The description of the Carthaginian trial presumably reflects real events since Augustine assumes Quodvoldeus, the recipient of the tractate, knew the details of the case as he had been a deacon at Carthage when it had taken place.\(^{183}\) However, the accusations leveled against the Manicheans reported by Augustine seem at odds with his earlier descriptions of the sect, especially his emphasis on radical (if inappropriate) Manichean asceticism including total chastity, vegetarianism and poverty for the Elect. These depictions of Manichean religiosity are considered by most historians as more or less reliable.\(^{184}\) In contrast, Augustine’s latter writings like *de haeresibus*, composed in 428 or 429, contain far more fantastical claims about Manichean beliefs and practices that may well be misleading. In these later texts, we are presented with the paradoxical image of Manichean as dualistic ostentatious ascetic on the one hand, and on the other as debauched and lascivious corruptors. The accusations of sexual immorality may well reflect a heresiological topos more than an observed reality. At a minimum, Augustine’s much later claim that ritual sexual abuse of minors was a common Manichean practice is at odds with the widely accepted view that Manicheans, especially the Elect, lived lives of chastity. And because Leo’s condemnations of the sect in his sermons and letters are so similar to those advanced by Augustine, it is difficult to distinguish how much Leo actually knew about the practices and rituals of those men and women accused of Manichaeism in Rome and what he was simply parroting from earlier sources.

Yet Leo does at times give slightly different details than Augustine regarding Manichean beliefs and practices. For instance, Leo adds that Manicheans fast on Sundays and Mondays whereas Augustine mentions only Sunday fasts.\(^{185}\) These differences suggest that Leo was not unthinkingly replicating his model outright. They also highlight the diversity of practices and

\(^{182}\) See also Augustine, *de Natura boni contra Manicheas*, ed. Joseph Zycha, CSEL 25/2 (Wien, 1892), §§45-47 (c. 405) in which the bishop of Hippo gives a similar account of Manichean ritual practices. His information comes in part from “a certain Catholic Christian” at Rome who informed him about public tribunals held in Paphlagonia and Gaul at which the Manichaeans were said to have confessed to bizarre sexual practices as part of their worship services.

\(^{183}\) Augustine, *de haer.*, §46.9, p. 315. “Detecti sunt tamen in ecclesia, sicut scis, apud Cathaginem, iam te ibi diacono constituto…”


\(^{185}\) *St. Leo the Great*, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 12.
beliefs contained under the umbrella term Manichaeism, an epithet which, as we mentioned, was in the first place a product of orthodox polemicists rather than a reflection of the beliefs of the adherents. It seems likely that what Leo initially stumbled across in Rome was ‘Manichaeism’ of a sort. Seeking more information, Leo may well have turned to Augustine in order to familiarize himself with the beliefs and practices of the sect.\textsuperscript{186} Using his Augustinian model, Leo sought out and eventually found precisely the Manicheans described by Augustine, homogenizing difference to create a unified and demonic other.

\textit{e. Nostra vigilantia: Leo, leadership and authority}

Despite the commonalities between Augustinian and Leonine rhetoric, Leo’s motives for confronting these heretics stemmed not only from their theological deviance or its strange cultic practices but from their similarity to, or mimicry of, orthodoxy, similar to what we saw with the Pelagians. According to Leo’s own testimony, these Roman Manicheans could and did pass for ‘real’ Christians and Leo repeatedly warned his listeners not to be fooled by their outwardly pious, upright and even ascetic appearance and actions.\textsuperscript{187} The Manicheans “dare to partake in our mysteries in order to cover up their infidelity” and even go so far as to receive holy communion, although they stop short of accepting “the blood of our redemption” – that is, the Eucharistic wine.\textsuperscript{188} Those who “deny that a human nature dwells in the Son of God,” and who oppose the Gospel and the Symbol “cannot have any fellowship” in the Roman Church, nor can they join Christian services “even if they dare to take for themselves the name Christian.”\textsuperscript{189}

Leo’s anxiety over Manichean participation in the services of the orthodox church certainly suggests that there was at least a degree of hybridity between the two faiths – a grey area where

\textsuperscript{186} Wessel, \textit{Leo the Great}, 122. Lauras has suggested that while Leo was familiar with Augustine’s writings, Leo’s knowledge about the sect also came from reading Manichean sources during the Roman inquisition. Antoine Lauras, “Saint Léon le Grand et le Manichéisme Romain,” \textit{Studia Patristica}, 11 (1972), 203-209.

\textsuperscript{187} \textit{tr. 24} (CCSL 138, pp. 109-116), §6. The emphasis here is likely on the fasts of the Manicheans, the rigorouosity of which may have impressed more ascetic-minded Roman Christians.


\textsuperscript{189} \textit{tr. 24} (CCSL 138, pp. 109-116), §7. Cuius unitatis nullum poterunt habere consortium, qui in Dei Filio Deo vero humanam negant manere naturam, impugnatores salutiferi sacramenti, et paschalis exsules festi; quod, quia ab Evangelio dissentient et Symbolo contradicunt, nobiscum celebrrare non possunt, quia etsi audent sibi Christianum nomen assumere, ab omni tamen creatura, cui Christus caput est, repelluntur.
the boundaries of correct belief and heresy were blurred. In his earlier dealings with the Manicheans, Siricius, Bishop of Rome from 384-399, also endeavoured to impose a strict and uncompromising separation between orthodox Christians and the Manichean heretics. As the *Liber Pontificalis* reports, Siricius declared that,

any convert from the Manicheans who returned to the church should on no account be given communion but should be removed to a monastery and held in subjection throughout his life, so that tortured by fasting and prayer and tested by every trial till the final day of his death, through the church’s mercy the viaticum should be given them. He decreed that a heretic should be reconciled by the laying on of hands in the presence of the whole church.\(^{190}\)

Siricius’ successor Anastasius is said to have decreed “that no cleric from overseas should be received unless he had a certificate signed by five bishops [attesting to their orthodoxy] because at that time Manicheans were discovered at Rome.”\(^{191}\) Anastasius seems to be concerned with the orthodoxy of African priests. Seen together, Siricius, Anastasius and Leo’s concerns suggest that Manicheans were not only sharing communion with orthodox Christians, but that some were coming and going between the two faiths. That Manichaeism and Christianity could be seen as even vaguely analogous, even by a small portion of the populace, was a serious issue for Rome’s bishops. Indeed, it is often when the danger of confusion exists, where heresy and orthodoxy seem to overlap, that heresiological rhetoric is harshest and the emphasis on religious purity the greatest.\(^{192}\)

Leo, as he had done with the Pelagians in the north of Italy, was also at pains to emphasize that the heretics must be shunned, exposed, excluded from the wider community.\(^{193}\) Harry Maier, following the analyses of Lewis Coser and Mary Douglas, argues that there is a strong parallel between Leo’s anti-Manichean rhetoric and denunciations for witchcraft and sorcery. Accusations of witchcraft tend to arise in “unclear or obscure social situations where there is confusion over internal group boundaries.” When these kinds of allegations are made against individuals thought to belong to another sect or rival faction (especially when it is imagined to be

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\(^{192}\) A point made in a slightly different context in Boyarin and Burrus, "Hybridity," 432.

\(^{193}\) Shunned and exposed (*cavendi sunt…prodendi sunt*): tr. 9 (CCSL 138, pp. 32-38), §4. excluded and cut off: (*dilectissimi…ab amicitia vestra penitus abdicate*): tr. 16, §4. cf. tr. 9 (CCSL 138, pp. 32-38), §4. “Non sinantur latere homines, qui legem per Mosen datam, in qua Deus universitatis conditor ostenditur, reciprodam esse non credunt.”
coexisting within a group), they function “to remove social ambiguities by redefining boundaries, controlling deviance, and promoting factional rivalry.”\textsuperscript{194} The boundaries between Manichean and Christian were not at all clear – or at least not clear enough for Leo. Thus he encouraged members of his church to keep a close watch on their neighbours for any possible signs that would betray them as heretics.\textsuperscript{195}

This emphasis on watchfulness, on vigilance, is the final element in Leo’s anti-Manichean rhetoric which helped to create in Rome what Maier evocatively termed an “ecclesiology of surveillance.” Leo’s Rome became the “Orthodox Panopticon” which coerced obedience by observation.\textsuperscript{196} In the early years of his pontificate, Leo repeatedly used the image of the watchtower and the watchmen whose alertness kept the church free of heretical contamination. By invoking the watchman (the reference is to the “watchman of Israel,” Ezekiel 3:17-19), Leo was drawing on a long tradition of thinking about episcopal authority.\textsuperscript{197} Indeed, the function of the office was embedded in the vocabulary used to describe it: the Greek word for bishop \textit{episkopos}, later Latinized to \textit{episcopus}, can be translated as “overseer” or “watchman.”\textsuperscript{198} But vigilance was not only needed to defend orthodoxy from external threats; it also could be applied to the self. To defeat the foes of the church, Leo claimed, every individual must first be mindful of their own shortcomings such the propensity for lust and cupidity. Watchfulness permeated society; every Christian was to be mindful of deviance, both in others but also in himself. In the end, it was the eye of God that watched over all; if anyone forgot that their actions were subject to constant supernatural surveillance, the task of reminding them was delegated by God to the bishop, from the bishop to the priest, and by the priest to a husband or wife.\textsuperscript{199}

\textsuperscript{194} Maier, "Manichee!," 449. See also Peter Brown, "Socery, Demons, and the Rise of Christianity from Late Antiquity into the Middle Ages," in Witchcraft confessions & accusations, ed. Mary Douglas (London, 1970), 22, discussing accusations of black magic in the mid-fourth century as part of the uncertainty and conflict which came about during the creation of a new Christian Roman society.

\textsuperscript{195} Not only in tr. 9 (CCSL 138, pp. 32-38), §4 as noted above; but again in tr. 16, §5 “Illud quoque vos, dilectissimi, obsecrans moneo, ut si cui vestrum innotuerit ubi habitent, ubi doceant, quos frequentent, et in quorum societate requiescant, nostrae sollicitudini fideliter indicetis”; and in tr. 24 (CCSL 138, pp. 109-116), §6: “Si quis autem vobis alium annuntiaverit praeter id quod didicitis, anathema sit”.

\textsuperscript{196} Maier, "Manichee!" 455-457.

\textsuperscript{197} For an overview of post-Constantinian writing on episcopal authority, see Rapp, Holy Bishops, 41-55.

\textsuperscript{198} Derived from the Greek verb \textit{episcopein}, “to oversee.” Christine Mohrmann, "Episkopos — speculator," in \textit{Études sur le latin des chrétiens 4: Latin chrétien et latin médiéval} (Rome, 1977), 231-252; Conrad Leyser, Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great (New York, 2000), 26 ff; Rapp, Holy Bishops, 24-32 on the earliest use of the word. The bishop was thought to have a legal responsibility to account for his flock on the Day of Judgement: Leyser, Authority and Asceticism, 52.

\textsuperscript{199} Cooper, "Closely Watched Households," 33.
Leo’s very first sermon against the Manicheans preached in 443 is constructed in such a way so as to heighten anxiety and fear in his listeners regarding the shadowy heretics in their midst and to encourage their extirpation. It also acts to reinforce Leo’s own role as arbiter of orthodoxy and morality, a tower of light and the only legitimate locus of salvation in a sinister world. The sermon does not open with a direct condemnation of Manichaeism, but rather with warning against the errors and superstitions that the devil had seeded throughout the world. Leo proclaims, “whoever among men has offended God by whatever transgressions [impietates] is led astray by his [sc. Satan’s] tricks and has been misled by his wickedness.”\(^{200}\) Leo then expounds on the justice of God’s judgement against evil and sin. All men and women will have their acts of piety and mercy judged; those found lacking will be rightly condemned and will be “cast into the fire prepared for the torture of the devil and his angels, with him to share the punishment, whose will they choose to do. Who then would not tremble at this doom of eternal torment?”\(^ {201}\)

The specific target of the sermon only becomes clear in the final section: Manichaeism. Following as it does Leo’s discussion of the satanic origins of heresy, the rewards for the pious and the just punishments for the wicked, the rhetorical assault against Manichaeism takes on cosmic significance. The battle between orthodoxy and the Manicheans in Rome is a proxy for the battle between good and evil, God and the devil. Every man and woman would have to choose sides in this fight; the consequence of choosing badly is eternal damnation. Having established the soteriological importance of this fight against evil, Leo suggested to his listeners that in order to please God (and thus insure their own salvation) they must accuse and denounce the Manichean heretics “wherever they are hiding.” Leo explicitly compares the denunciation and condemnation of one’s neighbours as heretics to an act of charity such as giving alms to the poor which will be rewarded in the afterlife.\(^ {202}\) Implicit is the threat of damnation should his parishioners fail in this duty. Similar themes are expressed elsewhere in Leo’s sermons. Shortly after preaching the above-mentioned first sermon, Leo again compared actions taken against the

\(^{200}\) Late 443: *tr.* 9 (CCEL 138, pp. 32-38), §1. *Quidquid igitur hominum quibuslibet impietatibus deum laesit, huius fraude traductum, huius est nequitia depraatum.*

\(^{201}\) Ibid., §2.

\(^{202}\) Ibid., §4. “*Dignum est enim ut elemosinarum sacrificio etiam huius operis palma iuguntur.*”
heretics to prayers, alms and fasting and called for the “watchfulness (cura) of all the faithful [to] rise up against the most savage enemies of souls.”\footnote{Advent, 443, \textit{tr.} 16, \S6. trans. \textit{St. Leo the Great}, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 29.}

We can well imagine that Leo’s call to denounce the heretics was repeated throughout Rome by other members of the Roman clergy.\footnote{This can be inferred from Leo’s request that Romans denounce Manicheans to their priests. \textit{tr.} 9 (CCSL 138, pp. 32-38), \S4. “Ut autem in omnibus, dilectissimi, placeat Domino vestra devotio, etiam ad hanc vos hortamur industriam, ut Manichaeos ubicumque latentes vestris presbyteris publicetis.”} We should also recall Valentinian III’s edict of 445 which had permitted accusations to be made against Manicheans without the longstanding risks that had traditionally been associated with failed prosecutions.\footnote{NVal 18. pr. This was not the only time emperors set aside legal precedent in order to facilitate the prosecution of heretics. Compare with \textit{CT} 16.5.9.1, a law of Theodosius I from 382.} Thus, the atmosphere in Rome must have been thick with fear, indictments and denunciations. Alternatively it is also possible that Leo’s frantic anti-Manichean rhetoric denotes his ultimate powerlessness to actually supervise and mete out punishment of the non-conformists and deviants in his midst. Following this interpretation, the sermons demonizing and marginalizing Manicheans in Rome may have been, in Maier’s words, “means of consolidating social power in an ambiguous social situation.”\footnote{Maier, “Manichee!,” 460.}

Indeed, \textit{vigilantia} and \textit{cura} not only sought to encourage conformity by observation, but it also helped to emphasize Leo’s authority within the wider Italian church. As he reported to the bishops of Italy, “our watchfulness has exposed them [the Manicheans]; [our] authority and judgement has coerced them.”\footnote{JK 405 = \textit{ep.} 7 (PL 54, pp. 620-622), \S1. trans., \textit{St. Leo the Great}, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 47.} And as he had done in his attacks against Pelagianism, Leo was keen to emphasize vigilance and good governance of the church. Heresy arose when bishops were lax; Leo’s exhortation to his fellow bishops was a powerful reminder that Rome had fought and vanquished heresy. Now they must do the same. Thus, Leo sent copies of the results of his investigation to the bishops and warned them that the most recalcitrant of the heretics, “whose guilt [in this matter] was too serious to receive absolution” had fled into the provinces. Leo urged the Italian bishops to “take action with more care and prudence, lest in any place the men of the Manichean perversity and the teachers of the sacrilege find an opportunity to inflict damage upon your people.”\footnote{JK 405 = \textit{ep.} 7 (PL 54, pp. 620-622). “Et quia aliquantos de his quos hic ne se absolverent arcitor reatus involverat, cognovimus aufugisse…sollicitius agere dignetur et cautius necubi Manichaeae perversitatibus homines plebes vertras facultatem laedendi et huius sacrilegii possint invenire doctores.”} In Rome, Leo used the supposed foulness and wickedness of Manichaeism as a
foil with which he could contrast the purity, continuity and orthodoxy of the Roman Church. “But you,” Leo exhorts his listeners,

to whom I appeal in words no less dignified than those of the blessed apostle Peter – [you who are] “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a particular people,” [I Peter, 2.9] built upon Christ the inviolable rock, grafted into our Lord and Saviour himself by virtue of his veritable assumption of our flesh – remain steadfast in the faith which you confessed before many witnesses; [the faith] in which you, having been born again by water and the Holy Spirit, received the chrism of salvation and the seal of eternal life. 209

The passage echoes with Petrine imagery. Leo makes direct reference to Peter, cites a passage from the book of Peter, and uses the imagery of the rock, all of which emphasized Leo as Peter’s successor. Elsewhere, Leo describes “the most blessed Apostle Peter” who keeps watch (praetendit excubias) “unceasingly as a shepherd over the sheep entrusted to him by the Lord.” 210 It was Leo, acting in Peter’s place, who watched over the Romans with a keen eye for deviance.

In sum, Leo’s attack against Manichaeism is emblematic of his unease with the potential overlap between heresy and orthodoxy. Using Augustine as his model, Leo instigated a legal investigation to expose and punish this surreptitious and demonically inspired error threatening to infiltrate his congregation. To explain and to delegitimise Manichaeism, Leo imagined their beliefs and practices as little more than a contemporary incarnation of previous errors. In order to defeat the heretics, maximum vigilance was required both from himself as bishop, and also from his congregants who were encouraged to denounce any possible deviance. Leo is the locus of legitimate religion, Manichaeism is a deviancy that must be rooted out and destroyed. After Leo, we hear almost nothing about Manicheans in Italy. Lieu suggests that the “systematic destruction


210 tr. 16, §6. “… sabbato autem apud praesentem beatissimum apostolum Petrum vigilias celebramus; qui, sicut experimur et credimus, pro commendatis sibi a Domino ovibus indesinenter pastorales praetendit excubias.”
of their books and the exile of their leaders by Leo and his successors would have given the sect little chance of recovery in the early Middle Ages.”

5. Priscillianism

Having considered Leo’s attack against Pelagianism and Manichaeism in the first few years of his pontificate, we now turn to Priscillianism which he encountered in 447. Many of the same elements of Leo’s earlier anti-heretical rhetoric are once again used against what appeared to be a revival of Priscillianist teachings in Spain. In particular, Leo again emphasized the danger of private or domestic religiosity and heretical mimicry of orthodoxy. Also notable are Leo’s views on apocryphal Christian literature, which he firmly condemned. But against the Priscillians, Leo also emphasized the social consequences of religous deviance. Priscillian teachings in particular were seen to undermine secular rule and religious authority. The potential consequences were dire; if Priscillianism was permitted to thrive, law would cease to function and good and evil actions would become indistinguishable. It was thus legitimate, in Leo’s view, for the state to enforce orthodoxy - even to the point of execution. When in the service of the true faith, as it was defined by the bishop of Rome, the use of secular power was legitimate for the coercion of religious dissidents.

**a. Priscillian before Leo**

Priscillian was born sometime in the mid-fourth century in Spain. He preached a version of Christianity that emphasized asceticism and may well have been influenced by Christian Gnosticism, although it was certainly possible to interpret his religious system as orthodox.²¹²

²¹¹ Lieu, *Manichaeism*, 207. Lieu does of course note the three references to the papal persecutions by Leo’s successors referenced in the LP (the veracity of which shall be considered below).

²¹² As can be seen from the proceedings of the Council of Saragossa in 380 at which the bishops of Spain debated the orthodoxy of Priscillian’s teachings and practices. But the concern was disciplinary rather than theological or doctrinal. Priscillian was not condemned by name; the bishops did, however, condemn various acts associated with his teachings, including excessive fasting, especially on Sundays, and the mingling of unrelated men and women at study groups. See the *acta* of the council in Concilio I de Zaragoza: Texto Crítico, ed. Félix Rodríguez. A detailed analysis of the *acta* of the Council of Saragossa can be found in Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic*, 30-46. Priscillian certainly considered himself orthodox and to be a member in good standing of the Catholic Church. On Priscillian’s orthodoxy, see Raymond Van Dam, *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Berkeley, 1985), 437-438, 446-448.
However, in 380 he came into conflict with Hydatius, bishop of Merida, who saw Priscillian’s private and mixed-sex study meetings and his ascetic piety as a challenge to his own episcopal authority. Priscillian’s extreme asceticism and his fondness for pagan and apocryphal Christian texts - some of which were apparently also used by Manicheans – also left him vulnerable to accusations of heresy and Hydatius, initially supported by Ambrose of Milan, managed to successfully cast Priscillian as a crypto-Manichean and as a magician. In 385, Priscillian and his allies found themselves in the secular court of the usurping emperor Magnus Maximus. The transfer of the controversy to a secular court was vocally opposed by Ambrose and Martin of Tours, both of whom considered the trial of an ecclesiastical case by secular authorities to have been a terrible abuse. Nonetheless, Hydatius happily appeared as the accuser. At a trial held in Trier, Priscillian was convicted of sorcery and was subsequently condemned to death by Maximus – an act opposed by both Ambrose and Martin. Priscillian and his closest acolytes were then beheaded.

b. Leo and Priscillianism

Leo’s interaction with this heresy is confined to a single letter written in reply to the inquiries of the Spanish bishop Turibius of Astorga, in 447. Turibius had sent Leo three documents – a personal letter, a memorandum (commonitorium) detailing the beliefs of the sect, and a libellus to refute them. Leo replied not only to Turibius, but also to the other important Spanish sees including New Carthage, Lusitania and Galicia. His letter was not meant to be personal, but rather encyclical and authoritative.

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213 Priscillian’s surviving tractates have recently been edited and published by Marco Conti, *The Complete Works*, ed. Marco Conti (Oxford, 2010). From these texts, it does appear that Priscillian shared with the Manicheans a dualistic cosmology; however it was not nearly as stark as that the Manicheans were accused of holding. It was also in part the link between apocrypha and heresy, particularly the association with Manichaism and Priscillianism, which prompted orthodox reaction against these texts. See Conti’s introduction in ibid., 8-12.


216 Only Leo’s response to Turibius survives, from which the details of Turibius’ letter can be derived. On the letter in general, see Karl Künstle, *Antipriscillian*: *Dogmengeschichtliche Untersuchungen und Texte aus dem Streite gegen Priscillians I* (Freiburg, 1905), 117-125.

Because Leo almost certainly had no experience with or direct knowledge of this sect, his views are derivative and unoriginal, incorrectly linking Priscillian and his followers to the Manicheans. Leo calls the Manicheans the *cognati* of the Priscillianists and he states that they [sc. the Manicheans and Priscillianists] “differ only in name, but [are] united in their blasphemies.” He also assumed that the rituals he had discovered in his Roman investigation of the Manicheans, including extreme fasting and the worship of the sun, apply equally to the Priscillianists. Leo also presumably supplemented what he had learned from Turibius’ letter with information from Augustine’s *de haeresibus*. And on account of his experience with the Manicheans in Rome in 443-444 and because Priscillianism had become closely associated with, if not analogous to, Manichaeism, Leo was able to recycle much of his earlier anti-Manichean rhetoric and apply it to the condemnation of Priscillian and his teachings. Indeed, Leo may well have revised some of his earlier anti-Manichean sermons in 447 or 450 as part of his response to Priscillianist/Manichean teachings. Thus the Priscillianists described by Leo bear little resemblance to what Priscillian actually taught; these ‘Priscillianists’ were little more than a rhetorical construct developed over the previous half-century upon which Leo built.

Leo’s letter opens with a detailed prologue recounting the troubled political and religious situation in Spain; the remainder consists of a discussion and commentary on Turibius’ anti-Priscillian *libellus*. As had been the case with both the Pelagians and Manicheans, Leo’s letter to Turibius reflects his longstanding concern over inscribing definitive boundaries between orthodoxy and heresy. In particular Leo was deeply concerned with the clandestine infiltration of true faith by both tainted people and corrupted texts. Like the Manicheans, Leo’s Priscillianists were attending services in Catholic churches in order to avoid detection and as a means of corrupting the faithful. Worse still and like the situation described above with the Pelagians in 442, even some priests had been co-opted by Priscillian teachings. To prevent this from

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218 *Cognati*: §4; “differ in name only”: §16. cf. §§. 4-5, 6-7. 16.


220 Van Dam, *Leadership and Community*, 113-114.

221 Suggested in the last line of the prologue of Leo’s letter to Turibius, JK 412 = *ep.* 15 (PL 54, pp. 677-695), pr. See also Benedikt Vollmann, *Studien zum Priscillianismus* (St. Ottilien, 1965), 142 ff.
occurring in the future, Leo is adamant that the heretics be separated off from the followers of the true faith; they must not be permitted to hide under “the cloak of the name ‘Christian.’”

A related problem was the Priscillianist use of scripture. Firstly, they claimed the same sacred texts as the orthodox and used them to justify their own interpretations and teachings. To do so, the heretics had edited the texts, according to Leo, presumably excising the passages they disagreed with and adding others. As Leo states, thanks to the “testimony of truthful witnesses,” it had been discovered that many of the books of the heretics were utterly corrupt, although they nevertheless persist in calling them canonical. These alterations seem to have been so widespread that some were having difficulty differentiating authorised (i.e. ‘correct’) texts from those tarnished by heretical editing. Thus Leo advises that extreme care must be taken that these falsified and heretical codices not be used in church.

Secondly, Leo vocally condemns the reading of apocryphal Gospel texts, supposedly popular amongst Priscillianists. These texts, called by Leo a *seminarium falsitatum*, were not only to be forbidden, but they were to be removed from wherever they could be found and “burned to ashes in flames.” Moreover, Leo commands that any bishop who has not prohibited his congregants from the keeping of apocryphal scriptures or who has permitted corrupted Priscillian books from being read in church should be deemed a heretic.

Lastly, Leo connects the rise of heresy in Spain with the deteriorating political situation, an association which encourages him to reflect upon the proper role of secular coercive power in the opposition to religious deviance. His view of the Priscillianists made this question particularly relevant. Priscillianism is described by Leo as a demonically inspired movement whose ultimate goal is to undermine and ultimately destroy the true faith. These are, in Leo’s view, active

\[\text{222} \quad \text{JK 412 = } ep. \ 15 \ (PL \ 54, \ pp. \ 677-695), \ §16. \ \text{“Non sit perversis liberum simulare quod fingunt nec sub velam, ine nominis Christiani decretorum imperialium statute declinet.”} \]

\[\text{223} \quad \text{Not unlike Tertullian’s indictment of Marcion in his *de praescriptione haereticorum*, §38, trans. Peter Holmes, *The five books of Tertullianus against Marcion* (Edinburgh, 1868), 474. “Marcion expressly and openly used the knife, not the pen, since he made such an excision of the scriptures as suited his own subject-matter.”} \]

\[\text{224} \quad \text{JK 412 = } ep. \ 15 \ (PL \ 54, \ pp. \ 677-695), \ §15. \ \text{“quia et nos istud veracium testium relatione comperimus, et multos corruptissimos eorum codices, qui canonici titulantur, invenimus.”} \]

\[\text{225} \quad \text{Ibid. Curandum ergo est et sacerdotali diligentia maxime prouidendum, ut falsi codices et ad sencera viritate discordes in nullo usu lectionis habeantur.” I read ‘lectio’ as reading in church.} \]

\[\text{226} \quad \text{Ibid.} \]

\[\text{227} \quad \text{Ibid., §pr. The sect is described as having re-emerged due to disruptions in the provinces and “the storms of the wars” which have prevented the carrying out of secular laws against heresy and had made the meeting of synods difficult.} \]
conspirators and agents of the devil involved in a battle against Christianity.\textsuperscript{228} And as Leo had described the Manicheans years earlier, the Priscillians too are dismissed as an amalgam of errors including those of the Manicheans, the teaching of Origen, Paul of Samosata and Photius, Marcion of Sinope and Arius, but also of Paganism, astrology and magic.\textsuperscript{229} None of these accusations can be confirmed in the surviving Priscillian texts but the association of one error with various others was an effective part of Leo’s heresiological rhetoric. By arguing that Priscillianism was nothing more than a compilation of previously condemned heresies, Leo implied that Priscillianism too was worthy of a similar condemnation.

The specific heresies with which Priscillianism is compared is important and foreshadows the rhetoric Leo would employ as part of the Christological controversy that was about to re-emerge: the Manicheans, Photians, the followers of Marcion and of Arius together with those of Paul of Samosata had all, from Leo’s perspective, misunderstood the nature of the Incarnation and thus had destabilized the crucial connection between humanity and God that was achieved through a Jesus Christ that was both human and divine. The Priscillian misunderstanding of the relationship between humanity and the divine constituted an attack on Leo’s understanding of human responsibility and human freedom.\textsuperscript{230} Moreover, their supposed affinity for astrology and magic denied God’s role as the ultimate arbiter of human destiny and signaled a refusal to accept one’s place in God’s plan.\textsuperscript{231} This had obvious soteriological implications, but also societal ones: unrestrained fatalism and a diminished sense of accountability for one’s actions that threatened to fundamentally upend societal norms. Thus according to Leo, if the Priscillianists were permitted to teach their impiety “all decrees, not only of human laws but even of divine constitutions, will be dissipated; for it will no longer be possible to discriminate between good or bad actions if a fatal necessity impels the movement of the mind to one side or the other and if everything which is done by men is not [the action] of men but of the stars.” The consequence for society was almost apocalyptic: laws would no longer be enforced or even valued. The basis for all human relations would be subverted. Leo continues: “all care for honesty would be taken away and every conjugal bond would be untied and…at the same time, divine and human law


\textsuperscript{230} Wessel, Wessel, \textit{Leo the Great}, 110-111.

\textsuperscript{231} Neil, \textit{Leo the Great}, 22.
would be subverted, if people of this kind were allowed to live anywhere." The Priscillian proclivity for astrology, among other things, undermined human laws as well as religious ones and ultimately threatened to destabilize society.

To prevent this from occurring, Leo looked back at the history of the sect and its initial condemnation. His conclusion was that ecclesiastical authority and the state must work in concert; the former to delineate error, the latter to proscribe it with laws and ultimately, with violence. Leo praises the Church Fathers (patres nostri) who took firm action against the heresy when it first arose. He goes on to note the assistance of the “severe constitutions of Christian rulers” in opposing the heresy, a reference to the various laws enacted against heresy by the Roman emperors. And in an interesting passage, Leo approves the role of the secular authorities (mundi principes) who “struck down its originator with the sword of public laws together with a great number of his disciples.” The passage is ambiguous. It is likely a reference to the execution of Priscillian, although it could equally apply to the execution of Mani himself in 276 or 277 by the Sassanid Emperor, Bahram I. But it seems odd that a Bishop of Rome would praise the “public laws” (leges publicarum) of the Zoroastrian Persian Empire. If the reference is to Priscillian, then Leo exhibits none of Ambrose and Martin’s hesitation towards the execution of the heresiarch and instead matches the hard line taken by the Spanish bishops in the 380s. As far as Leo was concerned, it was entirely legitimate for secular coercive power, even to the point of execution, to be brought to bear against those deemed to have undermined the essential communal bonds that held Roman society together. In this case, the aims of the state and of the faith were aligned. Heresy was both a cosmic and theological problem, but also a social ill that needed to be stamped out.

Conclusion

The fight against Pelagianism, Manichaeism and Priscillianism emphasized Rome as the arbiter of the true faith and as the ultimate judicial and organizational authority precisely at a time when political instability was undermining imperial power and the influence of local churches. Africa

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234 As is argued in St. Leo the Great, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 53, n. 70.
235 Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum, 434.
had been invaded by the Vandals in 429 and was largely under their control ten years later. Spain had been ravaged by wars which made synods almost impossible. Northern Italy had been subject to invasion, most recently from Attila and his Huns. Rome too, it needs to be said, was subject to sack in 410 and 455. However, under Leo the ecclesiastical hierarchy remained stable and through his opportunistic intervention, Rome’s influence was increasingly accepted and its counsel increasingly sought. Against the Pelagians, Leo called for a synod under his authority and called a provincial bishop to task for his failures to discipline his clergy; against the Manicheans in Rome, he organized a tribunal; against the Priscillianists in Spain, he sent letters to various important bishops, organized a provincial synod and instructed Turibius to “ensure that the official instrument which contains our decision is delivered to the bishops (nostраe ordinationis auctoritas).” It seems as if the proposed synod did not take place. However Leo’s letter was consequential for the Spanish church and Leo’s intervention may have been important for rooting out Manichaeism in that province. Moreover Leo’s reputation as an intractable enemy of heresy was widely known, as evidenced by the Spanish chronicler Hydatius’ comment in his chronicle for the year 445: “proceedings have been brought against the Manicheans throughout the provinces by the Bishop of Rome [sc. Leo] who presided at that time.”

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236 Leo sent stern letters to the bishops of Mauritania Cæsariensis reprimanding them for the non-canonical appointment of bishops in that province. JK 408 = ep. 12 (PL 54, pp. 645-656). The Vandal invasions would undermine the power of the African Church, which increasingly looked to Rome for support in the second half of the fifth century. Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum, 438-439.

237 According to Leo, JK 412 = ep. 15 (PL 54, pp. 677-695), §pr.

238 Ibid., §17.

239 St. Leo the Great, ed. Schipper and van Oort, 5.

Chapter Three: Leo Part II: The Heresiological Rhetoric of the Christological Debate

Introduction

As we saw in the previous chapter, Leo was uncompromising in his dealings with heresy in the western churches. He sought to insinuate himself in the affairs of local churches in an attempt to solve the disciplinary problems that were, in Leo’s view, largely responsible for the survival and growth of heresies. He also acted decisively against private religious practice as well as against the Manicheans in Rome via a legal proceeding. But while Pelagianism, Manichaeism and Priscillianism had been the focus of Leo’s anti-heretical efforts before 448, the conflict that indelibly marked the later phase of his pontificate was Christology, a modern term for the study of the second person of the Trinity – God the Son – and the relationship between his human and divine natures as revealed in scripture.¹

There are significant differences in Leo’s approach to these earlier heresies and to the question of Christology which will be the focus of this chapter. For one, whereas Manichaeism, Priscillianism and Pelagianism had all been condemned prior to Leo’s pontificate, Christology and what constituted Christological orthodoxy was still developing in the 440s and 450s. Moreover, unlike his dealings with heresy in the western church, Christology had also been primarily a debate that had occurred in the east, especially between the sees of Alexandria and Constantinople.² Leo, who became an active participant in the dispute only after 448, negotiated the complex and at times strained relationships between the Patriarchal sees in the East and lobbied the imperial court in Constantinople and the other eastern bishops in an attempt to persuade them to accept his own Christological teachings as definitive and orthodox. We will also see that as part of this diplomatic effort and as he had done in his attack against western heretics, Leo mobilized the rhetoric of heresiology during the Christological controversy in order to marginalize and delegitimize any position that opposed his own. The focus of Leo’s polemic was the monk Eutyches who had helped reignite the Christological controversy in 448. As he had

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previously done against the Priscillians and Manicheans and building on the precedents set in the early phase of the controversy, Leo sought to place Eutyches – and by extension his supporters – within a genealogy of error that associated them with Christianity’s most infamous heresiarchs. By characterizing Eutyches’ teachings as an amalgam of already condemned heresies, Leo delegitimized his opponent by implicating him in the errors of the past. Eventually Leo would come to describe Eutyches as a heresiarch, the eponymous founder of his own heresy called Eutychianism. Especially after the Council of Ephesus II in 449 and the Council of Chalcedon in 451, Leo imagined any and all opposition to his own Christological teaching and to the council as tantamount to either Eutychianism or its antithesis, Nestorianism. Soon, Eutychianism and Nestorianism became paradoxically entwined by Leo as the two equally incorrect extremes of Christological speculation, a connection that helped make Rome’s position in the controversy acceptable and ultimately authoritative, especially for eastern audiences. Moreover by implicating Eutyches in past error and by inventing the category of Eutychianism which could be usefully contrasted with Nestorianism, Leo defined the boundaries of acceptable Christological belief.

1. Context: The Christological Debate

Before turning to Leo’s role in the Christological controversy of the fifth century, we must briefly pause and consider the context of this debate. The question of Christology had emerged as a logical extension of the Trinitarian debates of the fourth century. The definitions of the faith accepted at the Councils of Nicaea (325) and later at Constantinople (381) in opposition to Arianism prompted Christians to more clearly define Jesus Christ and his relationship with humanity. According to this perspective, the Logos

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3 Aloys Grillmeier, CICT 1, 414ff; Frances M. Young and Andrew Teal, From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich., 2010), 178-298. For an outline of the debate in general, see Casula, Conflitto, 81-94.

4 In secondary literature the Christological debate is sometimes described as having taken place between two schools. The Alexandrian school, dominated by Platonism and fond of allegorical interpretation, is usually said to have over-emphasized Christ’s divinity at the expense of his humanity. This way of thinking is exemplified by Cyril. The Antiochene School, which is often described as having been influenced by Aristotle, took the opposite tact from the Alexandrines and emphasized Christ’s humanity. Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius are usually held up as the most famous examples of this approach. The notion of two competing schools can be helpful if we imagine “Alexandrian” and “Antiochene” as representing exegetical traditions which were not hermetically sealed from one another or from the Christian world more generally. But recent research has rightly concluded that the Christological
had, by an act of his will, placed himself under the conditions of human nature and had suffered and died. This voluntary act allowed Cyril, following in the tradition of Athanasius, to speak of Christ’s full humanity without accepting that his humanity was in any way distinct from the divine. As Cyril stated in his second letter to Nestorius, “we say…that in an unspeakable and incomprehensible way, the Logos united to himself in his hypostasis, flesh enlivened by a rational soul, and in this way became a human being and has been designated “Son of man.”

The second approach, which was at odds with Cyril and his supporters, is exemplified by the theological tradition often associated with Diodore of Tarsus (d. 395), Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428), Theoderet of Cyrus and, of course, Nestorius. For these men, there was thus no need (or even the possibility) of an essential unity between the Logos and Jesus the man, especially expressed as a union of two natures. Christ’s human nature had to be maintained as distinct and separate from his divine nature in order to ensure salvation; his humanity was as complete and as real as his divinity. They taught that the Logos, eternal and fully divine, had taken up a human body; the suffering of Jesus was that of his humanity, not of the divine Logos which dwelt in the

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6 Cyril of Alexandria, Second letter to Nestorius, in Daley, Christ and Christologies, 132-133. Compare Cyril to the teachings of Athanasius, for example his Orations against the Arians, Book III in ibid., 83-101.

7 On Nestorius’ theology and that of his supporters, see Friedrich Loofs, Nestorius and his Place in the History of Christian Doctrine (Cambridge, 1914), passim but esp. 94ff; C. Schäublin, Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der Antiokenischen Exegese (Cologne-Bonn, 1974); Grillmeier, CICT 1, 451-472; Manlio Simonetti, Lettera e/o allegoria: un contributo alla storia dell’esegesi patristica (Roma, 1985), 156-201; Nuovo dizionario patristico e di antichità cristiane (Genova, 2006); Gavrilyuk, The Impassible God, 141-144. The Christology attributed to the so-called Antiochene School, sometimes referred to as assumptus homo, was at least in part a construct created by their theological opponents. See Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy," 148-149; Armitage, Twofold Solidarity, 4 and n.9 with refs. Indeed, the heresy of ‘Nestorianism’ is falsely attributed to the Bishop of Constantinople: “the extreme view that the human Jesus and divine Christ were two different persons – and the separation of the Dyophysite Christians into their own church (the “Nestorian” Church of the East) did not involve him.” EEC, 811.
man Jesus in such a way that his two natures were not confused or mixed into a single subject, but rather existed together in a common form.¹⁸

The antagonists in this debate attacked each other and their teachings in numerous letters and pamphlets between 428 and 431. In particular Nestorius, who had become Patriarch of Constantinople in 428, was disturbed by the use of the term Theotokos (“mother of God”) by the faithful in the capital to describe Mary. In Nestorius’ view, Mary could rightly be described as the mother of Christ rather than of God.⁹ The debate eventually prompted the Emperor Theodosius II to intervene and call for an ecumenical council to solve once and for all the problem of Christology. This became the Council of Ephesus in 431 which was presided over by Cyril himself. With the support of Rome, Cyril and the council deposed Nestorius and condemned his teachings. This brought to a close the first phase of the controversy.⁸

Less than twenty years later the question of Christology once again came to the forefront, this time prompted by the Constantinopolitan archimandrite Eutyches, a man with important connections to the imperial court.¹⁰ Eutyches was a vocal supporter of Cyril of Alexandria’s Christology and a vigilant opponent of anything that could be construed as Nestorian – that is, any teaching that opposed that of Cyril. In 448, Eutyches was accused of teaching that Christ had only one nature after the incarnation to the point of denying Christ a real human body.¹¹ To some in the capital, this radicalization of Cyril’s teaching was unorthodox and Eutyches was subsequently condemned by the Patriarch of Constantinople Flavian at the so-called Home Synod in 448.¹²

However, Theodosius was not convinced and decided to convene a larger synod at Ephesus to decide on Eutyches’ orthodoxy. From the perspective of the emperor, Nestorius was the condemned heretic; Eutyches may well have only been trying to ensure the preservation of the

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⁹ Casula, *Conflitto*, 82.
¹⁰ Eutyches enjoyed a friendship with the eunuch Chrysaphius who was influential from 441 until the last few months of Theodosius II’s reign in 450. According to Gelasius’ account in *Gesta de nomine Acacii* (Thiel, *tract. I*, pp. 510-519 = CA *ep*. 99, pp. 440-453), §2, Chrysaphius was Theodosius’ spatharius. On Eutyches’ Christology (which was not static, but evolved over time), see in particular E. Schwartz, “Der Prozess des Eutyches,” *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist.*, 5 (1929), 1-93; R Draguet, “La christologie d'Eutychès d'après les Actes du synode de Flavien,,” *Byzantion*, 6 (1931), 441-457.
¹² The proceedings of the Home Synod were read into the record during the first session of the Council of Chalcedon. Flavian's condemnation of Eutyches can be found in the Latin *acta* at ACO II.3.1 §551, p.128. For a detailed analysis of the Home Synod, see Georg May, “Das Lehrverfahren gegen Eutyches im November des Jahres 448. Zur Vorgeschichte des Konzils von Chalkedon,” *AHC*, 21 (1989), 1-61.
decrees of the council of Ephesus and prevent any lingering sympathy for Nestorius in the capital from contaminating the rest of the church. At the Council of Ephesus II (449), Eutyches was exonerated by Cyril of Alexandria’s successor, Dioscorus. Finally in 451 at the Council of Chalcedon, Leo’s own Christological statement, the Tomus ad Flavianum (ep. 28), was accepted as orthodox teaching of the church. Both Dioscorus and Eutyches were condemned and deposed.

2. Eutyches: First Impressions

Looking back at the events of 448-451 with the benefit of historical hindsight, Leo’s opposition to Eutyches seems inevitable. However Eutyches’ heterodoxy was not clear when he initially came to Leo’s attention. Eutyches had written to inform the Bishop of Rome about a supposed revival of the condemned teachings of Nestorius in the eastern capital – possibly a reference to Theodoret of Cyrus, Ibas of Edessa, and Domnus of Antioch. In June of the same year, Leo responded with a short letter praising the Constantinopolitan monk for his vigilant opposition to the Nestorian heresy, although he also expressed a desire for more information in order to clarify the confused situation. Months passed. Then in November 448, Flavian, the Patriarch of Constantinople, convoked the so-called Home Synod. Under questioning, Eutyches continued to

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13 The so-called latrocinium or Robber Council. After the council, Leo wrote to Theodosius’ sister Pulcheria (who was now empress after her brother’s death the year before) and famously referred to the proceedings of 449 as “that which was able to be carried out at Ephesus – not by a legitimate legal process, but by robbery (non iudicio, sed latrocinio potuit perpetrari).” JK 475 = ep. 95 (ACO II.4, pp. 50-51). See also a letter of Gelasius in which he also refers to the ephesinum latrocinium. JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398), §1

14 At least for the churches that accept the Council of Chalcedon. On the language and theological background of the Chalcedonian symbol, see Alois Grillmeier, "Die theologische und sprachliche Vorbereitung der christologischen Formel von Chalkedon," in Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. Alois Grillmeier and Heinrich Bacht (Würzburg, 1952-1955). There are numerous modern works which detail the evolution of Leo’s Christology, the theology of the Tomus and the acrimonious political situation in the eastern capital in the mid fifth century. The most recent, detailed accounts can be found in Wessel, Leo the Great, passim, but esp. chapter 5ff; Green, Soteriology, passim, but esp. chap.6; Casula, Conflitto, passim, but esp. chaps. III, IV. Casula and Galot, La cristologia di San Leone Magno: il fondamento dottrinale e soteriologico. Leo was in all likelihood also greatly influenced by Cyril’s Christology. See Hans van Loon, The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria (Leiden, 2009), 24-29.


16 Eutyches’ letter does not survive. We have only Leo’s response in which the Bishop of Rome refers to the “Nestoriana haeresis” – the Nestorian heresy, or ‘Nestorianism.’ On the possible targets of Eutyches’ condemnation, see Leo Donald Davis, The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (325-787): Their History and Theology (Collegeville, Minn, 1987), 170-171.

17 June 1, 448. JK 418 = ep. 20 (ACO II.4, p. 3). This was a reply to the above-mentioned letter of Eutyches.
insist that after the Incarnation, Christ had only “one nature,” a statement that seemed to deny the reality of Christ’s humanity. Flavian and the Home Synod condemned Eutyches, deprived him of his priestly rank and his monastery, and he was excommunicated.  

In December, Leo received a second lengthy letter from Eutyches in which he explained his theology and appealed his condemnation by Flavian. Eutyches firmly proclaimed that his faith was that of the Councils of Nicaea and Ephesus I and was consistent with teachings of Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, and the Cappadocian Fathers. At this point, Leo had not yet received Flavian’s report of the trial. That Eutyches had been condemned as a heretic must have come as a surprise to Leo, and he wrote to Flavian in February 449 expressing his concern that the patriarch had not sent a full account of Eutyches’ trial to Rome. In fact, Flavian had sent a letter explaining the situation sometime at the end of 448, but Leo did not receive it until the late spring of the following year. Flavian, no doubt puzzled when he received Leo’s letter asking for something he had already sent, wrote a second letter once again explaining Eutyches’ condemnation. Finally in May, 449 Leo received Flavian’s first account of Eutyches’ trial as well as an invitation to attend the upcoming council called by Theodosius. It was in this confused atmosphere of discord, condemnations, and missing/late epistles that Leo wrote the *Tomus* to Flavian, responding to his first letter of 448, as well as a number of other letters to the

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**Footnotes:**


19 Survives in two variants: *libellus appellationis ad papam Leonem* in ACO II.2, pp.33-35; ACO II.2, pp. 143-145. Interestingly, Eutyches also sent an appeal to Peter Chrysologus, Bishop of Ravenna, to which Peter responded: ACO II.1.2, pp. 45-46. cf. the comments in Batiffol, *Le siège apostolique* (359-451), 445-446.

20 February 18, 449. JK 420 = *ep.* 23 (ACO II.4, pp. 4-5). cf. Leo’s letter to Theodosius written on the same day, JK 421 = *ep.* 24 (ACO II.4, p. 3-4). “quid autem in Constantinopolitana Ecclesia perturbationis acciderit, quod ita fratrem et coepiscopum meum Flavianum potuerit commovere, ut Eutychem presbyterum communione privaret, nondum potui evidentem agnoscre.” In a later letter to Juvenal of Jerusalem, Leo refers back to this period when he was unsure if Eutyches was actually a heretic. June 13, 449, to Juvenal of Jerusalem JK 434 = *ep.* 34 (ACO II.4, pp. 16-17).

21 Undated letter, end of 448. *relatio ad Papam Leonem de Damnatione Evtychis* (ACO II.2.1, pp.21-22). Leo almost certainly did not receive this letter until May, 449 and acknowledges its late arrival in a short reply to Flavian dated that same month. JK 442 = *ep.* 27 (ACO II.4, p.9).

22 Undated, before June 449: *alia epistola Flaviani episcopi ad Papam Leonem de Evtychem* (ACO II.2.1, pp. 23-24). Leo acknowledges the receipt of this letter in a short reply to Flavian written on June 20, 449: *ep.* 36.

23 Noted in a letter dated June 13, 449 to Theodosius. JK 424 = *ep.* 29 (ACO II.2, pp. 9-10). Leo acknowledges his invitation to the council and informs the emperor that he cannot attend, but will send Julius, Renatus and Hilary in his place, along with the *Tomus* to Flavian which contains “a full treatment of what the Catholic Church everywhere believes and teaches concerning the mystery of the Lord’s Incarnation.” cf. to Pulcheria JK 425 = *ep.* 30 (ACO II.2, p.10-11); JK 425 = *ep.* 31 (ACO II.2, p.12-15).
imperial family, to Julian of Cos and to Juvenal of Jerusalem. In these letters Leo condemned the teachings of both Nestorius and Eutyches and, as we can see with the benefit of historical hindsight, codified western Christological teaching.

It should be noted that in his first letter to Rome, Flavian had not asked Leo to judge the doctrinal decisions of the Home Synod or to judge Eutyches’ orthodoxy. Rather, Flavian expected Leo to simply announce the decisions the Constantinopolitan church had made. It was only after Flavian felt that he had been convicted in an unfair trial at the Council of Ephesus II that he acknowledged Rome’s ultimate jurisdictional authority. The same might be said for Eutyches who had also appealed his condemnation to Rome, thereby acknowledging its role as the final authority in ecclesiastical disputes. Rome’s authority within the church was often directly tied to its role as court of last resort, especially in cases of correct teachings. Winners were understandably less likely to seek or even recognize Rome’s authority; losers, on the other hand, were happy to be given a final chance by the Apostolic See.

3. Leo’s Response

By the spring and early summer of 449 it had become sufficiently clear to Leo that Eutyches’ theology had to be opposed. However, Leo modulated his response depending on his audience, expressing consideration and even sympathy when writing to members of the imperial family in the east while simultaneously taking a much harder line with his known allies. For example, in a letter written to Emperor Theodosius’ sister Pulcheria on same day as the Tomus, Leo stated that the old Constantinopolitan monk had fallen into error “from ignorance rather than guile.” Leo portrays Eutyches as naïve and unsophisticated: having placed such emphasis on Christ’s divinity, he had failed to appreciate his humanity. Should Eutyches denounce his error in writing (per libellarem satisfactionem proprium damnet errorem), he could return to communion with

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24 June 13, 449. JK 423 = ep. 28 (ACO II.2, pp. 24-33). Leo had also written to Flavian in May to acknowledge his receipt of the earlier letter and promises a detailed response: JK 442 = ep. 27 (ACO II.4, p.9). See also to Flavian JK 432 = ep. 38 (ACO II.4, p. 18); JK 442 = ep. 49 (ACO II.4, pp. 23). Note that Silva-Tarouca considers ep. 49 at least suspect if not spurious (NS, 183).

25 Leo’s Christology: the Tomus, JK 423 = ep. 28 (ACO II.2, pp. 24-33). To Emperor Leo: JK 542 = ep. 165 (ACO II.4, pp. 113-119). June 13, 449, to Juvenal of Jerusalem (incorrectly identified as Julian of Cos in the PL and the ACO which confirms that Leo was now convinced of Eutyches’ guilt. JK 434 = ep. 34 (ACO II.4, pp. 16-17).


27 June 13, 449, to Pulcheria. JK 425 = ep. 31 (ACO II.2, p.12-15), §1. “…error qui, arbitror, de imperitia magis quam de uersutia natus est” Compare this letter with that to Julian of Cos, dated the same day (below). Leo repeats the accusation using almost the same wording.
his monastic order.\textsuperscript{28} The tenor and content of Leo’s letter to Pulcheria is echoed in his correspondence with other easterners including the emperor, the abbots of the Constantinopolitan monasteries and bishops who had already begun to gather for what would become the Council of Ephesus II. To these men, Leo claimed that Eutyches had fallen into error because of ignorance and imprudence. Of course his teachings, as represented in the minutes of the Home Synod and the letters of Flavian, should be condemned. But Leo expressed his willingness to rehabilitate the man and his supporters who had fallen into error because of their over-zealous opposition to the already condemned heresy of Nestorius.\textsuperscript{29} Even in the Tomus and in his letter to Theodosius, Eutyches is described as “rash and arrogant,”\textsuperscript{30} and as an ignorant or unsophisticated old man (imperitus senex) who is “quite blind to the truth.”\textsuperscript{31} This is certainly not a ringing endorsement of Eutyches; however it is consistent with Leo’s characterization of Eutyches as naïve rather than intrinsically malevolent. Once again, Leo leaves open the possibility of reconciliation with Eutyches should he recant his views.\textsuperscript{32}

While writing rather conciliatory notes to members of the imperial family and to the eastern bishops, Leo was simultaneously adopting a more forceful tone in his correspondence with Julian of Cos, hinting at the future direction of the rhetorical battle against Eutyches and his supporters.\textsuperscript{33} Julian, although technically an eastern bishop, was in fact a Latin speaker, a native of Italy and likely a Roman.\textsuperscript{34} Leo and Julian were on friendly terms and exchanged letters frequently. No less than twenty of Leo’s extant letters are addressed to Julian, and many others, especially to the imperial family, mention him.\textsuperscript{35} Julian was an important ally in the east for Leo. He had a good relationship with the clergy and monks in the eastern capital and became Leo’s

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{28} Ibid., §4.
  \item \textsuperscript{29} June 13, 449, to Theodosius. JK 424 = \textit{ep.} 29 (ACO II.2, pp. 9-10); cf. Leo’s letter to the bishops gathering for the Council of Ephesus (II) June 13, 449 JK 427 = \textit{ep.} 33(ACO II.4, pp. 15-16); and to abbots of Constantinople JK 426 = \textit{ep.} 32 (ACO II.4, pp. 11-12).
  \item \textsuperscript{30} JK 423 = \textit{ep.} 28 (ACO II.2, pp. 24-33).
  \item \textsuperscript{31} JK 424 = \textit{ep.} 29 (ACO II.2, pp. 9-10). “...ut imperito seni ea in qua nimis caligat, veritas innotescat...” He is also described as “blind” in the Tomus: JK 423 = \textit{ep.} 28 (ACO II.2, pp. 24-33).
  \item \textsuperscript{32} JK 423 = \textit{ep.} 28 (ACO II.2, pp. 24-33), §6. “De quo si fideliter atque utiliter dolet, et quam recte mota sit episcopalis auctoritas vel sero cognoscit, vel si ad satisfactionis plenitudinem omnia, quae ab eo male sunt sensa, viva voce et prae senti subscriptione damnaverit, non erit reprehensibilis erga correctum quantacunque misratio.”
  \item \textsuperscript{33} PCBE 3, IOULIANOS 2. Probably the bishop of Kios in Bithynia (near Nicaea and thus near the Capital) as claimed by Wille (see n. 35, below), but possibly the island of Cos (Chios) in the Aegean as Destephen suggests (“ad episcopum coensem”). Silva-Tarouca, (ST 9, p. 13) agrees (“Leo episcopus Iuliano episcopo Choensium).
  \item \textsuperscript{34} JK 461 = \textit{ep.} 81 (ACO II.4, pp. 40-41). Leo referring to Julian: “ut scribis, fuerit animus ut per occasionem necessitatis et nobis te et patriae praesentares.”
  \item \textsuperscript{35} See Andreas Wille, \textit{Bischof Julian von Kios: der Nunzius Leos des Großen in Konstantinopel} (1909), 1 for a complete list of Leo’s letters to Julian.
\end{itemize}
key representative in Constantinople during the Christological controversy.\textsuperscript{36} Moreover, Julian was bilingual and later was responsible for the Greek translation of the Tomus – a tricky job considering the stakes, demonstrating the trust that Leo had in him.\textsuperscript{37}

The key difference in the letter sent to Julian when compared to those to Pulcheria, Theodosius and members of the Eastern Church is that Julian’s letter makes significant use of heresiological rhetoric. In particular, Leo characterized Eutyches’ teachings as the opposite, radical and equally incorrect side of the Nestorian coin: whereas Nestorius had separated the Word from the substance of his humanity, Eutyches described the Word as having taken up only the appearance (species) of a human body without a true union with that human body, a belief that was tantamount to Docetism and adoptionism.\textsuperscript{38} Leo had made a similar comparison in his letter to Pulcheria. However, Leo goes much farther in this letter to Julian, linking Eutyches with other, already condemned heresies. By denying the humanity of Jesus Christ, Leo tells Julian, Eutyches must be “filled with many impieties: either Apollinaris has overcome him, or Valentinus has seized him or Mani has gotten hold of him – none of whom believed the truth of Christ’s human flesh.”\textsuperscript{39} For Leo, Eutyches was analogous to these earlier heretics in that they all held a similar, incorrect understanding of the nature of Christ’s humanity. Even at this relatively early date, we can see an important element of Leo’s later anti-Eutychian polemic. He was being placed within a genealogy of error that links his supposed teachings with those of already condemned heretics of the past.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 2-3.

\textsuperscript{37} Consider, for example, that Leo complains on numerous occasions that his Tomus had been poorly or maliciously mistranslated into Greek, briefly considered below. Leo’s commission to Julian for the translation of the Tomus can be found in JK 507 = ep. 131 (ACO II.4, p. 87).

\textsuperscript{38} June 13, 449, to Julian of Cos. JK 429 = ep. 35 (ACO II.4, pp. 6-8 = ST 15, ep. vi), §1. “…he departs as far from the right path as did Nestorius…” (trans. Feltoe). “cum quantum Nestorius a veritate discessit, deitatem uerbi ab assumpti hominis substantia separando, tantum a recto tramite etiam iste [Eutyches] desciscat, qui unigenitum dei sic de utero beatae uirginis praedicat natum, ut humani quidem corporis speciem gesserit, sed humanae carnis ueritas uerbo unita non fuerit.”

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid. “negator enim mediatoris dei et hominum hominis Iesu Christi necesse est ut multis impietatibus impleatur, eumque aut Apollinaris sibi vindicet, aut Valentinus usurpet, aut Manichaeus obtineat, quorum nullus in Christo humanae carnis credidit veritatem.” Cf. also Leo’s letter to Juvenal of Jerusalem, also dated June 13, 449, in which the pope complains that Eutyches did not understand that his false beliefs are the “bonds with which the devil binds him.” JK 434 = ep. 34 (ACO II.4, pp. 16-17).
4. Sources: Flavian, Cyril and Nestorius

Leo’s comparison between Eutyches, Apollinaris and Valentinus may have been gleaned from Flavian’s letters to Rome announcing Eutyches’ condemnation at the Home Synod. In the first letter sent at the end of 448, Flavian claimed that Eutyches was “reviving the ancient sect of the impious Valentinian and Apollinaris.” In his second letter, Flavian made the same claim. His revival of these ancient heresies made it necessary for Flavian to reveal and condemn Eutyches for the good of the people. Flavian continued: “For this Eutyches, persisting in the disease of his concealed corruption and having abused our patience, impertinently and presumptuously dared to advance his own impiety amongst many people, saying that before the incarnation our lord Jesus Christ had two natures – divine and human – but one united nature after.” These accusations mirror the verdict which the patriarch had pronounced against Eutyches at the Home Synod: “Eutyches, formerly presbyter and archimandrite, is revealed in every way, by both his past actions and his present testimony, to be riddled with the heresies of Valentinus and Apollinaris and to be incorrigible in following their blasphemies.”

These charges were potentially damaging enough that Eutyches felt the need to respond to them in his second letter to Leo. To pre-empt or counter Flavian’s claims, Eutyches tellingly anathematizes “Apollinaris, Manes (Mani), Valentinus, Nestorius” and “all heretics back to the time of Simon Magus.” The Bishop of Rome was obviously unconvinced since it was precisely these accusations that Leo’s repeated in the above-mentioned letter to Julian of Cos. Yet Leo’s language, while harsh, seems less so than Flavian’s condemnations. Leo states that Eutyches is under the influence of the heresiarchs (the words he uses are vindicet, usurpet, and obtineat), suggesting that these heresies were analogous in their denial of Christ’s humanity but not

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41 Flavian of Constantinople, *alia epistola ad Papam Leonem de Evtychem* (ACO II.2.1, pp.23-24). “Necessarium ergo fuit ut animaduertentes laedi ueram religionem et renovari Apollinaris <et> Valentinii ab Eutychin nos non dissimularemus, sed manifestaremus eum reuelaremus ad cautelam populi. Hic etenim Eutyches celatam in se aegritudinem maluiolentiae tenens abusus nostra patientia irreuerenter et imprudenter circa multos proferre propria<m impietatem ausus est> dicens ante quidem incarnationem salvatoris nostri Iesu Christi duas esse naturas dietatis et humanitatis, post autem unitatem unam fuisse naturam, nesciens quid dicat neque de quibus asserat.” Note that Flavian is actually accusing Eutyches of Miaphysitism – before the Incarnation Christ had two natures (human and divine) but not only one afterwards.
43 December 448: *libellus appellationis Eutychis ad Papam Leonem* (ACO II.2, pp. 33-35). On the development of the myths surrounding Simon see above, Chapter 2, p. 34.
identical to that of Eutyches. Flavian, on the other hand, does not claim that Eutyches’ Christology was like these earlier heresies; he claims that Eutyches’ Christology was these earlier heresies. And to make matters worse, Eutyches had proven to be incorrigible in his support of their blasphemies and his refusal to acknowledge Flavian’s episcopal authority. Leo would soon be making the same claim.

While Leo’s condemnation of Eutyches was likely influenced by that of Flavian, Flavian’s own reference to the specter of previous heretical teachings may well have grown out of the anti-Cyrillian rhetoric which had emerged less than twenty years earlier during the debate before and after the first Council of Ephesus in 431. In particular, a number of Cyril of Alexandria’s opponents had claimed that Cyril had been influenced by Apollinaris of Laodicea, the opponent of Arius who had been condemned in the fourth century for claiming that Jesus did not have a human soul. Cyril was also associated with various other enemies of the faith by his enemies. In 430, Nestorius wrote to Pope Celestine accusing “certain clerics amongst us,” a thinly veiled reference to Cyril, of having taken up a heresy (he uses the word aegritudo or ‘disease’) with “affinities to the putrid [illness] of Apollinaris and Arius.” In a second letter to Rome, he made the same claim. Nestorius also composed a number of other letters and polemical works which made the same accusations, for example in his second letter to Cyril, and especially the Book of Heraclides written after his defeat at Ephesus I and exile. Nestorius even accused Cyril of having been ‘led astray by those condemned by the Holy Synod as Manichean sympathizers of the clerics who perhaps share your opinions.”

45 Nestorii Prima ad Caelestinvm (ACO I, pp. 12-14), “est enim aegritudo non parva, sed adfinis putredini Apollinaris et Arrii, dominicam enim in homine visionem ad cuiusdam contaminerationis confusionem passim commiscens, adeo ut et quidam apud nos clericorum…”
49 The accusation of Arianism and Apollinarianism remained a constant in ‘Nestorian’ (i.e. Syriac) Christianity’s criticisms of both Monophysitism, and later, Chalcedonianism. See, for example, the collection of later Syriac polemical material collected in Luise Abramowski and Alan E. Goodman, eds., A Nestorian collection of Christological texts: Cambridge University Library Ms. Oriental 1319, vol. II (Cambridge, 1972), passim, but esp. 4 (Cyrilians accused of Arianism and Apollinarianism), 19-20 (‘one nature’ theology as Apollinarian), 38 (‘the heretics’ who adhere to “one hypostasis” compared to Mani, Marcion, Arius, Eunomius, Apollinaris, Paul of
Nestorius’ condemnation of Cyril as a Manichean, crypto-Arian and Apollinarian is a good example of the malleable nature of heretical categories – a flexibility that Leo would later take up in his defense of the Tomus. In heresiology, ancient and long condemned heresies could be mobilized and applied to a contemporary opponent if they shared teachings or approaches that could be considered even vaguely analogous. To his fifth-century opponents like Nestorius, the fact that Cyril had emphasized the unity of Christ’s human and divine natures was enough to make the comparisons with Apollinaris and even Arius an expedient and effective polemic. In the context of the Christological debates, the fact that Apollinaris and Arius had both seemed to ascribe a single nature to Christ made them sufficiently alike that they could be amalgamated into the same accusation and then applied to Cyril.\textsuperscript{50} Accusations of this nature could be very effective and as the controversy became increasingly bitter before and after Ephesus I, Nestorius and his supporters sought to caricature Cyril’s teachings, pushing them to extremes and exaggerating their consequences. Nestorius, for one, nearly always paired his references to Apollinaris with comparable allusions to Arius and/or Eunomius.\textsuperscript{51} This is especially striking given Apollinaris’ teachings evolved precisely to refute those of Arius.\textsuperscript{52} Yet half a century after his condemnation, Apollinaris could be equated with his theological opposite. Indeed, comparing Cyril’s teachings with those of Arius and Apollinaris were not attempts to engage in a meaningful debate about Christology. Rather, it was an attempt to refute and convict a theological opponent by linking him with condemned heretics of the past.\textsuperscript{53} If it could be shown that elements of Cyril’s beliefs were influenced by Apollinaris or was comparable to Arianism, and if both Apollinaris and Arius were heretics, did it not follow that Cyril’s teachings must also be equally heretical?

\textsuperscript{50} Compare with Athanasius’ earlier comparison of Jews and Arians in his First Discourse against the Arians (for example, 1.13.53; 1.14; 1.54, and passim).

\textsuperscript{51} Loofs, \textit{Nestorius}, 66-68, esp. 67, n. 1 for a list of Nestorius’ numerous references to Apollinarianism and Arianism – 17 in all.

\textsuperscript{52} Young and Teal, \textit{Nicea to Chalcedon}, 241-242.

\textsuperscript{53} Nestorius had been the target of a very similar type of attack when an anonymous pamphlet (almost certainly penned by Eusebius, later bishop of Dorylaeum) was posted on the doors of Hagia Sophia claiming that the Patriarch of Constantinople shared the theology of Paul of Samosata who had been condemned and excommunicated more than a century and a half earlier. Helen Marie Sillett, “Culture of Controversy: The Christological Disputes of the Early Fifth Century” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1999), 9-10.
Cyril reports that this was a common charge leveled against him. He wrote to the aged Acacius of Beroea that his opponents defame him “as one who has a taste for the expressions of Apollinaris or Arius or Eunomius.” But Cyril was more than willing to play the same game. In his writings against Nestorius, Cyril reversed the charges against him and accused the patriarch of Constantinople of Arianism on the grounds that he thought Christ was not the same as God the Father. And it was not only his opponents’ theology that could be described as Arian – it was their attitude and character. Directly comparing Nestorius to Arius, Cyril states, “You [Nestorius] had the holy clergy of presbyters and deacons excommunicated for refuting your importunate madness, which is nothing else than thinking like Arius.” By invoking Arius in particular, Cyril declared his own innocence of the same charge while simultaneously impugning Nestorius and his teaching. Moreover, the charge allowed Cyril to present himself as a latter-day Athanasius, the bishop of Alexandria who had opposed Arius and defended Nicaea in the fourth century. As Athanasius had done, Cyril was now doing. And eventually, it was Cyril’s rhetoric rather than that of Nestorius that succeeded. Especially in the years after his victory at the Council of Ephesus I in 431, Cyril shifted the focus of his polemic from Nestorius himself and instead pilloried his teachers and predecessors. Cyril described Nestorius as only the most recent example of the questionable theological school – a school that Cyril and his successor Dioscorus would come to label Nestorian. As used by the Egyptian controversialists, the adjective ‘Nestorian’ became a straw man – an epithet which implied extreme theological propositions which in reality had little in common with its namesake or its antecedents. Regardless, Cyril and his allies successfully elevated Nestorius into the pantheon of heresiarchs; Nestorius himself became an abstraction to be derided and despised no less than Arius himself.

The degree to which these earlier anti-Cyrillian and anti-Nestorian polemics influenced Flavian’s, and later Leo’s, invective against Eutyches is difficult to judge. In general terms, these kinds of accusations were common in heresiological writing, as we noted in chapter one. But it would not be a stretch to imagine that Flavian was aware of the controversial literature that had emerged in the years before and after Ephesus I. The charge of Apollinarianism in particular had

54 Cyril, ep. 33.9. He also explicitly denies his connection to the teachings of Apollinaris various other letters: see, for example, Cyril, epp. 30.2; 40.23-40.24; 44.3; 45.5; 100.2-3.
55 Cyril ep. 23, his first letter to Nestorius, and his so-called ep. to ‘the monks’.
56 Cyril, Homilia IV, quoted in Wessel, Cyril, 213.
57 Sillett, Culture of Controversy, 43-45ff.
58 Price and Whitby, Chalcedon in Context: Church Councils 400-700, 1.25.
been useful for the previous generation of theologians battling Cyril. Flavian may well have reasoned it would be so again against Eutyches’ radicalized Cyrillian teachings. Leo then read Flavian’s letters condemning Eutyches as well as in Eutyches’ own protestations of his innocence in December, 448 and reused the same accusations.\(^59\) Leo may well have been exposed to this type of rhetoric even before he became bishop. As archdeacon during Celestine’s pontificate, Leo was likely privy to Nestorius’ and Cyril’s letters to Rome in the months before Ephesus I. Leo also may have actually exchanged letters with Cyril himself during this period; he certainly had access to at least some of Cyril’s correspondence which was preserved in the Roman archives.\(^60\) And as archdeacon, Leo commissioned John Cassian to write \textit{de Incarnatione}, a treatise against Nestorius.\(^61\)

5. Leo vs. Eutyches

Perhaps prompted by Flavian’s accusations, the letter to Julian suggests the beginnings of a shift in Leo’s attitude. No longer would he dismiss Eutyches as a misguided and (over-)zealous monk. Instead, Leo would unleash an assault against both the man and his beliefs which made use of his full heresiological arsenal. This transition was compelled in part by the Second Council of Ephesus (or the ‘Robber Council’ as it would come to be known), which was held in August 449 under the leadership of Dioscorus, Cyril’s successor bishop of Alexandria. Dioscorus defended Eutyches as a champion of Cyrillian teaching and an uncompromising opponent of Nestorius. Dioscorus’ attitude was shared by many in the east who, in the months leading up to the Council, had become very worried about a possible revival of Nestorian teachings or any comprise of those advanced by Cyril.

The Council proceeded in an atmosphere of profound mistrust and confusion. Eutyches was reinstated. Flavian was deposed. And Leo’s \textit{Tomus} was not even read despite the efforts of Leo’s

\(^{59}\) Eutyches, \textit{libelvs appellationis ad Leonem} (ACO II.2, pp. 33-35). “Ad vos igitur religionis defensores et hujusmodi factiones exsecrantis confugio...anathamazizans Apollinarium, Valentimum, Manem et Nestorium, et eos qui dicunt carnem Domini nostri Jesu Christi Salvatoris e coelo descendisse et non e Spiritu sancto et sancta Virgine Maria, et omnes haereses usque ad magum Simonem.”

\(^{60}\) As Leo states in a letter to Bishop Maximus of Antioch, July 11, 453. Leo notes that he searched his archives and found the “original of that letter of Cyril of holy memory” sent more than twenty years earlier and dispatched a copy to the bishop. JK 495 = ep. 119 (ACO II.4, pp. 72-75).

legates. Flavian was badly injured during the proceedings. If we believe the report of Eusebius of Dorylaeum related in Evagrius’ History, Dioscorus personally beat him to death, although in all likelihood this is an exaggeration. It does, however, point to the chaotic and violent nature of the Council, and Flavian did indeed die soon after his deposition and exile. When Leo learned what had occurred, he called a synod in Rome and annulled Ephesus II. But since Dioscorus had the support of the emperor, a Roman Synod would not be enough to overturn Ephesus II. Instead, Leo engaged in a significant diplomatic effort to convince the imperial family and the eastern bishops, many of whom held Cyril in high regard and were deeply suspicious of anything that could be construed as even vaguely Nestorian, to overturn the council, condemn Eutyches and accept the Tomus. An important part of this effort was Leo’s use of heresiological rhetoric to emphasize his own orthodoxy and the error of his opponents.

An examination of Leo’s sermons and letters pertaining to the Christological debate reveals three important aspects of this rhetoric. First, as Nestorius, Cyril and Flavian had done against their opponents in the 430s and 440s, Leo sought to describe Eutyches as the most recent incarnation of already condemned and demonically inspired errors of the past. Second, Leo eventually came to portray Eutyches as a heresiarch in his own right, the head of a ‘Eutychian heresy’ that encompassed any opposition to Leo’s own Christological teaching. Finally, Leo, in an effort to insulate himself from the accusations of Nestorianism, twinned Eutychianism with Nestorianism. These two heretical categories – the former over-emphasizing Christ’s divinity, the latter his humanity - could be condemned together in order to negatively define the boundaries of orthodoxy while simultaneously moderating Leo’s own position in the eyes of a distrustful eastern church.

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63 Ibid., II.2. Eusebius is said to have claimed that “Flavian had been wretchedly slain by being shoved and kicked by Dioscorus.” However, it must be said that at Chalcedon, some of the bishops present also claimed that Dioscorus used or threatened violence and some even call him “murderer!”
65 October 13, 449, to Theodosius, from Leo and the Synod held at Rome, JK 438 = ep. 44 (ACO II.4, pp. 19-21). For a full narrative of the confused events of Ephesus II, see, for example, Grillmeier, CICT 1, 526-529; Frend, Rise of the Monophysite Movement, 38-45; Davis, Councils, 176-180; McGuckin, St. Cyril of Alexandria; on the theological implications of the Council, see Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Growth of Medieval Theology (600-1300), vol. 2, Christian tradition (Chicago, 1978), 262-264. As Price and Gaddis note in their edition of the Acts of Chalcedon (I.141, n. 79), it is unclear to what degree Ephesus II was any less free than other church councils. Coercion certainly occurred at Chalcedon as well.
A theory of heresy and genealogies of error

The first aspect of Leo’s polemic against Eutyches involved situating him in a heretical lineage that linked him with past errors and ultimately with the devil himself. As he had done in the case of Manichaeism and Priscillianism, after Ephesus II Leo frequently defined the Christology ascribed to Eutyches as an amalgam of previous archetypal heresies, especially those attributed to Arius, Apollinaris and Mani. Manichaeism and Priscillianism were historical errors, condemned long before Leo’s pontificate; but Eutyches’ heresy, on the other hand, appeared in Leo’s own lifetime. He saw it evolve and understood that it had initially been intended as a well-meaning defense of Cyril in opposition to Nestorianism. Yet Leo still came to describe Eutyches and his teachings in much the same way as these earlier heresies.

This transition was made possible by Leo’s theory of heresy. Even before the Christological controversy, Leo had always recognized that heresy arose at times of debate over issues of the faith and it was in this context that some men, ignoring the teachings of the church in toto, exaggerated a single aspect of otherwise acceptable theology to the point of distortion. As Leo explained in his Christmas sermon of 443 – five years before the Eutychian crisis – even the most infamous heresiarchs sometimes preached doctrines that contained at least an element of truth. Arius’ error, for example, was in part a result of his emphasis upon God the Father’s eternity and immutability. However, according to Leo, Arius’ single-minded focus on the power of the Father necessarily demoted this same characteristic in the Son. Likewise, the Macedonians had rightly emphasized the union of nature and power of Christ and the Father, but eventually overstated this otherwise acceptable position to the detriment of the Holy Spirit. With the notable exception of Manichaeism, “each heresy,” Leo noted, “when taken on its own, has something that might be true with respect to some part of it.”

It was precisely the fact that heresy often contained an element of truth that made it so potentially divisive and dangerous.

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66 25 December, 443. tr. 24 (CCSL 138, pp. 109-116), §5. “Aliae haereses, dilectissimi, licet merito omnes in sua diuersitate damnandae sint, habent tamen singulae in aliqua sui parte quod uerum sit. Arrius dei filium minorem patre et creaturam esse definiens, et ab eodem inter omnia creatum putans spiritum sanctum, magna impietate se perdidit, sed sempiternam atque incommutabilem deitatem, quam in trinitatis unitate non uidit, in patris essentia non negauit. Macedonius a lumine ueritatis alienus, diuinitatem sancti spiritus non recepit, sed in patre et filio unam potentiam et eamdem confessus est esse naturam.”

67 It is worth comparing Leo’s attitude towards heresy with that of Augustine, who notes in his de haeresibus, “not every error is a heresy; yet, since every heresy involves a defect, a heresy could only be a heresy by reason of some error. What it is, then, that makes one a heretic, in my opinion, either cannot at all, or can only with difficulty, be grasped in a definition in accord with the rules.” Augustine, de Haer., ed. Plaetse and Beukers, pr.,§7 (p.33). trans. Müller.
In Leo’s view, Arius may well have begun by overemphasizing God the Father in part to preserve strict monotheism. But after the church had spoken at Nicaea and rejected his interpretation, Arius went from being a wayward theologian to a tool and servant of Satan (*hostis noster*) who sought to corrupt the orthodox by enticing them into false belief all the while professing that it was they who were in fact the true Christians. 68 Indeed what defined a heretic was his unwillingness to accept correction from the sources of legitimate authority. Men like Apollinaris, Valentinus, Marcion of Sinope and others may well have had good reasons to believe and preach what they did, at least initially; however, when the extremes of their teachings had been rejected, they had refused to acknowledge their error and instead arrogantly persisted in the belief that their teachings superseded those of the church as a whole. Thus, they passed from innocent theological speculation into heresy which was ultimately inspired by the devil himself. It was Satan, according to Leo, who stirred the various heresiarchs to action and who endowed them with their abilities. He had endowed the second-century Gnostic Basilides and the dualist Marcion with guile. It was under satanic leadership and direction that the Trinitarian modalism of Sabellius undermined the true faith. Arius was a servant to the power of the devil. 69 Somewhat optimistically Leo declared, “The Catholic faith, for which God is both teacher and helper, has destroyed these and other impieties, conceived through diabolical inspiration and poured out for the harm of many through the vessels of destruction.” 70

Thus for Leo, heresy was both a historical phenomenon and a demonic deviation from the truth. Once a theologian had arrogantly ignored legitimate authority (in the case of Eutyches, the authority of Rome holding correctly to the traditions of Nicaea and the Fathers), he moved from speculation into a demonically inspired conspiracy to undermine the unity of the true faith. Thus Dioscorus became “an Egyptian plunderer” who preached the devil’s errors; 71 Dioscorus and the

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68 *tr.* 16, §3. “Inter haec autem, dilectissimi, opera pietatis quae nos deo magis magis que commendant, dubium non est quod hostis noster, nocendi cupidus et peritus, acrioribus inuidiae stimulis incitetur, ut quos apertis et cruentis persecutionibus impugnare non sinitur, sub falsa christiani nominis professione corrumpat, habens haereticos huic operi seruientes, quos a Catholica fide deuisos sibi que subjectos militare in castris suis sub diuersis fecit erroribus.”

69 Ibid. “Hujus arte Basilides, hujus Marcion callet ingenio, hoc duce agitur Sabellius, hoc praecipitatur rectore Photinus, hujus potestati famulatur Arius, hujus spiritui servit Eunomius.” Note that this is a sermon preached in 443, which explains the lack of references to Eutyches. Moreover, its main target, despite the long list of heresiarchs, is Manichaeism.

70 *tr.* 30 (CCSL 138, pp. 152-159), §3. “Has ergo, dilectissimi, impietates diabolica inspiratione conceptas, et in multorum noxam per uasa perditionis effusas, olim Catholica fides cui deus et magister est et auxiliator obtruit.”

71 June 11, 453 to Theoderet of Cyrus. JK 496 = *ep.* 120 (ACO II.4, pp. 78-81). ST, *Nuovi Studi*, p. 183 considers this letter spurious.
“insane” Eutyches were tools of Satan and “the soldiers of the Antichrist (milites Antichristi).”

“It is the impious Eutyches,” Leo complained to Julian of Cos, “who wages a war against the evangelical and apostolic teachings, a war which is bound to involve him and his associates in ruin.”

Moreover, not only did Leo view heresy as intrinsically demonic; he also assumed that it also could be traced back to its dark origins through a genealogy of error. In this view, all heretics were similar to, if not actually the same, in that they disregarded the Gospels, renounced the Fathers, and ultimately were inspired by the devil. But specific types of error had their own particular lineage. As we saw in the previous chapter, in his attack on the Manicheans of Rome Leo had described this heresy in part through its supposed relationship to previously condemned and archetypal errors. Now as part of the Christological controversy, Leo applied a similar argument. As Leo understood it, because Eutyches’ insistence on Christ’s single divine nature after the Incarnation undermined Christ’s humanity tended towards Docetism, Eutyches was merely a fifth-century apostle of the fourth-century Apollinaris, the early third-century Mani, the early second-century Gnostic teacher Valentinus, the first/second-century dualist Marcion and ultimately Simon Magus. These comparisons were apt in Leo’s view since they, like Eutyches and his supporters, failed to properly understand Christ’s nature and his place in the salvation of humanity. Thus, Eutyches and his heretical antecedents represented a common tradition reproducing the same error across the centuries. This was, as we noted, the principle of apostolic succession applied to heresy; whereas Leo received his legitimacy as bishop of Rome due to his historical continuity with the apostles Peter and Paul, so too heresy received a sort of inverse, demonic ‘legitimacy’ from its perceived connection to earlier heresiarchs. It was as if in Leo’s mind there was a limited set of errors from which heretics could choose; these building blocks were then mixed, assembled and reassembled into various configurations in order to create contemporary heterodoxy. Eutyches’ understanding of the incarnation was therefore akin to Apollinaris’ patripassianism and Mani’s docetism. “In our own days,” Leo tells his parishioners in a sermon preached in February, 454,

...some have taken up again their old madness (ueteram insaniam conceperunt) in the spirit of an already disapproved and condemned error and they suffer from their indifference. They dare to deny the twofold nature

73 Ibid.
in Christ, either because they do not accept the reality of the flesh or that
divinity was made flesh. According to Mani, there is no resurrection when
there is no death, or according to Apollinaris, the very divinity of the Word
is changeable and was itself made capable of suffering. But to think
this…but what else is it but to overturn the very foundations of our religion and
to deny that the true Son of God is the true son of a human being?\textsuperscript{74}

Accusations of this kind are repeated in numerous letters. Leo variously compared Eutyches’
teachings to those of the Manicheans, of Apollinaris, and even to Valentinian Gnosticism. But
what Leo was claiming is not that Eutyches was similar or analogous to these past heresies and
their supposed eponymous founders; rather, Eutyches was a contemporary manifestation of these
earlier forms of deviance.\textsuperscript{75} He and his supporters only “pretend to hold to the faith of the
Council of Nicaea” but in reality they had rejected it.\textsuperscript{76} To the monks of Palestine, Leo described
Eutyches as one who “wallowed in the impious errors of the ancient heretics (\textit{ueterum
haereticorum}) [and] had chosen the third dogma of Apollinaris” [that is, he denied the reality of
Christ’s humanity].\textsuperscript{77} Even if “that heretic” Eutyches could somehow be convinced to recant the
views of Apollinaris, he would still cross over into Docetism like “the insanity of Mani and
Marcion.”\textsuperscript{78} In a letter to the Emperor Marcian, Eutyches is said to be the “most recent champion
(\textit{redivivus assessor}) of an already condemned error,”\textsuperscript{79} or one who “followed an already

\textsuperscript{74} tr. 47 (CCSL 138a, pp. 274-278), §2. trans. Freeland and Conway, pp. 203-204. Compare with the similar
accusations in \textit{alia epistola ad Papam Leonem de Evtychem (ACO II.2.1, pp.23-24)}.

\textsuperscript{75} To Emperor Leo, 458. JK 542 = \textit{ep.} 165 (ACO II.4, pp. 113-119). cf. comparisons to Manichaeism, to the people
and clergy of Constantinople in a letter of 449: JK 447 = \textit{ep.} 59 (ACO II.4, pp. 34-37); comparison to Manichaeism

\textsuperscript{76} JK 448 = \textit{ep.} 60 (ACO II.4, p. 29). cf. the so-called “Address to Marcian” dated November, 451 (Greek: ACO
vol. 3, pp. 111-120.

\textsuperscript{77} June 15, 453, to the Monks of Palestine. JK 500 = \textit{ep.} 124 (ACO II.4, pp. 159-163), §2. “Eutyches quoque eodem
percellatur anathemate, qui per impios veterum haereticorum volutatus errores, tertium Apollinaris dogma delegit.”
Here “eodem anathemate” refers back to Nestorius – that is, Eutyches must be condemned by the same anathema as
Nestorius. cf. August 17, 458 to Emperor Leo. JK 542 = \textit{ep.} 165 (ACO II.4, pp. 113-119). Much of this latter epistle
was almost directly taken from the former.

\textsuperscript{78} JK 500 = \textit{ep.} 124 (ACO II.4, pp. 159-163). “unde si ab Apollinaris peruersitate haereticus iste desciscit, ne
conuincatur deitatem passibilem sentire atque mortalem, et tamen uerbi incarnati, id est uerbi et carnis unam audit
[Eutyches] pronuntiare naturam, non dubie in Manichaei et Marcionis transit insaniam…”

\textsuperscript{79} June 9, 451, to the Emperor Marcian. JK 463 = \textit{ep.} 83 (ACO II.4, pp. 42-43). “et olim damnati erorris rediuuius
assessor locum in Christi ecclesia non haberet.” \textit{Redivivus} usually means ‘revived,’ ‘renewed’ or ‘renovated’,
especially when discussing buildings. However here, it seems to have an almost temporal meaning, perhaps
suggesting that Eutyches has ‘revived’ or renewed these ancient heresies. It could also suggest that Eutyches himself
was ‘renewed’ by his acquittal at Ephesus II.
condemned heresy.” In a letter to the Emperor Leo, the Bishop of Rome claimed that Eutyches had “obviously veered over into the madness of Valentinus and Mani.”

If the Christological controversy could be described as a dispute between orthodoxy and its traditional, longstanding adversaries, Leo could then argue that Eutyches, who had merely revived the heresies of Arius, Apollinaris, Mani, and Valentinus, had already been denounced and refuted by the Cappadocian Fathers, Ambrose, Augustine and even Cyril of Alexandria. By marshalling the writings of the Church Fathers, accepted by all sides in the debate, Leo could claim that the theological positions advanced by his current opponents had in fact been rejected by the very authorities they themselves appealed to in order to justify their own positions. This approach could be especially effective when Leo cited Greek writings such as those by Athanasius and Cyril. As Leo stated to Theodosius II, the defenders of the Catholic faith, writing in “both Greek and Latin” and including Cyril himself, had produced works which could “cut down the heresy which is now springing up [that of Eutyches], just as it once destroyed the heresy of Nestorius.”

Leo’s own teachings contained no innovation, or so he claimed, nor did he deviate in any way from the canons or the teachings of these holy men. As Leo wrote to Pulcheria, “Since he [Eutyches] was long since beaten down and already defeated in the persons who were his sources, if he had any soundness of mind, it could easily have restrained him from attempting to stir up the already buried ashes into a fresh fire and thus passing over into the society of those whose example he followed.” In a similar vein, to Julian of Cos, Leo dispatched copies of Athanasius’ letter to Epictetus – the very letter that Cyril had quoted at Ephesus I against Nestorius – noting that Athanasius had been so clever that “he already beat down both Nestorius and Eutyches in the persons of the heretics of his own age.” Therefore, Leo continued, “Let the followers of Eutyches or Dioscorus, who claim that our teachings depart from the doctrine and thinking of the Fathers, dare to accuse this man [Athanasius] of such great authority of either ignorance or depravity.”

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80 January 27, 452, to the Bishops of Gaul. JK 479 = ep. 102 (ACO II.4, pp. 53-55).
81 July 16, 450, to Theodosius II. JK 452 = ep. 69 (ACO II.4, pp. 30-31); cf. Leo’s letter to Pulcheria on the same day with similar content: JK 453 = ep. 70 (ACO II.4, pp. 29-30).
82 JK 505 = ep. 129 (ACO II.4, pp. 84-86).
84 JK 486 ep. 109 (ACO II.4, pp. 137-138), trans. E. Hunt. cf. JK 469 = ep. 88 (ACO II.4, pp. 46-47), to Paschasianus, Bishop of Lilybaeaum dated June 24, 451; JK 542 = ep. 165 (ACO II.4, pp. 113-119), to Emperor Leo in August 458. In these letters, Leo appends individual letters or florilegia of proof-texts from the Church Fathers to support his own position: to Julian of Cos (ep. 109, §3), a letter of Athanasius; to Paschasianus (ep. 88, §3), “writings of our blessed fathers” concerning the incarnation (sanctorum Patrum nostrorum…scripta); to Emperor Leo, the
which had “already been condemned and destroyed by the Fathers” or which had been “uncovered and condemned in their [own] sources.” Leo was also keen to depict the Council of Chalcedon, which in 451 had reversed Ephesus II and formally accepted his Tomus, as nothing other than a recapitulation of Nicaea - a council which all the participants in the Christological debate agreed was orthodox and binding. This approach set Leo in a long continuity with the Fathers of the Church and the Council of Nicaea over and against the divisive ideas taught by his opponents who were in reality nothing less than a revival of universally condemned ancient heresies.

b. Leo’s invention of Eutychianism

The second important aspect of Leo’s rhetoric was to caricature and reduce any and all opposition to his own theology as manifestations of the heresy of Eutyches. Eutyches’ supposed continuity with past heretics, the role of the devil, and the very real continued opposition to Chalcedon in Egypt and Palestine prompted Leo to increasingly depict Eutyches, Dioscorus and their supporters not as individual heretical malcontents, but as a movement – a rival, demonically inspired version of the faith that was making war against the true believers. As Cyril had invented the “Nestorian heresy” to describe any two-nature Christology, Leo began to think of Eutyches and Dioscorus as the inverse of Nestorius – Eutyches was becoming a heresiarch in his own right and the eponymous leader of all who denied Chalcedon on the other side of the Christological debate, a heresy that could now be portrayed as Eutychianism.

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Testimonia excerpta pro re supra scripta de libris Catholicorum Patrum a Leone papa collecta Leonique imperatori directa (PL 54, pp. 1174-1190 = ACO 2.4 pp. 119-131). On this florilegium, see above, p. 54, PCBE 2.2

PASCHASINVS I, episcopus Lillibetanus, aka Lilybaeum = Marsala, Sicily.

85 JK 469 = ep. 88 (ACO II.4, pp. 46-47). “abominanda ergo est in Eutyche impietas, quae olim a patribus in praecendentibus haereticis damnata atque destructa est.”


87 JK 539 = ep. 162 (ACO II.4, pp. 105-107); see also. JK 535 = ep. 156 (ACO II.4, pp. 101-104), which explicitly compares Nicaea’s condemnation of Arius with Chalcedon’s condemnation of Eutyches. Interestingly, before Chalcedon Leo was not enthusiastic about the prospects of yet another council, especially one that was to be held far in the east which would preclude most western bishops from attending. See JK462 = ep. 82 (ACO II.4, p. 41); JK 469 = ep. 89 (ACO II.4, pp. 47-48). cf. Monald Goemans, “Chalcedon als "Allgemeines Konzil"," in Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. Alois Grillmeier and Heinrich Bacht (Würzburg, 1952-1955), 261ff. on Leo’s cautious approach to the council and the important role of the Emperor Marcian. See also Grillmeier, CICT 1, 543ff. on the dogmatic formula accepted by the council. Note that Chalcedon’s Christological definition was and is not accepted by the Egyptian (Coptic) Church, the Armenian and Syriac (“Nestorian”) churches, and the churches of Ethiopia and Eritrea.

88 “Nestorianism”: JK 418 = ep. 20 (ACO II.4, p. 3). “Nestoriana haeresis.”
For instance, Leo’s letter to Pulcheria, written in April 451 (that is, before the council), attacks “the error of Eutyches” (*Eutychis error*) and “the Nestorian impiety” (*impietas Nestoriana*). Here Nestorius’ supposed heresy, twenty years after its condemnation, was ‘Nestorianism;’ Nestorius, the name of the heresiarch, has been transformed into *Nestoriana* - an adjective which represented both the general characteristics of heresy, but also a particular heretical category of radical two-nature Christology. Eutyches’ heresy is still that of one man. But only two years later, Leo could speak of the Council of Chalcedon as victory over the “Nestorian impiety” and the “Eutychian madness” (*Nestorianae impietatis…Eutychianae uesaniae*) – transforming the name of both Nestorius and Eutyches into adjectives. As the debate intensified, any opposition to the *Tomus* by those sympathetic to the teachings of Cyril necessarily signalled membership in what increasingly appears in Leo’s writings to be the sect of Eutyches. “The wicked Eutyches” could now be seen as waging a war against the preaching of the Gospels and apostles through “the madness of his deceivers,” although Leo confidently tells Julian of Cos that “Eutyches and his allies” would indeed eventually be defeated. This defeat would not only be in the realm of ideas: “The sons of light should not fear the sons of darkness so that sane men submit to madmen. Nor should they think that there should be some kind of respect shown to men of this kind who, if they prefer to die rather than to come to their senses, provisions should be made so that they do not do more harm by escaping punishment and that by their toleration, many more are not led to destruction.” In this chilling sentence, Leo suggests that if the opponents of Chalcedon were willing to die for their beliefs, perhaps they should be helped along that path.

By 453, two years after Chalcedon, Eutyches was described by Leo as having followers (*discipuli*) who were in conflict with those of Nestorius (*sectatores*), both of whom were opposed by Catholics. The error of Eutyches was more and more becoming “the Eutychian

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89 JK 459 = *ep.* 79 (ACO II.4, pp. 37-38).
90 JK 496 = *ep.* 120 (ACO II.4, pp. 78-81), “agnouimus…tam Nestorianae impietatis quam Eutychianae uesaniae extitisse victimam”.
92 Ibid. “sed non ita debent filii lucis filios metuere tenebrazum, ut sani furentibus acquiscant, aut aestimatem huiusmodi hominibus aliquid praestandum esse reverentiae, qui si perire malunt quam resipiscere, prospiciendum est ne inpunitate sua latius noceant, et in multorum perniciem, dum diu tolerentur insurgent.” trans. Feltoe, with modifications.
93 JK 495 = *ep.* 119 (ACO II.4, pp. 72-75). cf JK 496 = *ep.* 120 (ACO II.4, pp. 78-81).
madness,” a heresy comparable to “the Nestorian impiety.” In a letter to Bishop Proterius, the man who had replaced the deposed Dioscorus as Patriarch of Alexandria after the Council of Chalcedon, Leo portrayed his opponents as a shadowy, demonic collective who “seek to entrap men not so much by watching their actions as by nice distinctions of meaning, corrupting the force of sentences by some very slight addition or alteration, whereby sometimes a statement, which made for salvation, by a subtle change is turned to destruction.” This view was only exacerbated by the violent rebellions against Chalcedon that had occurred after the council in Egypt. Leo claimed that they had been incited by “factions of Eutychians” (Eutychianii factiones). The brutal lynching of Proterius of Alexandria by a crowd of anti-Chalcedonians in 457 is described by Leo as having been perpetrated “through the fury of the Eutychians.” By the later years of Leo’s pontificate, Eutyches had gone from an individual heretic to the head of a group of supporters (socii), who together were progressively extrapolated into an entire heretical movement. The enemies of the Council of Chalcedon were now Eutychians (Eutychianistae) or the impious men of “the Eutychian dogma.” Leo had successfully invented Eutychianism - as an epithet comparable to Nestorianism (or Arianism in the previous century) that could be used to label and cut off anyone who opposed the Tomus. And by claiming that Eutyches and his

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94 JK 469 = ep. 87 (ACO II.4, p 45-46).
95 JK 505 = ep. 129 (ACO II.4, pp. 84-86).
96 JK 507 = ep. 131 (ACO II.4, p. 87). “sed quia non parum ipsi laboris Eutychianorum factionibus excitatur, qui epistulam meam ad beatae memoriae Flavianum datam fallaci interpretatione curruptam simplicibus quibusque aut indocitis ita dicuntur ingerere.” Here, the monks made use of a copy of the Tomus mistranslated into Greek into order to show Leo’s supposed affinities with Nestorius’ teachings. They could then claim that Proterius, who supported the ‘Nestorian’ Leo, must also be a Nestorian.
97 September 1, 457. The same phrase is repeated in two letters: to Basil, Bishop of Antioch, JK 526 = ep. 149 (ACO II.4, pp. 97-98); and to Euxitheus of Thessalonica, Juvenal of Jerusalem, Peter of Corinth and Luke of Dyrrhachium, JK 525 = ep. 150 (PL 54, pp. 1120-1122). “Cognitis quae apud Alexandriam Eutychianorum furore commissa sunt quaeque fraternitati uestrae comperta esse non dubito, pro ea sollicitudine quam omnibus ecclesiis die debo, haec scripta direxi.” Tellingly, the Chalcedonian party in Alexandria were sometimes contemptuously referred to as ‘Proterians’ by the supporters of Peter Mongus. See Christopher Haas, "Patriarch and People: Peter Mongus of Alexandria and Episcopal Leadership in the Late Fifth Century," JECS, 1 (1993), 306.
98 It should be noted that Eutyches died in 456; Dioscorus died in 454.
99 June 1, 457. JK 520 = ep.144 (ACO II.4, p.138). “Siquidem ut indicare dignaris, ea quae Eutychianistae post obtum uenerabilis memoriae principis Marciani excitare moliti sunt, efficacia tua et eorum quos tecum dei spiritus incitauit, agentem causam suam ipsa ueritate destructa sunt.” cf. Leo’s letter to Anatolius, Patriarch of Constantinople September, 457 in which a Constantinopolitan priest is said to have favored the “error of the Eutychians.” JK 529 = ep. 151 (ACO II.4, pp. 138-139). “…Atticum prebyterum, qui perhibitur Eutychianorum errorem apertis intra ecclesiam disputationibus confouere…”
100 JK 541 = ep. 164 (ACO II.4, pp. 110-112). “Unde cum sancta synodus Chalcedonensis, quae ab universis Romani orbis provinciis cum totius mundi est celeb rated consensus, et a sacratissimi concilii Nicaeni est indivisa decretis, omnem Eutychiani dogmas impietatem a corpore Catholicae communions absciderit.”

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supporters had revived condemned heretical teachings from the past, Leo suggested that Eutychianism must likewise be dismissed and condemned.\textsuperscript{101}

The rhetorical construction of Eutychianism allowed Leo to conflate anyone who opposed Leo’s position and later that of the council of Chalcedon as the impious men of “the Eutychian dogma”\textsuperscript{102} and to parody interpretations different than his own as “the Nestorian dogma or the Eutychian error.”\textsuperscript{103} Moreover it utterly divided Leo’s supporters (the “disciples of Truth” and the “sons of light” as Leo stated in the above-mentioned letter to Julian) from everyone else (“the sons of darkness”). Rome is presented as authentic Christianity, standing in the long tradition of the defenders of orthodoxy from Athanasius and Cyril, whereas the Eutychians are depicted as a counterfeit, deviant and ultimately heretical version of the faith in the tradition of Apollinaris, Mani and even (paradoxically), Nestorius as we shall see below.\textsuperscript{104}

Leo’s use of the category of Eutychianism proved extremely successful. Men such as Eutyches and Dioscorus, who actually had quite different Christologies, came to be condemned under the same rubric. By 458, Egypt, which was then under the control of the non-Chalcedonian Patriarch Timothy Aelurus, could be described by Leo as suffering under the “lamentable captivity” of the “disciples of Eutyches and Dioscorus.”\textsuperscript{105} This despite the fact that Dioscorus had condemned Eutyches at the Council of Chalcedon and was even willing to accept Flavian’s formulae “from two natures after the Incarnation” – the very formulation that was used to

\textsuperscript{101} The same rhetorical techniques had been used at Ephesus II by Dioscorus. At this council, Dioscorus’ opponents were characterized as Nestorians so that, in the words of one bishop who was present, “out of fear of the Nestorian heresy, we would not be judged orthodox but condemned as heretics.” Dioscorus’ supporters shouted, “Cut into two those who say “two natures”! Cleave, kill, and drive out those who say “two”!” At Chalcedon itself, the representatives from the Egyptian Church exclaimed “he who says two natures should be cut in two. He who says two natures is a Nestorian.” See the testimony of Theodore of Claudiopolis during the first session of the Council of Chalcedon: Acts, I.62. cf. I.176.

\textsuperscript{102} JK 541 = ep. 164 (ACO II.4, pp. 110-112). “Unde cum sancta synodus Chalcedonensis, quae ab universis Romani orbis provinciis cum totius mundi est celebrata consensus, et a sacratissimi concilii Nicaeni est indivisa decretis, omnem Eutychiani dogmatis impietatem a corpore Catholicae communisionis abscederit.”

\textsuperscript{103} JK 548 = ep. 171 (CA, ep. 53, pp. 120-121), §2. “Agat ergo dilectio tua, frater charissime, ne vel Nestoriani dogmatis vel Eutychiani erroris ullam in Dei pupulo possit vestigium reperiri.”

\textsuperscript{104} In this same letter, Leo recommends the writings of Cyril and Athanasius to support his own position and condemns “the followers of Eutyches and Dioscorus” (“Eutychis et Dioscori sectatores”) as following the error of Apollinaris and of Mani.

\textsuperscript{105} 21 March, 458. JK 539 = ep. 162 (ACO II.4, pp. 105-107), §5, §2. Timothy Aelurus (Greek Ailourous) is also sometimes referred to as ‘The Cat’ or ‘The Weasel.’ This nickname was unsurprisingly used by his enemies more than by his supporters. See Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor, Chron., ed. Greatrex, iv.0, p.130, n.4 with refs.
condemn Eutyches in the first place at the Home Synod in 448.\textsuperscript{106} Still, he could be subsumed into the Eutychian category, a rhetorical abstraction rather than an accurate description of beliefs or teachings. For Leo and his successors, any Christology that departed from the \textit{Tomus} must be akin to “the Nestorian dogma or the Eutychian error.”\textsuperscript{107}

c. The odd couple: Nestorianism and Eutychianism

This last letter mentioned above, written to the Chalcedonian Bishop of Alexandria Timothy Salophakiolos in 460, points to the final element of Leo’s anti-Eutychian polemic. It was not simply ancient heresies that were used to taint Eutyches and his supporters. Especially in correspondence with eastern bishops, Leo again and again paired Eutyches with Nestorius or Eutychianism with Nestorianism. That these two men, who represent the opposite ends of the Christological spectrum, could be twinned at first seems odd. At least one recent scholar has claimed that Leo “thought Nestorianism still posed a threat” and after 449, Leo was preoccupied with a ten-year “joint offensive against Nestorius and Eutyches.”\textsuperscript{108} However, this ignores the rhetorical context of Leo’s opposition to Eutyches.\textsuperscript{109} By linking Eutyches and Nestorius, Leo sought to undermine Eutyches and his supporters by associating them with the very teachings they most vocally opposed. It was precisely their supposed radicalism and their fundamental antagonism to one and the other that made these two categories so useful for Leo. Moreover, their condemnation in parallel helped moderate Leo’s own position for easterners who otherwise would have read a condemnation of Eutyches without a parallel condemnation of Nestorius as a tacit approval of Nestorius’ teachings.\textsuperscript{110} As we shall see, in Leo’s heresiological rhetoric,

\textsuperscript{106} Acts of Chalcedon, ed. Price and Gaddis, I.332. Indeed, it was Dioscorus’ willingness to accept this formula that eventually led the council to reject it, replacing it with a much stronger dyophysite formula that made future reconciliation with the Egyptian Church almost impossible. As noted by Price and Gaddis (n. 209).

\textsuperscript{107} JK 548 = ep. 171 (CA, \textit{ep.} 53, pp. 120-121), §2. “Agat ergo dilectio tua, frater charissime, ne vel Nestoriani dogmatis vel Eutychiani erroris ullum in Dei pupulo possit vestigium reperiri.”

\textsuperscript{108} Green, \textit{Soteriology}, 202-203 and ff. Green is correct in emphasising Leo’s opposition to these two “twin heresies” and that it is in the context of the fight against both Eutychianism and Nestorianism that the \textit{Tomus} must be read. However, it seems likely that Nestorianism is used to balance his condemnation of Monophysitism and that this method of arguing against heresy was common in Leo’s thought. See below.

\textsuperscript{109} This is not to say that Nestorius’ theology disappeared after his death; for example it continued to thrive long after Ephesus II and Chalcedon amongst the Syriac Church that often (inaccurately) bears his name. But it was really the views of Theodore of Mopsuestia rather than those of Nestorius \textit{per se} which were held in high regard by the Church of the East. See, for example, S.P. Brock, “The Nestorian Church: A Lamentable Misnomer,” \textit{Bulletin John Rylands Library}, 78, no. 3 (1996), 28-30.

\textsuperscript{110} Also noted by Green, \textit{Soteriology}, 208.
Eutyches and Nestorius usefully served as boundary markers that defined the outer limits of orthodox teaching.

The intrinsic link between these two diametrically opposed heresies is emphasized in an interesting phrase: writing to thank the empress Pulcheria for her support in 451 prior to the Council of Chalcedon, Leo tellingly described the teachings of Nestorius and Eutyches as “a twin impiety” (Geminae impietatis) that was ultimately destroyed by the unified Catholic faith.\(^{111}\)

Here, Eutyches and Nestorius are fundamentally interconnected in that they both have misunderstood the Incarnation and its significance, only in contrary ways. As Leo later explained to Eudocia, the widow of Theodosius II, “For as the Catholic Faith condemns Nestorius, who dared to maintain two persons in our one Lord Jesus Christ, so does it also condemn Eutyches and Dioscorus who deny that the true human flesh was assumed in the Virgin Mother's womb by the only-begotten Word of God.”\(^{112}\) In Leo’s view, both the “Eutychian heresy and the execrable Nestorian dogma” had to be condemned.\(^{113}\) There should be no retreat in the fight “against the Nestorians or Eutychians” (contra Nestorianos aut Eutychianos agentes), both of whom were the enemies of Christ who deserved to be struck down by anathema.\(^{114}\) Repeatedly, Leo makes the same point: if one heresiarch was worthy of condemnation, so too was the other. Just as Leo had rightly “condemned Nestorius in his perversity,” so too he damned “by a similar sentence those who deny that the reality of our flesh existed in the Lord Jesus Christ.”\(^{115}\) Both men should be despised for their impious beliefs which “they drink from the muddy trough of diabolical falsehood rather than the pure spring of true light.”\(^{116}\)

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\(^{111}\) JK 459 = ep. 79 (ACO II.4, pp. 37-38). “de quo virtutum agone processit, ut per sollicitudinem uestram ea quae per Eutychen diabolus molitus est, non laterent et qui sibi singulas partes geminae impietatis elegerant, una Catholicae fidei virtute procumerent.”

\(^{112}\) June 15, 453 to Aelia Eudocia. JK 499 = ep. 123 (ACO II.4, p. 77). On Aelia Eudocia, see Kenneth G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1982), chap. IV.

\(^{113}\) JK 509 = ep. 135 (ACO II.4, pp. 88-89). “…non minus Eutychianam haeresim quam Nestorianum execrable dogma condemnant…”

\(^{114}\) To Theoderet of Cyrus, JK 496 = ep. 120 (ACO II.4, pp. 78-81). “Quod superest, exhortamur ut quia illic nonnullas Eutychiani ac Nestoriani erroris reliquias cognouimus remansisse, nunc etiam sedi apostolicae collabores.”

\(^{115}\) October 13, 449, to the clergy, nobility and people of Constantinople. JK 443 = ep. 50 (ACO II.4, pp. 21-22). “nos enim sicut Nestorium in sua peruersitate anathematizauimus, ita eos qui uritatem carnis nostrae in domino Iesu Christo denegant, pari execratione damnamus.”

\(^{116}\) June 26, 451 to Marcian. JK 470 = ep. 90 (ACO II.4, p. 48). “Catholica fides...a cuius integritate et Nestorius antea, et nunc Eutyches diuersis quidem callibus sed impietate non inpari deuiarunt, abominandi prorsus in persuasionibus suis quas contra sincerum veri luminis fontem de caenosis lacubus diabolicë falsitatis hauserunt. Note that ACO II.4, p. 48 has a typo on line 17, diuersuis, which is correctly rendered in the PL as diuersis.
These dual condemnations cleverly served to relate and thus to tarnish Eutyches with the heresy of his sworn theological enemy. But they also helped cast Leo’s own position as a moderate and traditional middle ground between the radical extremes of Christological speculation. This was especially important in his communication with eastern bishops and members of the imperial family, many of whom saw Eutyches and Dioscorus as a safeguards against a possible Nestorian revival. It must be admitted that it is difficult to make generalizations about the recipients of Leo’s letters simply because on the subject of Christology, the overwhelming majority of Leo’s letters were in fact sent to the East. Nevertheless it seems reasonable to assume that for some of these recipients Leo must have intended his condemnation of Nestorius to balance his attack against Eutyches. Thus to bishops, clergy, monks and members of the imperial family in the Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch – that is, in the Greek East – Leo was keen to emphasize that a condemnation of Eutyches did not indicate an acceptance or vindication of Nestorius. It was crucial that Leo be seen to oppose both Nestorius and Eutyches, for to attack the latter and not the former could be interpreted as vindicating a man already judged a heretic in order to condemn another who had been acquitted of any error by a council of the church. And so Leo was at pains to emphasize that both men were worthy of denunciation; the canons directed against Nestorius and his supporters at the Council of Ephesus I must continue to be upheld. As Leo tried to explain to Theodosius II in the aftermath of the Council of Ephesus II in 449, as Nestorius’s teachings had been worthy of condemnation years earlier, so too were those of Eutyches: “Just as we, venerable emperor, rightly anathematized the perverse dogma of Nestorius, so too we justly damn even the impiety of those who deny the truth that our flesh was taken up by our most Glorious Lord Jesus Christ [sc. Eutyches].” Moreover, the defenders of the Catholic faith, writing in “both Greek and Latin” including Cyril himself,

117 This is not to suggest that Leo’s Christology was actually the product of conscious attempt to negotiate a compromise between two theological perspectives (Nestorius and Eutyches, or “Antioche and Alexandrine” which didn’t actually exist as we might imagine them today). Rather, he chose to represent this understanding as the stable middle path from which heretics of all types deviated on all sides.
118 Leo does on occasion condemn both Eutyches and Nestorius in letters to westerners such as the bishops of Gaul. In this case, as in his epistle to Theoderet, it is possible that the dual condemnation of both men had simply become rote, part of Leo’s heresiological rhetoric. In contrast, other important letters to westerners such as that sent to Paschasius of Marsala, the man who would serve as Leo’s representative at the Council of Chalcedon, do not contain an equal and balanced attack against both Eutyches and Nestorius. To Paschasius: JK 469 = ep. 88 (ACO II.4, pp. 46-47).
119 December 25, 449, to Theodosius II. JK 445 = ep. 54 (ACO II.4, p. 11).
produced works which could “cut down the heresy which is now springing up [Eutychianism], just as it once destroyed the heresy of Nestorius.”

It is important to consider the language Leo employed in this letter. The message is much the same as in many of his other letters and sermons but to Theodosius, he unambiguously tied the condemnation of Nestorius (to which the emperor had assented in 431) with that of Eutyches, begging the question: how could Theodosius, enemy of Nestorius, now be an ally of Eutyches? Moreover, Leo claimed Cyril’s theological heritage as his own, placing himself in continuity with the Fathers of the Church, Nicaea and Ephesus I. Lastly, he shrewdly omitted Eutyches’ name from his letter entirely. By referring only to Eutyches’ error in general terms, Leo was perhaps giving Theodosius room to turn against his teachings without explicitly condemning the man himself. Yet in his letters to the emperor and in almost all of his other correspondence on Christology with the east, Leo always specially condemns Nestorius by name – a feature of his polemic to which many people in Constantinople and Alexandria would have quickly assented.

Only after any hope of support from Theodosius had been abandoned did Leo attack Eutyches in name. But he rarely did so without a condemnation of Nestorius in the same breath: to the bishops gathering for the Council of Chalcedon in 451, Leo claimed that “the purity of faith and of doctrine which we preach in the same spirit as our blessed Fathers equally condemns and attacks the Nestorian and the Eutychian depravity (Nestoriana et Eutychiana pravitas) along with their supporters.” Or as he stated to Maximus of Antioch, “although the disciples of Eutyches despise Nestorius and the partisans of Nestorius anathematize Eutyches, in the judgement of Catholics both are condemned. The two heresies together” are to be cast out and cut off from the body of the church.

Crucially, Leo may well have employed the strategy of dual condemnations in order to facilitate the acceptance of his Tomus amongst eastern bishops prior to the Council of Chalcedon in the summer of 451. In a letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople Anatolius written on the

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120 July 16, 450, to Theodosius II. JK 452 = ep. 69 (ACO II.4, pp. 30-31). trans. Hunt with modifications, p. 138. cf. Leo’s letter to Pulcheria on the same day with similar content: \ #1189
121 June 26, 451, to the bishops gathered for the council. JK 473 = ep. 93 (ACO II.4, pp. 51-53). Again, note that both the words ‘Nestorian’ and ‘Eutychian’ are in adjectival forms. “Puritas enim fidei atque doctrinae, quam eodem quo sancti Patres nostri spiritu praedicamus, et Nestorianam et Eutychianam cum suis auctoribus condemnat partier et persequitur pravitatem.”
122 July 11, 453 to Maximus, bishop of Antioch. JK 495 = ep. 119 (ACO II.4, pp. 72-75), §1.
123 Anatolius had replaced the deposed Flavian with the support of Dioscorus of Alexandria. Thus Leo was rightly concerned regarding Anatolius’ allegiances. See, for example, Leo’s letter to Theodosius II: JK 452 = ep. 69 (ACO
eve of the Council, Leo states, “since you yourself thought it right to inform [us] that all the eastern priests (omnes orientales sacerdotes) have subscribed in support of the Catholic faith [here, a reference to Leo’s Tomus] and in the damnation of Eutyches and Nestorius, we believe the work which is to be taken up at the council will proceed without any troubles of controversies.” This passage certainly suggests that Leo’s Tomus had been circulated prior to the council and that some eastern bishops (not all, despite Leo’s optimistic claim) had actually signed a document to indicate their support. That this language indicates an actual signing of the Tomus is further supported by a letter of Pulcheria written to inform Rome that Anatolius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who had been a partisan of Dioscorus, was now in fact Catholic. The empress tells Leo that the new patriarch had “signed off (subsripsit) without any delay” on Leo’s Tomus.

But it is interesting to note that Leo’s letter to Anatolius reports that the eastern priests had also consented to the damnatio of both Eutyches and Nestorius in addition to subscribing to the Tomus. At first glance, we might assume that this was simply a rhetorical flourish referring to eastern support for the Tomus itself. Yet the text of Tomus, composed two years earlier in June 449, is almost exclusively concerned with countering Eutyches and his Christology. Eutyches’ name appears numerous times in the text, whereas Nestorius’ name does not appear at all. Indeed, for some eastern critics, in his attempt to counter Eutyches and Dioscorus, Leo had preached a Christology that was tantamount to Nestorianism. Leo himself was worried that his teachings could be interpreted as such, especially by those who were looking to undermine his

II.4, pp. 30-31), §1-2, cf. Leo’s letter to Pulcheria, JK 459 = ep. 79 (ACO II.4, pp. 37-38); and Leo’s own letter to Anatolius giving thanks that the patriarch was orthodox: JK 460 = ep. 80 (ACO II.4, pp. 38-40).

124 June 26, 451, to Anatolius. JK 471 = ep. 91 (ACO II.4, p. 49). “Neque enim illic ullis contentionum difficultatibus credimus laborandum, cum et ipse indicare dignatus sis, quod in suscipienda Catholica fide et damnatione Eutychis atque Nestorii omnes orientales subscripserint sacerdotes.” Chalcedon would begin in October of that year.

125 Epistola Pulcheriae Augustae ad Sanctissimum Archiepiscopum Romae Leonem (PL 54, Leo ep. 77 = ACO II.4). “Sanctissimus igitur gloriosae Constantonopolis episcopus Anatolius in eadem fide permanit atque religione, et tuarum litterarum apostolicam confessionem complectitur, illo errore sublato qui ab aliquibus nunc ortus est, sicut ex eius quoque litteris clarius tua sanctitas agnosceret poterit; et epistolae namque similiter Catholicae fidei, epistolae namque similiter Catholicae fidei, quam sanctae memoriae Flavianum episcopum tua beatitude direxit, sine aliqua dilatatione subscripsit.”

126 Nestorius himself, who was exiled after Ephesus I, was reported to have been comforted by Leo’s Tomus which he believed was a theological vindication of his teachings. See Istvan Pasztori-Kupan, Theodoret of Cyrus (New York, NY, 2006), 12.
position and were willing to twist his words to do so. As an antidote to this perception and in order to garner as much support as possible for his own position, it seems likely that these eastern bishops were asked to sign their assent not only to the *Tomus* itself, but also another document which balanced the denunciation of Eutyches with a parallel denunciation of Nestorius.

Indeed, this and the many other examples of dual condemnations of both heretics in the letters to Anatolius, Theodosius II, Eudocia, the people and clergy of Constantinople, and many other bishops and members of the imperial family were in a way a gloss on the *Tomus* itself, expounding what Leo initially wrote to Flavian in the summer of 449. At that time, Leo was responding to the particular issue of Eutyches’ supposed radicalized Cyrillianism. But on the eve of Chalcedon in 451, this document had to retrospectively be made to also oppose Nestorius if it had any hope of gaining general acceptance in the east. One may well surmise that if Leo knew that his letter to Flavian would become such an important touchstone of orthodoxy in the years after it was sent, he would have almost certainly included a more explicit condemnation of Nestorius to make it more universally acceptable. This is not simply speculation: one of Leo’s later letters, written to the Emperor Leo in 458, is in essence a reworking of his *Tomus* and his letter to the monks of Palestine. And it is this letter rather than the *Tomus* itself that Gelasius, bishop of Rome at the end of the fifth century, saw as the definitive definition of Christological orthodoxy.

Whereas the *Tomus* had not mentioned Nestorius at all, in his letter to the emperor, Leo explicitly associated Eutyches’ error with that of Nestorius:

> Two enemies, one shortly after the other, attacked the Catholic faith that is one and true – nothing can be added or subtracted from it. The first of these to rise was Nestorius; then Eutyches. They sought to introduce into God’s church two heresies, the one contrary to the other. As a result, the advocates of truth rightly condemned both, for the teachings of both men, false in

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127 As Leo tells us in his letter to the monks of Palestine: JK 505 = *ep.* 129 (ACO II.4, pp. 84-86). A malicious mistranslation of the *Tomus* had been circulating that emphasized Leo’s supposed Nestorian leanings leading some to accuse the Bishop of Rome of Nestorianism.

128 That is, JK 500 = *ep.* 124 (ACO II.4, pp. 159-163).

129 , 18. “Quodsi vestra professione constricti, Calchedonensis synodi constituta vos omnibus modis servare firmatis, simul etiam apostolicae sedis praedicationem, quae in ills synodo relecta, tractata, suscepta est, vos suscepturos esse dicitis: quae omnia definita ex omnium retro pontificum, qui fuerunt a tempore Domini Salvatoris toto orbe terrarum, beatae memoriae papa Leo ad augustae memoriae Leonem subditis epistolae suae testimonii approbavit.”
different ways, were utterly foolish and blasphemous. Nestorius believed that the Blessed Virgin Mary was the mother of the man only and not of God – that is, in his opinion, the divine person was different from the human person. He did not think there was one Christ existing in the Word of God and the flesh, but taught that one was the son of man and the other the Son of God, each separate and distinct from the other. For this he was condemned.\textsuperscript{130}

Here, Leo connected both men’s teachings into a unified heretical whole, paradoxically amalgamated by their very contrariety.\textsuperscript{131} This was a particularly powerful rhetorical weapon that could be wielded to great effect, especially against those supporters of Eutyches who saw him as a bulwark against Nestorius. If the two men were contrary manifestations of the same error - an incorrect interpretation of the relationship between Christ’s human and divine natures – then supporting one could be presented as akin to supporting the other. Nestorius’ heretical teachings were simply preludes to those of Eutyches, and Eutyches’ were sequels to those of Nestorius; they were two contrary iterations of the same misunderstanding of the Incarnation.\textsuperscript{132} Both were equally incorrect and both men had arrogantly and stubbornly refused correction and had chosen instead to undermine the unity of the church. Thus they and their followers were anathema.\textsuperscript{133}

In their mutual antagonism, Leo linked Nestorianism and Eutychianism as opposing, demonically inspired radical extremes of theological speculation. Nestorius overemphasized Christ’s humanity. Eutyches overemphasized Christ’s divinity. Both men had misunderstood the Incarnation and thus both men had abandoned orthodoxy as taught by the Gospels and the Fathers, which, according to Leo, taught a Christology somewhere in the middle of these two extremes which at once (and paradoxically) preserved Christ’s divinity and his full participation in humanity.


\textsuperscript{131} Other parallel condemnations: June 26 [?], 451 to Marcian. JK 469 = \textit{ep}. 89 (ACO II.4, pp. 47-48). To the Constantinopolitan monks Faustus and Martinus, JK 457 = \textit{ep}. 75 (ACO II.4, p. 33). To the bishops of Gaul, JK 479 = \textit{ep}. 102 (ACO II.4, pp. 53-55). June 19, 451 to Anatolius in which Leo condemns “both heresies” (utrumque heresim) JK 469 = \textit{ep}. 87 (ACO II.4, p 45-46).

\textsuperscript{132} tr. 28 (CCSL 138, pp. 139-145). Here, the pope suggests that almost all errors stem from a misunderstanding of the incarnation, and thus all these errors are essentially the same. “Thus, in the many-faceted variations of a single doctrine, not only the nature of the flesh and of the soul, but the very essence of the Word has been wiped out.”

\textsuperscript{133} March 21 453, to the bishops gathered for the Council of Chalcedon. JK 490 = \textit{ep}. 114 (ACO II.4, pp. 70-71). “…ut damnatis haereticis, qui corrigi noluissent, nulla penitus resideret de vera Domini nostri Jesu Christi incarnatione dubitatio. Unde si quis umquam ausus fuerit vel Nestorii tueri perfidiam, vel Eutyches ac Dioscori impium dogma defendere, a Catholicorum communione resecetur; nec habeat ejus corporis participationem, cujus abnegat veritatem, fratres charissimi.”
d. Leo’s dialectic of Orthodoxy

This two-fold condemnation of Christological error had important implications for the way Leo described orthodoxy. Like so many other ancient Christian thinkers, he was extremely hesitant to provide a comprehensive or definitive definition of orthodoxy, preferring instead to exclude that which deviated from the path of the true faith. Correct belief was defined in terms of what it was not; that is, orthodoxy was demarcated by, and was a negation of, heresy. Leo’s preaching in particular provides numerous examples of those who ‘got it wrong’ so that he could illustrate ‘how to get it right.’ This can be clearly seen in his sermon preached on Christmas day, 452 which is worth considering in detail. The birth of Jesus was a particularly apt day for an exposition on the Incarnation and a defense of his own Christology. And Leo did not disappoint his congregation, delivering a long and detailed summary of orthodox teachings. However, the “barking heretics” have “turned a source of enlightenment into an occasion of blindness.” In fact, almost every heresy imaginable shares the common error of misunderstanding of Christ’s nature:

Some have ascribed to the Lord only his humanity, others only his divinity. Some have said that his divinity was real enough, but that his flesh was only an appearance. Others have declared that he took on real flesh but did not have the nature of God the Father. […] Some realized that Father and Son are not separable on a natural level. Yet, because they could not understand the unity of divine nature without a unity of Person, they insisted that the Father and the Son are one and the same. […] There are those who thought that the Lord Jesus Christ did not have a body made of our substance but one taken from higher and finer elements. Others felt that there was no human soul in the body of Christ, but that the very divinity of the Word took the place of his soul. […] There are many other prodigious falsehoods. I ought not burden your kind attention by listing them. Yet, after these various types of godlessness (which are interconnected by the fact that they are all blasphemies of one form or another), I warn you – please give close heed – to resist especially the following errors. One of them, founded by Nestorius some time ago, tried to

134 The targets of Leo’s accusations (not necessarily exhaustive): Adoptionism, dynamic Monarchianism, Photianism (see note below) and possibly Nestorius.
135 Here, Leo seems to be referring to the Manicheans, but could, of course also be referring to Eutyches. cf. ep 59. “Unde non Deum tantum dicimus Christum, sicut haeretici Manichaei, nec hominem tantum, sicut haeretici Photiani...”
136 Doceticism, including early Gnostic Christians, the Marcionites, and (again?) Manicheans.
137 Arianism.
138 Sabellian or Monarchic modalism, also called “Patripassianism” by its critics, most famously Tertullian.
139 Apollinarianism.
build up momentum — and not without considerable peril…[He] had the temerity to preach that the Blessed Virgin Mary was mother only to the man…Eutyches, the impious proponent of the more recent sacrilege, admitted the union of two natures in Christ. Yet he asserted that – as a result of this union – only one of these two natures remained while there was nothing at all left from the other’s substance.\textsuperscript{140}

What is so interesting about this sermon is that various heresies are grouped together and presented dialectically. Leo thus provides his listeners with a potted history of Christological errors, all of which were “interconnected,” united in their sacrilege and in their misunderstanding of the Incarnation. They all deviate from true faith. Each extreme and incorrect statement may well contain an element of truth, but this truth can only be realized when it is opposed by its contrary and equally incorrect analogue: Nestorianism was opposed by Eutychianism; Docetism by Arianism; Arianism by Sabellian modalism. Leo argues that all these heresies deviated from the true faith due to their failure to comprehend the fundamental mystery of his Incarnation. This was largely because they could only perceive a small portion of the truth and never the paradoxical whole: Jesus was not merely human or divine; he was human \textit{and} divine. Leo claims that all of these things, which on the surface seem contrary and mutually exclusive, are true simultaneously and without qualification; the mystery of Christ’s incarnation was, simply put, a paradox. But the tricky thing about a paradox is that it can be almost impossible to describe, at least in positive terms. But in negative terms, it becomes much easier.

The dialectic of contrasting heresies, then, was a species of apophatic theology that could serve as an important explanatory device to teach correct belief, especially in homilies. Arius had understood the Father correctly but had not understood the Word; Macedonius had understood the Father and Son but not the Holy Spirit; Sabellius had understood the Father Son and Holy Spirit were the same nature, but misunderstood the distinction of Person; Photius believed Christ was true Man but not True God; Apollinaris believed that Jesus was human but did not have a human soul, only a divine one.\textsuperscript{141} Considered on their own, they are the “poisonous lies inspired

\textsuperscript{140} tr. 28 (CCSL 138, pp. 139-145), §4-5. Trans., Freeland and Conway, Leo I, \textit{Sermons}, trans. Freeland and Conway, pp. 118-119. Leo insisted on numerous occasions that most heresy came about as a result of a misunderstanding of the Incarnation. “For, almost all heresies which have existed at different times have departed from the Gospel in their misunderstanding of the mystery of bodily birth, the passion, and the resurrection of Christ.” Leo I, \textit{JK 506 ep. 130 (ACO II.4, pp. 83-84)}.

by the devil.”  

But somewhere in the midst of all these contrary and extreme claims lay orthodoxy – undefined in its specifics, but nevertheless bounded by error.

**Conclusion**

Leo’s own episcopal authority and his identity as bishop of Rome was at least in part based on his orthodoxy; thus the maintenance of this orthodoxy was essential to his episcopal authority. His Christology evolved out of debate. Before Nestorius challenged the idea of Mary as the Mother of God and before Eutyches and Dioscorus had emphasized Christ’s unified single nature after the Incarnation, no specific Christological formula was needed. Leo attempted to address these issues by developing a theology that carefully excluded both Eutyches and Nestorius. Of course, neither Nestorius’ supporters nor those of Eutyches and Dioscorus accepted that the question had been definitively answered by Rome. Thus, the question of who exactly had the authority to rule on fundamental questions of correct belief was raised once again. In church history, the question of authority is inextricably linked to the question of correct belief.

For Leo, to protect his own authority as Bishop of Rome necessitated a no-compromise defense of his Christological orthodoxy as consistent with the Fathers and Nicaea. As part of this defense, Leo mobilized the heresiological categories which had been employed in the early years of the debate by Nestorius, Cyril, and later Flavian of Constantinople. Eutyches went from a wayward theologian and naive old man to the personification of various long condemned heresies including those of Valentinian, Mani and Apollinaris. Eventually Leo came to describe Eutyches as a heresiarch – the eponymous founder of a demonically inspired sect that sought to undermine the unity of the church. He did not simply attack the error of Eutyches; he condemned Euchianism. Moreover Leo imagined a dyad into which all Christological teachings that disagreed with his own could be subsumed: Nestorianism or Euchianism. It was through these rhetorical categories that Leo defined the limits of orthodox teaching as he understood it. For Leo, the history of heresy – its origins, genealogy and peculiar characteristics which marked each heretical movement as distinct from another – was ultimately crucial to the theory and practice of orthodoxy in the present.

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142 tr. 28 (CCSL 138, pp. 139-145), §6.
143 As the Nicene formula had done to exclude Arius. See Humfress, *Law and Orthodoxy* 127.
144 A similar point is made about the history of Greek and Roman medicine in van der Eijk, *Historical Awareness*, 4.
The power of Leo’s accomplishment is not only reflected in his success at Chalcedon, but also in Roman law. As we noted in the previous chapter, Leo’s anti-Manichean letters and sermons had a direct impact on the ideas and language in Roman law directed against the cult, in particular the *constitutio* issued by Valentinian III in 445. This was also true in the case of Christology. A law in the name of Valentinian and Marcian in 455 was promulgated against the followers of the “profane perversity of Eutyches” who opposed the faith established at Nicaea, supported as it was by Athanasius, Theophilus and Cyril, as well as the Councils of Constantinople and Ephesus (I). Most recently, according to the law, orthodoxy had been “supported at the venerable synod of Chalcedon” which “agrees entirely with the decisions of the previous councils of priests, neither adding nor subtracting anything from the Creed ("*sacrosancto symbole*”) but condemning the deadly teachings of Eutyches.” The law continues: “Let the followers of Eutyches know that they are Apollinarian heretics. For Dioscorus and Eutyches sacrilegiously followed the criminal sect of Apollinaris.” This condemnation is not merely rhetorical; the emperor was instructing Paladius, the Praetorian Prefect, to equate anyone who supported the teachings of Dioscorus and/or Eutyches with Apollinarians. That is to say under Roman law, “Eutychianism” was henceforth to be legally equated to Apollinarianism. Both crimes would be subject to the same penalties and prohibitions including the denial of the right of assembly and church construction, prohibition from military service, and a ban on the appointment of priests and bishops against the will of an orthodox (i.e. Chalcedonian) bishop. The emperors also imposed an extremely harsh fine of ten pounds of gold on anyone who merely discussed the heresy (*discendi studio audierint*) even if it came from a desire to understand its teachings, and called for the death penalty (*ultimo etiam supplicio coerceantur*) for those who

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145 NVal. 18, in the names of Valentinian III and Theodosius II. See previous chapter.
146 CJ I.5.8.pr: “…sciant se esse haereticos apollinaristas: apollinaris enim facinorosissimam sectam eutyches et diocorus mente sacrilega sunt securi.”
147 CJ I.5.8.1: “deoque hi omnes, qui apollinaris vel eutychetis perversitatem sequuntur, illis poenis, quae divorum retro principum constitutionibus contra apollinaristas vel serenitatis nostre postmodum sanctione contra eutychianistas vel hac ipsa augustissima lege contra eosdem decreatae sunt, noverint se esse plectendos.”
148 CJ I.5.8.2 “Idcirco apollinaristae, hoc est eutychianistae...” forbidding the heretics from creating a parallel church hierarchy by appointing their own priests and bishops; I.5.8.3: “apollinaristae vel eutychianistae” forbidding the construction of churches or monasteries; I.5.8.4, banning “Apollinarians or Eutychians” from military service; I.5.8.5, denying the right of assembly to “Apollinarians or Eutychians”.

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dare to actually teach it. Finally, all the books and pamphlets that contain the teachings of Eutyches (that is, of Apollinaris) were to be burned.¹⁴⁹

This edict gives the force of Roman law to many aspects of Leo’s anti-Eutychian rhetoric. Orthodoxy is defined by its link with Nicaea and the Fathers, especially Cyril – an important emphasis for an eastern audience. As Leo had claimed, this law also states that Chalcedon (and by extension its Christological definition) had not added or created anything new, but rather had simply condemned the heretical teachings of Eutyches. Finally, As Leo had done rhetorically, here Eutyches is legally equated with Apollinaris and thus cut off from fellowship with the larger Christian community.

In general terms, Leo’s polemic against Eutyches changed the vocabulary of the debate. Opposition to Chalcedon came to be seen as “Eutychian,” a heresy that evoked similar revulsion in orthodox Christians as did Apollinarism, Arianism or Manichaism. Eutychianism became so entrenched in the heresiological pantheon that Gelasius, writing thirty years after Leo’s death, could condemn the “Eutychian heretics” or the “Eutychian heresy” in much the same way as he does “the Pelagian plague” and the “Pelagian heretics.”¹⁵⁰ In the mid six-century, the hagiographer Cyril of Scythopolis described Saint Euthymius’ battles with Manicheans and Origenists, Arians and Sabellians and most importantly “the insane Eutyches” who confused the natures of Christ, and “the Judaizing Nestorius” who divided them.¹⁵¹ Indeed, even the term “Monophysite” which modern scholars often apply to Cyril’s Christology, especially as it was later interpreted by men such as Eutyches, Dioscorus and Severus of Antioch, is in many ways indebted to a Leonine definition of their faith rather than to their own.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ CJ 1.5.8.5: “Eos vero qui discendi studio audierint de infausta haeresi disputantes, decem librarum auri, quae fisco nostro inferendae sunt, iubemus subire dispendium. Ultimo etiam supplicio coerceantur, qui illicita docere temptaverint. Omnes vero huiusce modi chartae ac libri, qui funestum eutychetis, hoc est apollinaris, fuerint dogma complexi, incendio concrementur, ut facinorosae perversionis vestigia ipsa flammis ambusta depereant. Aequum namque est, ut immanissima sacrilegia par poenae magnitudo percellat.”
¹⁵² A more accurate term for its modern adherents such as the Coptic Orthodox Church (who, it should be stated, claim to adhere to Cyril and anathematize Eutyches) would be Henophysitism or perhaps Miaphysitism.
Chapter Four: Gelasius Part I

Introduction

This chapter marks the beginning of the second part of this dissertation that will consider the question of heresy in the time of Gelasius (492-496). Gelasius, like Leo, was keen to present the Roman Church as the final arbiter of the truth: doctrinal, credal or otherwise. But unlike Leo, Gelasius was forced to confront the ramifications of the collapse of Roman imperial power in the west. The so-called Fall of the Western Roman Empire – in fact, the deposition of Romulus Augustulus by the general Odoacer in AD 476 (or, perhaps the murder of Julius Nepos in 480) – actually brought with it a degree of security and stability in Italy that had been lacking in previous decades. In the capital city of Ravenna, the magistri of the civil service, comprised of the same viri illustres who had been so crucial to the late-Roman bureaucracy, continued to carry out their duties in much the same fashion as they had before 476. Odoacer ruled the Kingdom of Italy for sixteen and a half years.

Gelasius became bishop of Rome during the final years of Odoacer’s reign. In 489, Italy was invaded by the Ostrogoths led by their king Theoderic, possibly with some kind of imperial commission from Emperor Zeno. Theoderic was a patrician who had served as magister militum praesentalis of the eastern armies and had been appointed consul by Emperor Zeno in 484. But despite his position within the Roman military hierarchy, the continued presence of Theoderic and his followers in the Balkans posed an ongoing threat to the empire. Whether the expedition was initially proposed by Zeno or was the product of Theoderic’s own initiative, the Ostrogoth’s departure for Italy had the effect (at least from Zeno’s own perspective) of ridding the east of a

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1 McGrade, "Two Fifth-Century Conceptions of Papal Primacy," 19.
2 Romulus had himself been a usurper, a fact which helped Odoacer justify his own actions. The general continued to issue coins in the name of the ‘legitimate’ Western emperor, Julius Nepos, until 480.
3 Many members of prominent senatorial families held important offices during the rule of Odoacer and especially, of Theoderic. Giovanni Tabacco, The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy: Structures of Political Rule (Cambridge, 1989), 61-62.
potentially destabilizing military force.⁵ Indeed if we believe the account in the *Anonymus Valesianus*, Theoderic was sent to Italy by Zeno himself to recover Italy for the empire; should he defeat Odoacer, “the patrician Theoderic” was to rule and defend Italy as a proxy of Zeno.⁶

From the outset, the war went badly for Odoacer. His forces were defeated at a battle outside Verona and soon Odoacer found himself besieged by the invaders in Ravenna. With few remaining options, in 493 Odoacer agreed to a truce with Theoderic whereby the two men were to rule Italy together. Thus the war ended; however, the truce proved to be short-lived. Only days after he had opened the gates of the city to Theoderic, Odoacer was dead, murdered at the banquet table. Theoderic became the sole ruler of what was now the Ostrogothic kingdom of Italy.⁷ He would reign until his death in 526.

Aside from the obvious possible political ramifications resultant from the displacement of Roman imperial authority in Italy, the advent of first Odoacer’s and subsequently Theoderic’s kingdom had the potential to pose a religious challenge to the Roman Church as well: Odoacer and the Ostrogoths were non-Nicene Christians usually identified in modern scholarship as adherents of the Arian heresy. Moreover in distant Constantinople, emperors and their patriarchs seemed to be plotting to overturn the Christological settlement achieved by Leo at the Council of Chalcedon. As we saw in the last chapter, in the years after Chalcedon many in the East

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⁵ The Ostrogothic invasion of Italy was the result of complex political machinations in Constantinople. Theoderic, who despite his earlier alliance with Zeno rebelled against the emperor in 486 and had even marched on Constantinople in 487. Eventually, it was agreed that Theoderic should march on Italy, although it remains a matter of debate if he was intended to act as a deputy of Zeno or if he was to rule Italy in his own right. Patrick Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy*, 489-554 (Cambridge, 1997), 7-8 states that “Zeno appears to have suggested to Theoderic – perhaps as a way of getting rid of him – that he invade Odoacer’s Italy and restore it to the Roman Empire (more specifically, to Zeno’s rule).” On the background of the invasion and Theoderic’s position (real and theoretical), see Schwartz, PS, 215-217; Jones, “Odoacer and Theoderic,” passim; Peter Heather, *Goths and Romans*, 332-489 (New York, 1991), 304-308; Peter Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford, 1996), 216-219; Herwig Wolfram, *History of the Goths* (Berkeley, 1988), 278ff; Moorhead, *Theoderic in Italy*, 11-19; Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis, *Ravenna in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2010), 108-109. Older studies sometimes employ a more pessimistic tone. Gilbert Pomarès, ed., *Lettre contre les Lupercales et dix-huit messes du sacramentaire léonien*, SC 65 (Paris, 1959), 15, for example, describes Zeno as “having abandoned Italy to Theoderic” (my translation).

⁶ Anon. Val., *ed. and trans. John C. Rolfe*, p. 540, §49. “Zeno itaque recompensans beneficisi Thodericum, quem fecit patricium et consulem, donans ei multum et mittens eum ad Italiam. Cui Thodericus pactuatus est, ut, si victus fuissest Odoacar, pro merito laborum suorum loco eius, dum adveniret, tantum praeregaret. Ergo superveniente Theoderico patricio de civitate Nova cum gente Gothica, missus ab imperatore Zenone de partibus Orientis ad defendendam sibi Italiam.” But cf. Valerio Neri, “La legittimità politica del regno teodericiano nell’Anonimi Valesiani Pars Posterior,” in *Teoderico e i Goti tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Antonio Carile (Ravenna, 1995), 324-326, who argues that there was no agreement between Zeno and Theoderic. Instead, Theoderic may have retrospectively claimed that his invasion was sanctioned by Zeno as a way of legitimizing his rule in Italy. Theoderic commonly used the title ‘rex’, however he may also have sought to present himself as a Roman emperor as argued by Arnold, *Theoderic*, 58-76, esp. 75-76. For details on Ostrogothic settlement of Italy, see below, p. 187 and n. 82.

remained hostile to Leo’s statement of faith and opposition to the council had prompted violence and even outright rebellion.\(^8\) In an attempt to reconcile moderate anti-Chalcedonians with the supporters of the council, Emperor Zeno (474/476-491) instructed Acacius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, to develop a theological statement that would be acceptable to the broadest possible number of Christians.\(^9\) The result was a document known as the *Henotikon* (Edict of Union) which was promulgated in approximately 482.\(^10\) Felix III (483-492), Gelasius’ immediate predecessor, had strongly opposed the *Henotikon* as a breach of Chalcedon and an egregious example of lay/imperial interference in ecclesiastical affairs. The *Henotikon*, together with a rather clumsy attempt to bribe (or trick) two Roman legates who had been sent to the capital to negotiate with Patriarch Acacius, led to Felix’s decision to excommunicate Acacius in 484 and eventually Emperor Zeno in 491.\(^11\) Acacius soon followed suit and excommunicated Felix. The result became known as the Acacian Schism which divided Rome and Constantinople until 519. With the advent of the Ostrogothic Kingdom and Emperor Zeno and his successor Anastasius I (491 to 518) in Constantinople, Gelasius found himself confronted by potential heretical opponents both locally in Italy and at the heart of the empire.

In what follows, we will consider Gelasius’ pontificate and his opposition to heresy from two distinct perspectives: in the next chapter, we will focus in detail on Gelasius’ own ecclesiastical province of *Italia suburbicaria* and consider his relationship with the heterodox Ostrogoths, their king and his family. In the present chapter, we will investigate Gelasius’ dealings with various bishops outside of Italy, especially as it pertained to the enduring problems with Pelagianism and the debate over Christology. In the case of Pelagianism, we once again have an example of a Roman bishop intervening in the affairs of a local church due to disciplinary failures. As Leo had done decades earlier, Gelasius saw it as his responsibility to call any bishop to account for his failures to manage his church and to oversee his flock. Gelasius certainly shared Leo’s view that heresy grew when ecclesiastical oversight was not undertaken with sufficient vigour.

\(^8\) For example, see above, p. 48ff.
\(^9\) Zeno’s desire to restore religious unity to his empire may have been prompted by two political threats in 482: the looming rebellion of the general Illus and the incursions of Theoderic and his Goths into Thessaly and Macedonia. See Haas, "Patriarch and People," 350 and n. 36.
\(^10\) The details of the *Henotikon* will be discussed more fully below, but its political and religious context is nicely introduced in Caspar, *Gesch. des Papsttum*, II.14ff; Schwartz, PS, 198ff.
\(^11\) Felix’s sentences of excommunication can be found in two letters, the first to Acacius, July 28, 484: Felix III, JK 599 (Thiel *ep.* 6, pp. 243-247); the second to Emperor Zeno JK 600 (Thiel *ep.* 7, p. 247).
Turning to Christology, we shall see that from Gelasius’ perspective, the *Henotikon* threatened to overturn the Council of Chalcedon and Leo’s contributions to the definition of the relationship between Christ’s human and divine natures. In order to protect the Chalcedonian settlement, to coerce and persuade other bishops of the validity of Rome’s inflexible stance, and to delegitimize his opponents in the East, Gelasius, as Leo had done, employed the rhetoric of heresiology. He described any compromise of Chalcedon as a politically motivated betrayal of the true faith and stressed the genealogical nature of Christological heresy and orthodoxy. Any compromise of Leo’s teachings was described as Eutychianism, a heresiological category taken from Leo that effectively linked Gelasius’ contemporary theological adversaries with condemned heretics. In contrast, orthodoxy was depicted as the original teachings of the church passed on from Nicaea and the Fathers to Leo and the Council of Chalcedon. The chain of transmission of either heresy or orthodoxy was represented by the idea of communion, either with legitimate or illegitimate authority.

1. Gelasius: Sources

In total, the *Regestae Pontificum Romanorum* lists 124 entries for Gelasius. This number includes at least two letters that are attested to and not extant and another written to Gelasius. There are also ten letters and one tractate that are widely considered to be spurious, as well as two letters that no longer exist. Once these have been discounted, we are left with a total of 105 or 106 letters (including 49 which are fragmentary) and five tractates. This is a surprisingly

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12 Philipp Jaffé et al., *Regestae Pontificum Romanorum* (1885), JK 619-743; (Steenbrugis, 1995), §§1667-1676

13 Spurious letters of Gelasius noted by Jaffé and Kaltenbrunner: JK 695, JK 696, JK 697, JK 698, JK 699. Also spurious according to Walter Haacke and Ziegler are: JK 746 (an epistle of Anastasius II preserved by Thiel as Gelasian, *ep.* 2, but not counted by Jaffé and Kaltenbrunner as Gelasian), JK 620 (considered genuine by Caspar, pp. 44-46), JK 634, JK 700 (*de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis*), and JK 702. JK 619 is not extant, but is mentioned in JK 622. JK 639 to the bishops of Dalmatia is also not extant, but is referred to in JK 638 (Thiel *ep.* 18, pp. 382-385 = CA *ep.* 101, pp. 464-468), §4. Haacke and Ziegler also discount JK 622 (which will be considered in greater detail below), although it is accepted as genuine by most modern scholars. Also included in the Gelasian corpus are the record of the Roman Synod of March 13, 495 (no JK number but included by Thiel as *ep.* 30, pp. 437-447) and a letter addressed to Gelasius from the bishops of Dardania, JK 635 = Epistola Dardaniae episcoporum ad Gelasium (Thiel, *ep.* 11, pp. 348-349 = CA *ep.* 80, pp. 223-225). Tractatus II (JK 669) should also be dismissed as a later production, although Erich Caspar, *Gesch. des Papsttum* II. 51-52, and Koch, *Gelasius* 67-76, esp. 67-68 and his conclusions on 76), accept it. For an overview, see Ziegler, "Pope Gelasius," 415, n.10; Walter Haacke, *Die Glaubensformel des Papstes Hormisdas im acacianischen Schisma*, Analecta Gregoriana 20 (Roma, 1939), 32-44. A truncated version of *ep.* 26 which appears in the PL and is published by Thiel (pp. 414-422) should also be discounted in favour of the longer variant also published in Thiel (pp. 392-413) and in the *Collectio Avallana* (ep. 95) edited by Otto, Günter. When we subtract the nine or ten letters (including or excluding JK 622) generally recognized as spurious (not including the supposed letter of Anastasius II which was not counted in our original
large number considering he was bishop for less than five years; as we noted in Chapter Two, there are 143 extant letters for Leo as well as ninety-six sermons. Leo’s pontificate was over twenty-one years long.\textsuperscript{14}

Gelasius’ literary output seems even more impressive if we include a number of important letters and tractates written in the name of his predecessors. Following Hugo Koch’s 1935 study, most modern scholars have accepted that in addition to the texts that come down to us in his own name, Gelasius was also responsible for the drafting of many if not all of the letters of his immediate predecessor Felix III (483-492).\textsuperscript{15} Koch also claimed that Gelasius wrote the letters of Simplicius (468-483) as well – a theory accepted by Walter Ullmann, but rejected by Nelly Ertl, Ziegler and Richards.\textsuperscript{16} Koch’s conclusions were based on the syntactical and stylistic similarities found in the letters of these three bishops. However, while it is certainly possible that Gelasius contributed to the ideas and words behind some of Simplicius and more plausibly, of Felix’s letters including \textit{de vitanda communione Acacii} (which is widely accepted as Gelasian),\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{14} On Leo’s letters and tractates, see above, p. 46ff. Gelasius’ literary output and the preservation of his letters is particularly striking when compared to his immediate predecessors and successors. Even including spurious texts, Jaffé and Kaltenbrunner list just twenty-one entries (JK 569-590) for Simplicius who was bishop for fifteen years, and twenty-seven entries for Felix III who was bishop for nine years (JK 591-618). Symmachus’s sixteen-year contested pontificate (598-514) produced only seventeen surviving letters (JK 752-769); Hormisdas’ nine years (514-523), on the other hand, produced an impressive 101 entries (JK 770-871). It should be noted that the Acacian Schism was resolved on Rome’s terms under Hormisdas.

\textsuperscript{15} Koch’s analysis can be found in \textit{Gelasius im kirchenpolitischen Dienste seiner Vorgänger, der Päpste Simplicius (468-483) und Felix III (483-492): ein Beitrag zur Sprache des Papstes Gelasius I (492-496) und früherer Papstbriefe} (München, 1935), passim, but esp. 53ff.


\textsuperscript{17} JK 611 = \textit{de vitanda communione Acacii} (Thiel, pp. 287-311). This letter was written in 488-489 by Felix or under his name by Gelasius. While it remains possible that Gelasius was involved in the production of this letter, I find myself in agreement with Sontinel (n. 18, below), whose arguments must at a minimum call into question the easy attribution of Felix’s letter to Gelasius.
it must be admitted that there is no evidence extra-literary that can confirm these suppositions. The attempt to subsume the works of Simplicius and Felix into the Gelasian corpus may well have been motivated by a desire to demonstrate that Gelasius stood behind a coherent doctrine of “papal power” throughout the later fifth-century. The similarities in the style and language found in the epistles of these three bishops may owe more to the rules of chancery composition rather than to common authorship.\(^{18}\) Indeed, we should not dismiss the possibility that Gelasius’ own views were shaped by ideas current at Rome before his pontificate and not the other way around. Gelasius was almost certainly an influential figure in the curia prior to his election as bishop in 492; but it is simply impossible to establish his role under his successors with any degree of certainty.\(^{19}\)

The authenticity of other letters attributed to Gelasius is also debated. The *Gesta de nomine Acacii*, which outlines the history (from the perspective of Rome) of the Christological controversy from Nestorius and Eutyches to the condemnation of Acacius, is universally accepted as Gelasian despite the fact that it is usually dated to Felix’s pontificate.\(^{20}\) It is also possible that Gelasius’ tractate on Pelagianism was written before he became bishop, although there are no doubts among scholars that this text is authentically Gelasian.\(^{21}\) The so-called *adversus Andromachum*, a letter written against the continuing pagan festival of the Lupercal, is

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\(^{18}\) This desire also explains why these conclusions have been so readily accepted. There is a divide between French and German scholars as to whether or not to attribute Felix and Simplicius’ letters to Gelasius. German-speaking scholarship tends to accept this attribution while French literature largely rejects it. Compare Koch and Ullmann’s theory noted above with skeptical approach of Pomarès, ed., *Lettre contre les Lupercales*, 16, n. I. But see especially the conclusions of Sontinel in the *Dict. hist. de la papauté*, 720. See also PCBE II, p. 906 GELASIVS 2, which makes much the same point as Sontinel. With these prudent warnings in mind, we should be extremely hesitant to treat Simplicius’ and Felix’s letters as unquestionably Gelasian. The present study will limit itself to those letters and tractates widely recognized as Gelasian, written in Gelasius’ own name. The exception will be a consideration of *de vitanda*; however for the sake of clarity the letter will be credited to Felix - although I leave open the possibility of Gelasian influence. In any case, it is worth emphasizing that while each bishop brought his own personality and ideas to the office, they did not work alone. Instead, Roman bishops depended on a wide variety of advisors, clerics and bureaucrats. The letters of Felix or of Gelasius express their own views to be sure, but they also may reflect unknown and unknowable consultations with trusted advisors and friends.

\(^{19}\) For Gelasius’ early career, see below, p. 145.

\(^{20}\) *Gesta de nomine Acacii* (Thiel, *tract. I*, pp. 510-519 = CA *ep.* 99, pp. 440-453). Koch, *Gelasius*, 66 notes that this tractate must have been composed before the deaths of Peter Mongus (Oct. 29, 490) and Acacius (November, 489). Caspar, *Gesch. des Papsttum*, 41, n. 5 proposes a date of 489. But cf. Pietri, "Aristocratie et Société Cléricale," 421, n. 13, who reasonably posits that the tractate may have been begun under Felix, but completed during Gelasius’ pontificate. The fact that this tractate cites a letter of Felix (in the third person, §§30-31 in the CA edition) certainly suggests that Felix was not the author.

\(^{21}\) JK 627 "adversus Pelagiam haeresim" (Thiel *tract. V*, pp. 571-598 = CA *ep.* 97, pp. 400-436). On the composition of this text, see Pomarès, ed., *Lettre contre les Lupercales*, 16 and n. I.
likewise widely accepted as genuine.\textsuperscript{22} Slightly more problematic is the so-called \textit{commonitorium} to Flavius Anicius Probus Faustus Niger preserved by Thiel as \textit{ep.} 10.\textsuperscript{23} Faustus, who was \textit{magister officiorum} in 493, was tasked by Theoderic in that same year to legitimate his takeover of Italy with imperial authorities in Constantinople.\textsuperscript{24} This letter has been called spurious in at least three important studies;\textsuperscript{25} however the majority of modern scholars treat the text as genuine.\textsuperscript{26}

Which letters we accept and genuine and which letters we reject necessarily impacts the way we reconstruct the priorities of Gelasius’ pontificate. For example, Walter Ullmann’s conclusions regarding Gelasius’ letters pertaining to Ostrogoths are deeply problematic. While attributing all of Simplicius and Felix’s letters to Gelasius, Ullmann simultaneously rejects all of Gelasius’ correspondence with the Ostrogothic King Theoderic on the assumption that the utterly foreign, barbarian and heretical nature of the Goths precluded a relationship with the bishops of Rome.\textsuperscript{27} However, this image of Ostrogothic Italy is based in part on the rejection of these letters, and it is only by disallowing these letters that Ullmann can present this perspective. There is no good reason to reject these texts.\textsuperscript{28}

\textit{a. Collections}

The transmission of the letters of the Bishops of Rome changed considerably in the years after Leo the Great. Leo, as well as his predecessors, especially Siricus (384-399), Innocent I (401-417), and Celestine I (422-432) had produced doctrinal letters and especially decretals that had circulated widely throughout the Latin west. This was simply not the case in the century and

\textsuperscript{22} See the persuasive arguments of Neil McLynn, "Crying Wolf: The Pope and the Lupercalia," \textit{JRS}, 98 (2008), 162 and n. 9.
\textsuperscript{23} JK 622 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 10, pp. 341-348). Faustus (PLRE II, 454-456).
\textsuperscript{24} This was Theoderic’s second embassy to Constantinople; the first had been headed by Rufius Postumius Festus (PLRE II, 467-469), the head of the Roman Senate in 490, but had failed. Faustus too failed in 492 and Theoderic was only recognized in the east in 497 after Festus made a second trip to the east. See Moorhead, \textit{Theoderic in Italy}, 35ff.
\textsuperscript{26} E.g. Caspar, \textit{Gesch. des Papsttum}, II.54-55. See esp. the conclusions of Moorhead in \textit{Theoderic in Italy}, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{27} Ullmann, \textit{Gelasius}, 218 and 225-6.
\textsuperscript{28} Contra Ullmann, see Amory and Moorhead’s entirely persuasive argument for accepting the letters of Gelasius to Theoderic in \textit{People and Identity}, 200, n.22 and \textit{Theoderic in Italy}, 12, 27-28.
a half following Leo’s pontificate. As we noted in Chapter Two, almost all of Leo’s seventeen decretals were widely excerpted into the various Late Antique canonical collections. In the case of Gelasius, only his *generale decretum* from the Roman Synod of 494 circulated with anything like the frequency of the decretals of earlier Roman bishops. This text was originally directed to the Italian bishops of Lucania, Abruzzo and Sicily (i.e. the territories for which Gelasius was metropolitan); however the earliest collections that preserve the *generale decretum* alter the addressees in the text, thereby transforming it into a universally applicable decretal addressed to all bishops of the church.

The limited circulation of decretals after Leo’s time may have been promoted by changing motives for the compilation and preservation of canonical collections. On the whole, fewer general collections were produced in the later fifth-century and afterwards, and those that were tended to be local with limited transmission outside Italy, perhaps prompted by the political fragmentation of the Western Roman Empire. The *Collectio Frisingensis Pirma* and the *Quesnelliana*, both compiled at the end of the fifth-century, as well as the *Collectio Vaticana*, *Collectio Teatina* and the *Collectio Italica*, compiled in the early sixth-century, were all local Italian, mostly Roman productions.

As general collections declined, local special collections assembled for specifically polemical purposes began to replace them. In his survey of the letters from this period, Detlev Jasper states that these later collections were not intended as dispassionate assemblages of

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29 For an overview of the changes in the nature of canonical collections after Leo, see Fuhrmann and Jasper, *Papal Letters*, 61-65.
30 Not to be confused with the spurious *Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis*. See below, n. 43.
31 JK 636 = *generale decretum Gelasii* (Thiel ep. 14, pp. 360-379). Maassen, *Geschichte*, 281, identified 10 collections that contain Gelasius’ decretum. For comparison, the decretal of Siricius (JK 255, mentioned in Chapter 2, p. 56) appears in 15 collections. Other important decretals of Innocent appear in 14, 15 or 16 different collections. Leo’s seventeen decretals are included in almost all the chronologically ordered canonical collections of the fifth and sixth centuries. See Fuhrmann and Jasper, *Papal Letters*, 49 and 59, n. 245. cf. Silva-Tarouca, "Beiträge zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Papstbriefe des 4.-6 Jh.,” 690-693. On Leo’s decretals, which were somewhat surprisingly more frequently copied than his dogmatic letters, see above, p. 49ff.
32 The original was directed to “universis episcopis per Lucaniam Et Brutios et Siciliam constitutis.” The earliest collections that preserve the text (with the exception of the *Dionysiana*) changed the addressees to read “universis episcopis per unamquamque proinvinciam constitutis,” or alternatively they simply call it a “generale decretum ad omnes episcopos.” See Gaudemet, *Les Sources*, 64. For a detailed discussion of the transmission of the *decretum*, see Jean Gaudemet, "Histoire d'un texte: Les chapitres 4 et 27 de la décrétale du Pape Gélase du 11 mars 494,” in *Mélanges d'histoire des religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech* (Paris, 1974), 292-295. On the jurisdiction of the bishops of Rome in this period, see Chapter 1, p. 24ff.
33 For the dating and manuscript see Kéry, *Canonical Collections*, Collectio Frisingensis pirma pp. 2-3, Teatina, 24, Vaticana 25-26, Quesnelliana 27-29, Italica (Sanblasiana) 29-31. The *Quesnelliana* was produced in Gaul according to Maassen and Duchesne; in Rome according to Silva-Tarouca, Gaudemet and others. Gaudemet, *Les Sources*, 133.
canonical norms. Rather their authors or editors were “more interested in documenting the ecclesiastical politics of a specific pope than assembling a collection of sources to be consulted about church discipline or teaching.”

This emphasis account for the relatively widespread transmission of Gelasius’ dogmatic letters, which tended to circulate together with the epistles of his immediate predecessors Simplicius and Felix III. Interest in the letters of these three bishops in particular was in part predicated on their important roles in the Christological controversy. The Acacian Schism, which divided Rome and Constantinople until 514, as well as the related Laurentian Schism in Rome itself (from 498 until 506) and the later Three Chapters Controversy (post-533) all provided ample incentive for the preservation and circulation of Gelasian material by staunch Chalcedonians weary of any comprise with the east. And so it should not come as a great surprise that aside from the generale decretum mentioned above, the most extensively circulated authentic Gelasian texts all pertain especially to the Acacian Schism. These include the famous letter to Emperor Anastasius, a letter to the bishops of Dardania justifying the excommunication of Acacius and a very long letter to the bishops of the East in defense of Rome’s position in the Acacian Schism. Also widely copied was a Gelasian formula for the ordination of bishops as well as a number of works now widely considered to be spurious. In this last category we can include the so-called Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis, falsely-attributed to Gelasius (or circulated in Gelasius’s name). This text may have been produced in Gaul during the late fifth or sixth centuries or possibly even later. The so-called ‘Gelasian Sacramentary’ was an eighth century collection with no

34 Fuhrmann and Jasper, Papal Letters, 59.
35 For an overview of the reception of Gelasius’ letters into the collections of canon law, see Maassen, Geschichte, 279-285.
36 Again, it is worth stressing the shift in emphasis between the time of Leo and of Gelasius: whereas it was Leo’s decretals that circulated widely in the earliest collections rather than his dogmatic letters, the inverse was true with Gelasius.
37 For an excellent survey of the evidence connected to the Laurentian Schism and the various associated manuscripts, see (Wirbelauer, 1993 #1595@171-223)
40 Preserved in four collections: JK 665 (Thiel ep. 27, pp. 422-435).
41 Preserved in five collections: JK 674 (Thiel ep. 15, pp. 379-380).
42 Especially two letters: to Euphemius, Patriarch of Constantinople preserved in 4 collections: JK 620 (Thiel ep. 3, pp. 312-321); and a commonitorium to the magister officiorum Flavius Anicius Probus Faustus Niger, preserved in four collections: JK 622 (Thiel ep. 10, pp. 341-348). On authenticity of these letters see discussion above, note 13.
43 Preserved in nine late antique collections and in countless manuscripts: published by Ernst von Dobschütz, "Das Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis," Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur, 38, no. 4 (1912). Most scholars now agree that de libris likely originated in Gaul. However Wirbelauer, Zwei Päpste in Rom, 133, n. 92 places it in the context of the Laurentian Schism in late fifth/early sixth-
connection to Gelasius. Many other genuine letters of Gelasius circulated in only one or two collections; many others still survive outside the late antique canonical collections altogether.

The most significant collections containing Gelasian material include the Collectio Avellana, the Collectio Berolinensis, the Collectio Veronensis, Quesnelliana and the Collectio Frisingensis prima. Also of interest is the 11th or 12th century manuscript known as the Collectio Britannica that contains a number of Gelasius’ letters, as well as others from Pelagius (556-561) and various other later medieval Roman bishops. The Veronensis in particular can be directly connected to the Acacian Schism. Its compiler was a partisan of Gelasius’ categorical stance against any compromise with the East over the issue of Christology. The collection itself dates to shortly after Gelasius’ death and was later mobilized against the Council of Constantinople (533) in the context of the Three Chapters controversy.

century Rome. When it was composed or compiled also remains a subject for debate. Siegmar Döpp and Wilhelm Geerlings, Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur (Freiburg, 1998), 160, suggest the late-fifth or sixth century. Rosamond McKitterick, The Carolingians and the Written Word (Cambridge, 1989), 202-205, notes that the earliest extant manuscript of the text, Brussels 9850-2, was produced around 700 near Corbie. It then spread throughout the Frankish realms quite rapidly. In McKitterick view, de libris constituted “a vital Frankish contribution to the definition of orthodox knowledge and one that was widely influential in the Carolingian world.” Following McKitterick, Yitzhak Hen. Culture and Religion in Merovingian Gaul, A.D. 481-751 (Leiden, 1995), 51-52; Yitzhak Hen, The Royal Patronage of Liturgy in Frankish Gaul to the Death of Charles the Bald (877) (London, 2001), 30, places it in a Merovingian context.

44 Although it may well contain Roman material from the fifth/sixth centuries. See Noble, Literacy and the Papal Government, 99.


46 The Collectio Britannica (CB) survives in a single manuscript: MS Add. 8873 in the British Library. It contains various letters ascribed to Roman bishops as well as other material including Patristic texts and Roman law. There is no critical edition of the Collectio Britannica although Ewald’s important study does present some hitherto unpublished letters. Others are contained in other collections such as those of Thiel, Mommsen (in the so-called Epistulae Theodericianae Variae, discussed below, n. 49) and especially of Lowenfeld who published material unavailable or unknown to Ewald (all of which are cited below, nn. 61, 49). Paul Ewald, "Die Papstbriefe der britischen Sammlung," in Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde (1880), 275-414, 503-596. But see also Poole, the Papal Chancery, 29-30; and Robert Somerville and Stephan Kuttner, Pope Urban II, the Collectio Britannica, and the Council of Melfi (1089) (Oxford, 1996), 2ff., which questions a number of Ewald’s conclusions.

47 Fuhrmann and Jasper, Papal Letters, 63; Grillmeier, CICT 2.1, 26-27.
b. An Overview of our Evidence

As we have seen, in the decades after Gelasius’ death it was his dogmatic letters pertaining to the Christological controversy that were most widely copied and preserved. In total, there are eight extant letters and two tractates in Gelasius’ own name written against Acacius and in defence of the Council of Chalcedon.\(^{48}\)

However, despite the ongoing importance of the Acacian Schism, more than half of the surviving authentic letters and tractates focus on the day-to-day operation of the church in *Italia suburbicaria*, the territory in which Gelasius was the metropolitan bishop. As we shall see in the following chapter, the basic administration and the details of land holding within Italy were crucial aspects of Gelasius’ pontificate. Also pertaining to Italy are seven letters addressed to members of the Ostrogothic regime: three to Theoderic, two to the Gothic *comes* Teia, and two to Theoderic’s mother Ereleuva.\(^{49}\) Considering the importance of both the church and Theoderic, at first glance it is somewhat surprising that Gelasius and the other bishops of Rome in this period interacted so infrequently with Theoderic.\(^{50}\) However, if we expand the scope of our focus beyond the direct relationship between Gelasius and the Ostrogoths and include letters in which the church came into contact with the Ostrogothic state, we can add six more letters bringing us to a total of thirteen. These additional epistles illustrate Gelasius’ reaction to questionable characters seeking sanctuary in an *ecclesia barbarorum* and his intervention in court cases involving clergy and Gothic courts. In another letter, Gelasius complains that some of his

\(^{48}\) The extant letters pertaining to the Acacian Schism: to the bishops of Dardania, explaining Gelasius’ position vis-à-vis Acacius: JK 623 (Thiel ep. 7, pp. 335-337 = CA ep. 79, pp. 218-223); to Abbot Natal, a supporter in the east: JK 624 (Thiel ep. 8, pp. 337-339); to Saucoconius, an African bishop who had taken refuge in Constantinople: JK 628 (Thiel ep. 9, pp. 339-341); the famous letter to Emperor Anastasius: JK 632 (Thiel ep. 12, pp. 349-358); twice more to the Dardanian Bishops: JK 638 (Thiel ep. 18, pp. 382-385 = CA ep. 101, pp. 464-468); JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398); to the bishops of the East: JK 665 (Thiel ep. 27, pp. 422-435); to a certain John, a vir illustris: JK 671 (Thiel frag. 1, pp. 483-484). There are also two important tractates: JK 670 = "*de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium*" (Thiel, tract. III, pp. 530-557); JK 701 = *de anathematis vinculo* (Thiel tract. IV, pp. 557-570). On the subject of the Henotikon and relations with the East, we can also include the *acta* of the Roman of March 13, 495 (preserved in Thiel as Gelasius, ep. 30).


bishops are spending too much time at the court in Ravenna.\footnote{51} There is also an epistle condemning the Lupercal.\footnote{52} Finally, there are also five texts that address the heresy of Pelagianism.\footnote{53} There are also several letters of Theoderic relating to issues that touch upon the Roman Church, but Cassiodorus’ \textit{Variae} does not contain a single letter written on behalf of Theoderic addressed to a Roman Bishop.\footnote{54}

Of course, given the incomplete survival of evidence, it is difficult to draw absolute conclusions about Gelasius’ priorities from a simple tally of the subject matter of his surviving letters. For one, our categories (‘Ostrogothic’, ‘Christological’, ‘administrative’, etc.) are somewhat arbitrary and open to interpretation and a number of letters legitimately belong to more than one category. Moreover, because there is no complete original register of letters for Gelasius, we cannot be sure to what degree the letters we do possess accurately reflect the concerns of his pontificate.\footnote{55} It is certainly true that in the generations following his death, Gelasius’s dogmatic tractates and epistles in defence of the Council of Chalcedon were the most valued by the compilers of ideologically motivated collections such as the \textit{Collectio Avellana}, \textit{Collectio Britannica} or the \textit{Collectio Veronensis}. The continuator of Jerome’s \textit{De Viris Illustribus} and near contemporary of Gelasius Gennadius of Massilia tells us that it was precisely these texts that were valued and preserved by the church long after Gelasius’ death.\footnote{56}

\footnote{51}These letters include legal cases in which members of the church came into contact with the Ostrogothic court: to bishops Gerontius and John: JK 723 (ETV \textit{ep.} 7 = Thiel \textit{frag.} 11, p. 489); to bishops Crispinus and Sabinus: JK 727 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 23, pp. 389-390); to John, bishop of Vibonensis: JK 732 (Thiel \textit{frag.} 42); to bishop Elpidus: JK 735 (Thiel \textit{frag.} 7, p. 486); to archdeacon Justin and the defensor Faustus: JK 741 (Thiel \textit{frag.} 23, pp. 496-497); to bishops Quinigesius and Constantine: JK 743 (ETV \textit{ep.} 8 = Thiel \textit{frag.} 13, p. 490).

\footnote{52}JK 672.

\footnote{53}Pelagianism: JK 621, JK 625, JK 626, JK 627, JK 696.

\footnote{54}Noble, Noble, \textit{Theoderic and the Papacy}, 398. To be more accurate, no letters written on behalf of Theoderic to a bishop of Rome survive in the \textit{Variae}. There are, however, two extant letters to John II (533-535), the first in Athallaric’s name (\textit{Var} 9.15), the second in Cassiodorus’ name (as Praefectus Praetorio) (\textit{Var.} 11.2).

\footnote{55}As we noted in Chapter One, no register of letters for the bishops of Rome – complete or even partial – survives in its original form before the twelfth-century. For the period under consideration here, what we do have are copies or copies of copies which were generally transmitted in the various collections we have discussed above. There are, however, two partial exceptions. The first are the 850 letters of Gregory the Great which almost exclusively were copied directly from his register. Second, as we also saw in Chapter Two (n. 25), Leo may also have been responsible for assembling material related to the Christological controversy directly from his now lost register. Leo certainly had access to his copies of his own letters and frequently cited them in his sermons, for example. On registers and the state of our evidence, see the discussion in Chapter One.

against Acacius and imperial meddling. Indeed, so much was thought of Gelasius’ contribution that a number of letters defending Rome’s position in the Christological debate were later attributed to (or forged in) Gelasius’ name. On the other hand, Gelasian decretals on matters of church discipline and organization, which were far less widely circulated than his dogmatic letters in his own day, survive in such large numbers in part due to the interest of later medieval compilers of canon law like Gratian (twelfth-century). The same cannot be said about Gelasius’ letters to or about Theoderic and his court. Indeed, given how little value these letters would have held for either canon lawyers or propagandists and the fact that the Ostrogoths were considered barbarian heretics by later generations, we might wonder not at how limited our evidence is for Gelasius’ relationship with the Ostrogoths, but at its abundance.

c. Modern Editions

Gelasius’ letters have received much less attention from modern editors than those of Leo. There is no recent critical edition that encompasses all of Gelasius’ letters and tractates, although they are collected in the Patrologia Latina. The best single edition is now that of Andreas Thiel, to be supplemented by Schwartz’s edition of Gelasius’ writings regarding the Acacian Schism, Ewald’s study of the Collectio Britannica and by Mommsen and Lowenfeld’s editions of the Gelasian material discovered after Thiel.

57 LP, I.255. “Ipsis temporibus fecit synodum et misit per tractum Orientis et iterum misit et damnauit in perpetuum Acacium et Petrum, si non penitens sub satisfactionem libelli postularet paenitentiam.”
58 These include many of the spurious letters noted by Jaffé and Kaltenbrunner noted above (n.13), especially de damnatione nominum Petri et Acacii (Thiel, tract. II).
61 Andreas Thiel, ed., Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum (Braunschberg, 1868; reprint, 1974), 285-613; Ewald, Neues Archiv 5, 509-526, 562-563; Samuel Loewenfeld, ed., epistolae Pontificum Romanorum ineditae (Leipzig, 1885; reprint, 1959), 1-11. Mommsen and Schwartz’s editions (the ETV and PS) are cited above in notes 49 and 45 respectively. Whenever possible, the newest editions are to be preferred. See Bagan. Syntax, vii. References to particular sections of letters and tractates (i.e., §2) are to Thiel’s edition unless otherwise noted.
2. Gelasius: Context

In the decades after the death of Leo on November 10, 461, the Roman Church remained relatively stable and united.62 As we have already seen in this chapter, the main theological concern for the bishops of Rome continued to be Christology. And it was the fight to preserve and protect the council as the touchstone of Christological orthodoxy that preoccupied Leo’s successors including Hilary (461-468), the very man who had acted as Leo’s representative at the ill-fated Council of Ephesus II.63 Hilary was in turn followed by Simplicius (468-483) and Felix III (483-492).64 Felix differed from his predecessors in that he came from a Roman senatorial family, the first demonstrably aristocratic bishop of Rome.65 But despite their dissimilar backgrounds, Hilary, Simplicius and Felix shared a commitment to preserve Chalcedon against any potential comprise initiated in the east.66

The impression of stability conveyed by the bishops of Rome stands in stark contrast to the political and military uncertainty faced by the western half of the Roman Empire in this same period. Weak emperors and the gradual loss of territory including much of Gaul, Spain, and North Africa culminated in the collapse of imperial authority in the west in 476. At this time the general Odoacer took control of Italy, only to be challenged thirteen years later by Theoderic and the invading Ostrogoths.67 In the midst of the conflict between Theoderic and Odoacer and five days after Felix III’s death, Gelasius became bishop of Rome. We know very little about his life or ecclesiastical career before he became bishop. He held the see for only four years and eight months (March 3, 492 to November 21, 496), although he was almost certainly influential in the curia for some time prior to his election (although it is impossible to know with any degree of

62 Gaudemet, L’Église, 325.
63 Hilarius: LP, 242-245. Editions of his letters can be found in CPL 1662.
64 Simplicius: ibid., 249. Felix III: ibid., 252. Editions can be found in CPL 1664 and 1665/6 respectively. It should be noted that Felix III is sometimes referred to as Felix II (as per Thiel). The confusion is due to the fact that a number of sources such as the LP (I.211) include the Antipope and opponent of Liberius named Felix (355-358) in the line of succession.
65 On Felix’s family and aristocrats as bishops of Rome, see Richards, Popes, 235-243; Ullmann, Gelasius, 135; Markus, Gregory the Great, 8.
66 In general on Leo’s immediate successors and the political and theological machinations for the period between Leo’s pontificate and that of Gelasius, see also Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum, II.10ff.
67 Simplicius, who presided over Odoacer’s ascent to power, did not even bother to mention it in any of his surviving letters. Perhaps political machinations were less important than the spiritual well-being of the church and its congregants. And at any rate, the seizure of power by the barbarian general Odoacer was likely not seen as a particularly radical departure from the status quo of the previous half-century. See Moorhead, Theoderic in Italy, 9.
certainty in what capacity). Unlike his immediate predecessor the aristocratic Felix, Gelasius was a provincial of African origins – one of the few details we can learn from his laconic biography in the Liber Pontificalis. Yet like Leo before him, Gelasius also proclaimed his Roman identity. To Emperor Anastasius, Gelasius writes, “Since I myself was born Roman, I love, honour and admire the Prince of the Romans.”

In his surviving letters and tractates, Gelasius showed himself to be a skilled polemicist thoroughly conversant in theological, biblical and legal thought. He could marshal a torrent of biblical proof-texts in order to buttress his views and was fond of quoting (or at least paraphrasing) his opponents before deconstructing their arguments, twisting their words, and/or turning them back against their authors so as to make them against their own positions.

Although Gennadius of Massilia comments that Gelasius wrote various treatises on the sacraments and scriptures “in a polished style” (elimato sermone), to the modern reader, his exceedingly complex, sometimes long-winded and turgid prose is more reticent and less accessible than that of Leo. Despite their stylistic differences, Gelasius’ education was likely similar to that received by Leo. Like Leo, Gelasius’ writing contains almost no references to literary works outside of the bible, suggesting a solidly Christian education focused on scripture. Even his familiarity with various western church authorities seems somewhat superficial.

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68 As we noted above, it is possible that Gelasius was responsible for some of Felix’s correspondence with the East regarding the Acacian Schism, although it is impossible to say this was the case with any degree of certainty. Pace Ullmann who claimed without any firm evidence in Gelasius, 116-127, 135-141 and 164 that Gelasius had been an important secretary (“Kanzlist”) under Simplicius and had risen to the post of dictator and eventually deacon under the inexperienced Felix III. cf. Ullmann, “Der Grundsatz der Arbeitsteilung bei Gelasius I,” 47 in which Gelasius is described as the “federführender Kanzlist unter Felix III”. The claim that Gelasius, like Leo before him, was a deacon or even archdeacon of Rome prior to his elevation to the episcopacy is commonly repeated in the literature (e.g., Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum, 33-34; Koch, Gelasius, 63-64.) This, of course, is entirely possible; however this supposition cannot be confidently demonstrated from any contemporary evidence. Unfortunately, it is safer to admit that we simply do not know the details of Gelasius’ life or ecclesiastical career before he became bishop.

69 LP, I.255. “Gelasius, natione Afer, ex patre Valerio.” In Late Antiquity, Romanus could refer specifically to the city of Rome. This is the way the word is used in the Liber Pontificalis. For example, a bishop such as Felix III is described as natione Romanus (LP I.252), that is to say, he was actually born in the city of Rome itself, whereas Leo was natione Tuscus (LP I.238) and Gelasius was natione Afer (LP I.255). But Romanus could obviously also have wider connotations, referring perhaps to Italia or even ones membership in the res publica. It was in this last sense that Gelasius, and earlier Leo (above, n. XX), used the term. Finally, Romanus eventually came to designate Catholic Christians in distinction to homoians in the context of Ostrogothic Italy. This usage can be seen, for example, in Anon. Val, §82. For an overview of the various and changing uses of Romanus, see Amory, People and Identity, 267-268.

70 JK 632 (Thiel ep. 12, pp. 349-358), §1. “et sicut Romanus natus Romanum pricipem amo, colo, suspicio.”

71 For instance, a letter in Felix’s name (possibly composed by Gelasius) to the eastern bishops cites a letter of Acacius to Simplicius. Compare Gelasius, JK 611 = de vitanda communione Acacii (Thiel, pp. 287-311), §2; epistola Acacii Constantinopolitani ad Simplicium papam (Thiel, pp. 192-195), §2.

72 Gennadius, de viris inlustribus, §94, pp. 94-95.

73 In agreement with Ullmann, Gelasius, 162-163.
Gelasius was acquainted with Tertullian and possibly Cyprian.\textsuperscript{74} He also seems to have known some of the works of Augustine.\textsuperscript{75} Both Gelasius’ opposition to Pelagianism and his surviving Christological treatise, \textit{de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium}, closely follow Augustine’s theology of Grace and Christology respectively.\textsuperscript{76} Although he was clearly familiar with the writings of various Church Fathers, Gelasius’ anti-heretical polemic generally tended to emphasize explicit and implicit references to scripture. The exception was his letters and tractates on Christology. In these texts, he also readily mobilized the writings of the Church Fathers, especially Greek-speaking easterners, in order to argue his case.\textsuperscript{77}

3. Heresy outside \textit{Italia suburbicaria}: Pelagianism

As had been the case in the 440s, the heresy of Pelagianism once again came to the attention of the bishop of Rome during Gelasius’ pontificate. Indeed, as was the case during Leo’s confrontation of Pelagianism in the church of Aquileia, Gelasius in part explained the re-emergence of the heresy as a result of fundamental failures of ecclesiastical governance at the local level. Gelasius confronted Pelagianism both inside and outside his own ecclesiastical province, writing three letters on the subject: one to the bishops of Picenum and two to Honorius, bishop of Dalmatia. It is in these last two letters to Honorius that we can clearly see the bishop of Rome intervening in the internal affairs of a church outside his traditional jurisdiction. He also penned one tractate condemning Pelagianism.\textsuperscript{78}

In his letters and tractate written against Pelagianism, Gelasius’ teachings on grace closely echo those of Augustine.\textsuperscript{79} This can especially be seen in his letter to the bishops of Picenum in

\textsuperscript{74} Frend, \textit{Rise of the Monophysite Movement}, 194; Ullmann, \textit{Gelasius}, 163. See also L. Duchesne, \textit{L’Église au Vle siècle} (Paris, 1925), 12ff; Koch, \textit{Gelasius}, 63 and esp. 77-82; Grillmeier, CICT 2.1, 298. However, modern studies sometimes presuppose the influence of men like Tertullian and Cyprian on Gelasius’ thought based largely on their shared African origins.

\textsuperscript{75} Ullmann, \textit{Gelasius}, 163. See also García Jiménez, "La presencia de san Agustín en la cristiandad gelasiana," \textit{Augustinus}, 22.

\textsuperscript{76} Pelagianism is considered immediately below.

\textsuperscript{77} Gelasius’ Christology, his defense of Chalcedon, and his use of the Church Fathers (especially Greek texts in Latin translation in a florilegium) will be considered in greater detail below, p. 150ff.

\textsuperscript{78} JK 627 "adversus Pelagiam haeresim" (Thiel \textit{tract. V}, pp. 571-598 = CA \textit{ep.} 97, pp. 400-436).

\textsuperscript{79} On Gelasius’ affinities with the teachings of Augustine in his opposition to Pelagianism, see Ziegler, "Pope Gelasius," 419-420 and n. 27 with refs.
which he explained the necessity of the sacraments of baptism and particularly of Eucharistic communion for salvation. Pelagius had famously denied the doctrine of original sin, at least as it was interpreted by Augustine. Gelasius, following Augustine, explained that both baptism and the Eucharist were indispensable for it was these sacraments that expiated the guilt of sin and allowed communion with the church and ultimately, the possibility of salvation. Also as Augustine had argued, Gelasius too claimed that there could be no exceptions, even in the case of unbaptized infants. Quoting John 3:5 and 6:54, Gelasius states that “without baptism, they [infants] are not able to eat the body of Christ, nor drink his blood; and without this [the body and blood of Christ, sc. the Eucharist], they cannot have ‘eternal life.’" In this passage, Gelasius closely adheres to various treatises of Augustine, especially de natura et origine animae, (also known as de anima et eius origine) written against the Pelagian sympathizer Vincentius Victor, de peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum, and especially contra duas epistolas pelagianorum. This last work contains a supposed quotation from a letter of Innocent I to the bishops of Numidia condemning Pelagius’s teachings which Gelasius cites almost directly in his own letter.

To Picenum, Gelasius also lamented the invasions and wars which had inflicted devastation on Italy. The barbarians mentioned in this letter were almost certainly a reference to the

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80 Nov. 1, 493. JK 621 (Thiel ep. 6, pp. 325-335 = CA ep. 94, pp. 357-368).
81 Ibid., §6. "dum sine baptismate corpus et sanguinem Christi nec edere valeant nec potare, sine autem hoc vitam in semetipsis habere non possint, sine vita vero non nisi mortui sint futuri."
82 Compare Gelasius’ statement above with those of Augustine in this note and following. Augustine, de natura et origine animae, in CSEL 60, eds. Carl Franz Vrba and Joseph Zycha, Wien, 1913, book 1.§IX.11, pp. 311-312. "non baptizatis parvulis nemo promittat inter damnationem regnumque coelorum quietis vel felicitatis ciuslibet atque ubilibet quasi medium locum - hoc enim eis etiam heresis Pelagiana promisit…” Here, Augustine argues against the supposedly Pelagian notion that there was some middle ground (medium locum) where unbaptized infants, since they were not tainted with original sin, might enjoy some rest and happiness (quies and felicitas). Augustine maintained that baptism and afterwards, the Eucharist, were both absolutely necessary for salvation. See op. cit., book 1.§IX.10, pp. 310-311. The affinity Gelasius’ letter to the bishops of Picenum to de natura et origine animae is also noted by Thiel, p. 331. n. 15, although his reference appears to be incorrect.
85 JK 621 (Thiel ep. 6, pp. 325-335 = CA ep. 94, pp. 357-368). §1. “Barbaricus hactenus dolebamus incursibus maxime vicinas Urbis provincias et bellorum saeva tempestate vastari.”
conflict between Odoacer and Theoderic which had caused widespread disruption not only for the local population, but also for the operation of the Roman Church’s vast estates. But the upheaval had not only caused physical damage, according to Gelasius. War had given heresy a chance to spread since the devil takes every opportunity to use weakness and societal disorder for his own advantage.

In much the same way as Leo, Gelasius closely connected the rise of heresy such as Pelagianism with failures of church governance which was exacerbated by disruption, violence, political instability and disorder caused by war. And as had been the case in Leo’s treatment of the heresy, Gelasius too was keen to emphasize the importance of church discipline and Rome’s benevolent (at least from Gelasius’ perspective) help in opposing Pelagianism, even when it was needed outside of his direct ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Italia suburbicaria.

This can be seen especially in his two letters to Honorius of Dalmatia, a province on the east coast of the Adriatic Sea opposite Italy. Gelasius’ intervention in Dalmatia was, like Leo’s earlier letters to the bishop of Aquileia, predicated on Honorius’ failure to adequately confront Pelagians in his province. His first letter is quite patronizing in its tone. In it, Gelasius informs Honorius that despite his hectic schedule (he scarcely has time to breathe!), it was nonetheless Gelasius’ duty to attend to the obligations placed upon Peter by Jesus himself. In this case, that duty was to warn Honorius – a metropolitan bishop of his own ecclesiastical province and outside of Rome’s direct episcopal jurisdiction - of the dangers of Pelagianism (imaginatively described as a recurring weed) and to chastise him for failing to do enough to prevent heresy.

“Is it possible,” Gelasius asks Honorius, “that you do not know that the heresy [Pelagianism] about which we are speaking and which was overthrown (prostratam) by the Apostolic See, first by the continuous and unceasing sentences of Innocent [I] of blessed memory, and then by Zosimus, Boniface, Coelstinus, Sixtus, [and] Leo, and was damned not only by the law of the

86 Georg Pfeilschrifter, Der Ostgotenkönig Theoderich der Grosse und die katholische Kirche, Kirchengeschichtliche Studien 3 (Münster, 1896), 27. For more details on the ramifications of the civil war in Italy, see the following chapter.

87 JK 621 (Thiel ep. 6, pp. 325-335 = CA ep. 94, pp. 357-368), §1. “sed quantum inter ipsa recentium calamitatum ferventia pericula comperimus, perniciosiorem diabolus Christianorum mentibus labem, quam corporibus hostilis feritas, irrogavit.”

88 JK 625 (Thiel ep. 4, pp. 321-323 = CA ep. 98, pp. 398-400), §1. “recidiva Pelagianae pestis zizania...”
Catholic church, but of the Roman emperors, so that his followers [sc. of Pelagius] were not permitted any place to live in the world?”

Here Gelasius follows Leo’s example in calling to task a bishop outside of his own province for his failure to confront Pelagianism, specifically invoking Leo and other Roman bishops, all of whom were (in Gelasius’ view) staunch defenders of orthodoxy and opponents of heresy. Gelasius closely connects Rome’s authority with its orthodoxy and it is as a result of both that he feels it to be his responsibility to intervene in the internal affairs of the Dalmatian Church. Honorius’ response does not, unfortunately, survive. But from Gelasius’ second letter to the bishop, it seems as if Honorius was surprised and not particularly happy that a bishop of Rome would insinuate himself into the affairs of another metropolitan in far-off Dalmatia. In his second letter, Gelasius wryly expresses his astonishment at Honorius’ surprise “that the attentive care of the Apostolic See, which by ancient rite (mos majorum) extends to every church in the world, would also, for the sake of the faith, extend to your territory.” Having heard that Pelagianism was rampant in the Dalmatian provinces, it was, according to Gelasius, impossible for him not to exercise his pastoral responsibilities. The error of Pelagius spread when Bishop Honorius failed to maintain watch over his clergy in his area of jurisdiction. When local metropolitans failed, the bishop of Rome stepped in. Gelasius’ actions in combating Pelagianism represent a tangible real-world example of Rome’s jurisdictional authority over churches outside suburbanicarian Italy.

4. Rome and Constantinople: Gelasius and Christology

Although Pelagianism remained an ongoing concern for Rome in the later fifth century, by far the most important issue outside of Italy for Gelasius continued to be Christology and the status of the Council of Chalcedon. As we have already noted in this chapter, in the years after the Council of Chalcedon in 451, the question of Christology continued to undermine the unity of the church and the Roman world. Many in the east, especially in Egypt, were deeply uneasy about Leo’s statement of faith which some saw as tantamount to Nestorianism. It was this

89 Ibid., §3. “An fortasse nescitis hanc haeresim de qua loquimur, et ab apostolica dudum sede per beatae memoriae Innocentium, ac deinde Zosimum, Bonifacium, Coelestinum, Xystum, Leonem, continuis et incessabilibus sententis fuisse prostratum, nec tantum Ecclesiae Catholicae legibus sed principum quoque Romanorum eo tenore damnatum, ut nec usquam terrarum vivendi locum sectatores eius habere sine retentur?”
90 JK 626 (Thiel ep. 5, pp. 324-325 = CA ep. 96, pp. 398-400), §1. A clever turn of phrase in both Latin and English: “Miramur dilectionem tuam fuisse miratam, curam sedis apostolicae, quae more majorum cunctis per mundum debetur ecclesiis, pro vestra quoque regionis fide fuisse sollicitam.”
continued opposition to Chalcedon that prompted the development and promulgation of the *Henotikon* (Edict of Union) by Patriarch Acacius and Emperor Zeno in approximately 482.\(^91\) The *Henotikon* became the official Christological position of the Eastern Roman Empire until 519.

The *Henotikon* was purposefully vague. While it explicitly condemned both Eutyches and Nestorius, the *Henotokon* sidestepped many of the details of complex theological issues of the debate altogether and instead simply emphasized the orthodoxy of Nicaea and of the Council of Constantinople (381).\(^92\) This ambiguity was an attempt by Acacius to leave as much room as possible for variant interpretations to coexist. Unfortunately for Acacius and Zeno, this strategy did not work and the *Henotikon* proved unpopular with both sides of the debate. Opponents of Chalcedon were not satisfied since the *Henotikon* failed to condemn and overturn the council outright.\(^93\) Chalcedonians including Gelasius and his predecessors interpreted the *Henotikon*’s failure to definitely endorse Leo’s *Tomus* as akin to an outright rejection of the cornerstone of Christological orthodoxy.\(^94\) In part because Rome’s authority and its self-identity were fundamentally linked to its sense of its own primacy and orthodoxy, none of Leo’s successors could assent to a theological formula that compromised Chalcedon. To accept the *Henotikon* would not only signal a willingness to consent to imperial interference in matters of church dogma and doctrine, but it would also imply that Leo’s Christological theology was not definite.

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\(^91\) The exact date of its promulgation is uncertain. See Philippe Blaudeau, *Alexandrie et Constantinople (451-491): de l’histoire à la géo-ecclesiologie* Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d’Athènes et de Rome (Rome, 2006), 203, n. 590. The Henotikon is preserved in three sources. In Greek: Evagrius, *Hist. eccl.*, ed. Whitby, §III.14, pp.147-149; Pseudo-Zachariah Rheter, *Chron.*, ed. Greatrex, V.8, pp.198-201 and see also Greatrex’s note 121 for the relevant editions and extensive references. In Latin, Liberatus, *Breviarium causae Nestorianorum et Eutychianorum*, in ACO II.5, pp. 98-141, §17. Liberatus’ text was likely composed sometime between 560-566 and summarizes (from a Chalcedonian perspective) the Christological debates all the way back to Apollinaris of Laodicea in the context of the Three Chapters controversy. For an excellent introduction to Liberatus and his *Breviarium*, see ZAC 14, which is entirely dedicated to the subject; but in particular, Hanns Christof Brennecke, "Das akakianische Schisma: Liberatus, Breviarium 15-18," ZAC, 14, no. 1 (2010), 74-95.


\(^93\) It was certainly possible for opponents of Chalcedon to read the *Henotikon* as a rejection of the council and of Leo’s *Tomus*. Indeed, this was precisely the interpretation advanced by Peter Mongus in order to gain the support of the Alexandrians since Peter’s recognition as patriarch of Alexandria by Acacius and Zeno was contingent on his acceptance of the *Henotikon*. On Peter, Acacius and the *Henotikon*, see Haas, "Patriarch and People," 306-307.

\(^94\) See, for example, Felix III’s letter to Zeno sent in the wake of the promulgation of the *Henotikon*: JK 591 (Thiel ep. 1, pp. 222-232). cf. Schwartz, "Die Kanonessammlungen der alten Reichskirche." 266-267. According to Gelasius, the *Henotikon* had for all intents and purposes overturned or condemned the Council of Chalcedon.

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and subject to reversal. This notion was no more acceptable to Gelasius than it had been to Leo years earlier.

As we noted above, letters and tractates regarding the Acacian Schism comprise a significant portion of the Gelasian corpus and were widely copied in the late fifth and sixth centuries. In these texts, Gelasius was firm and uncompromising: Chalcedon and Leo’s Tomus must be preserved. Everything else, including the Henotikon, was tantamount to “the Eutychian error.”

95 Gelasius’ own Christology is unsurprisingly deeply indebted to that of Leo. Gelasius’ surviving Christological treatise, de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium, closely echoes Leo, and through Leo, the teaching of Augustine. Interestingly in de duabus, Gelasius avoids the most contentious language of Leo’s Tomus, although he repeats similar theological points in paraphrase. Indeed, in some ways de duabus is more closely akin to Leo’s ‘Second Tome’ written to Emperor Leo which, unlike his Tomus, balanced its attacks against Eutyches with equal language directed against the heresy of Nestorius in an attempt to make Leo’s Christology more appealing to easterners. As Leo had done, Gelasius cites liberally from the New Testament. Also paralleling the Second Tome, Gelasius’ Christological tractate includes an interesting florilegium of proof-texts. In it, Gelasius excerpts various, largely eastern, authorities for his Christological teachings including Ignatius of Antioch, Hippolytus of Rome, Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Eustathius of Antioch, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa and others.

In the years after Leo, florilegia had emerged as an important polemical tool in the Christological controversy and was employed by both sides in the debate. Gelasius’ florilegium was largely derived from a Latin translation of the florilegium of

95 JK 665 (Thiel ep. 27, pp. 422-435), 3.
96 Generally on Gelasius’ Christological teaching, see Grillmeier, CICT 2.1, 297ff.
98 August, 453. Leo I, JK 542 = ep. 165 (ACO II.4, pp. 113-119).
99 In the case of the Incarnation, for example, Gelasius’ teachings were based on Luke 1:34-35. See JK 670 = "de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium" (Thiel, tract. III, pp. 530-557), §2 and in paraphrase, §10. Leo also uses biblical proof texts extensively, especially in his ‘Second Tome.’
100 Leo’s florilegium appended to his ep. 165: Testimonia excerpta pro re supra scripta de libris Catholicorum Patrum a Leone papa collecta Leonique imperatori directa (PL 54, pp. 1174-1190 = ACO 2.4 pp. 119-131). See above, p. 54.
101 JK 670 = "de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium" (Thiel, tract. III, pp. 530-557), §17-42. Again, cf. Leo I, Testimonia excerpta, noted above.
102 For example, a florilegium was compiled in Alexandria in 482 by supporters of Chalcedon that explicitly attempted to claim that Cyril and his Christology was in accordance to the council and that Cyril himself would have accepted the Caledonian formula. This work, known as the Florilegium Cyrilianum, prompted the fierce opponent of Chalcedon and staunch Cyrillian Serverus of Antioch to compose his Philalethes. Aloys Grillmeier, CICT 2.2,
the *Pentalogium*, a lost work of Theoderet written against Cyril of Alexandria and the first Council of Ephesus. Coming as they do from a collection of texts, the excerpts cobbled together by Gelasius do not necessarily suggest that he had a detailed knowledge of these authors. But it is significant that these works had in some sense become authoritative in Gelasius’ time. It is also interesting that Gelasius’ source is Theodoret, the anti-Cyriillian and later anti-Eutychian agitator who had been rehabilitated at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, only to be posthumously condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 553.

In general, Gelasius’ Christological polemic, especially in his letters, is marked by two interesting and related elements. First, he was keen to highlight the political nature of the *Henotikon*, initiated and promulgated as it was by a Roman emperor, not the church. Second, Gelasius made use of heresiological rhetoric to delegitimize his opponents and to emphasize Rome’s enduring orthodoxy. He did this by emphasizing the genealogical nature of heresy and orthodoxy, both of which were linked by chains of transmission that were passed on through communion with either legitimate or illegitimate authority. And much as Leo had done before him, Gelasius collapsed all positions that opposed his own into a single heretical category of ‘Eutychian’ – which in turn could be associated with condemned heretics from the past while firmly placing Leo and himself within the long patristic tradition all the way back to Nicaea. In all his letters in defense of Chalcedon, Gelasius emphasised the crucial role of the Apostolic See in defense of orthodoxy and in opposition to error.

Gelasius’ condemnation of the *Henotikon* as an imperially motivated betrayal of the faith closely follows the perspective advanced in a epistle addressed to the eastern bishops written in the time of his predecessor Felix III in 488 or 489. As we noted above, many modern historians accept this letter as authentically Gelasian, perhaps composed when he was a deacon on behalf of

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Felix.\textsuperscript{105} However, without entirely excluding the possibility that Gelasius had some role in its formulation, because such an attribution is problematic for reasons discussed above it is safer to treat this text as a product of Felix. In any case, as we shall see, Gelasius would have broadly agreed with the letter’s perspective and it certainly reflects opinions Gelasius would later express.

Felix’s letter is not so much a theological justification of the position taken at Chalcedon than an indictment of the political nature of the *Henotikon*. For Felix and Gelasius, the issue, as it had been the case under Leo, was one of authority. Who could decide and legislate on what constituted orthodoxy and what did not? By condemning Eutyches, penning his own definitive Christological statement and supporting Flavian’s orthodoxy over and against a Council of the Church at Ephesus, Leo had essentially claimed to possess this authority more explicitly than Rome had done before. And Chalcedon had been his vindication. More than forty years later, Felix defended this achievement in part by suggesting that emperors did not have a legitimate role in deciding correct belief. Or as he straightforwardly puts it: the emperor is “a son of the church, not its leader (*praesul*). In that which pertains to religion, it is appropriate for him to learn, not to teach.”\textsuperscript{106}

Moreover the obviously political motivations that had prompted the *Henotikon* and the cynicism with which it was implemented were deeply troubling to Felix and an indication of its illegitimacy. In exchange for assenting to the *Henotikon*, Acacius had recognized Peter Mongus as the legitimate Patriarch of Alexandria and received him into communion. Peter Mongus had been a deacon of Timothy Aelurus - the vocal opponent of Chalcedon who had been complicit in the brutal murder of the Chalcedonian Patriarch of Alexandria Proterius in 457. Peter had in fact been deposed from his position in the Alexandrine Church for his refusal to accept Chalcedon by the martyred Proterius and years earlier Acacius himself had called him “a Eutychian heretic.”\textsuperscript{107} From Felix’s perspective, how could Acacius now receive this heretic back into the church with

\textsuperscript{105} See above, 136f. and notes.
\textsuperscript{106} JK 611 = *de vitanda communione Acacii* (Thiel, pp. 287-311), §10. “Quod si dixeris salva pace ipsius dixerimus filius est, non praesul Ecclesiae: quod ad religionem competit, discere ei convenit non docere.” cf. Ibid., §31.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 5. Acacius’ accusation is preserved in Simplicius’ (468-483) biography in the Liber Pontificalis “Sub huius episcopatum uenit relatio de Grecia ab Acacio Constantinopolitano episcopo et adfirmauit Petrum, Alexandriae urbis, eutychianistam hereticum, facta petitione ab Acacio episcopo, cyrographo eius constructa.”
open arms? It seemed as if the faith was being bargained away by Acacius and the emperor in a blatantly political manner.\(^{108}\)

This is not to suggest that Felix and subsequently Gelasius objected to the role of the emperor in the proper governing of Christian society. Rather, the crux of the issue was a question of legitimate authority and jurisdiction. From the perspective of the bishops of Rome, the emperor had a sacred duty to care and maintain the purity of the faith, not to decide doctrine. This was the prerogative of the church whose ministers were divinely sanctioned to decide the nature and limits of the correct and legitimate teachings of the church. It was the emperor’s task to enforce it.\(^{109}\) That an emperor would impose a politically motivated theological formula such as the *Henotikon* by fiat was seen by Felix and later by Gelasius as an intrusion into the prerogative of priests. It had to be confronted precisely because it seemed to represent a radical shift in the emperor’s position in a Christian world.\(^{110}\) Gelasius’ widely-cited *duo quippe sunt* letter to Emperor Anastasius makes a similar point, although in a more conciliatory tone.\(^{111}\) The letters of Felix and Gelasius were not necessarily making radical new claims for “papal power” as has sometimes been claimed.\(^{112}\) Rather, Felix and Gelasius were attempting to clarify the nature of the relationship between secular and religious authority in the context of a schism that had brought this issue to the fore. As Jeffery Richards concisely noted, letters such as Felix’s to the eastern bishops or Gelasius’ to Emperor Anastasius were “not written as abstract statements of principle but as arguments to convince.”\(^{113}\)

Of course, not everyone was persuaded by Rome’s arguments. Elsewhere in his letter, Felix admits that some churchmen, even those sympathetic in principle to Rome’s stance on the matter, were willing to accept the possibility of some compromise with Constantinople over the issue of Christology. These men are reported to have argued that the *Henotikon* could be reconciled with orthodoxy and that it could be a worthy concession that brought unity to the church. Felix and his supporters, of course, strenuously disagreed. To the suggestion made by the eastern bishops that Felix’s obstinacy and haughty unwillingness to consider even the smallest

\(^{108}\) Ibid., §2-5.


\(^{110}\) Sarolta A. Takács, *The Construction of Authority in Ancient Rome and Byzantium: The Rhetoric of Empire* (Cambridge, 2009), 120.

\(^{111}\) JK 632 (Thiel *ep.* 12, pp. 349-358). The letter is, high handed and somewhat condescending; nonetheless, Gelasius repeatedly pledges his loyalty and allegiance to the emperor and its emperor.


\(^{113}\) Richards, *Popes*, 22.
concession was diminishing Rome’s *dignitas*, a word that in this context must be synonymous with authority, Felix angrily responded: “is the dignity of the Apostolic See diminished if the Catholic faith and communion is protected? Is the dignity of the Apostolic See maintained if that faith is violated? [...] Is the Empire aided if the Catholic faith and communion is injured and is the Empire somehow injured if that faith and communion saved? God forbid that a Christian and a Catholic would profess such a thing!”

Whether or not Gelasius had a hand in composing Felix’ letter to the eastern bishops, it seems clear from his definitively authentic letters that Gelasius would have agreed with its sentiments, especially Felix’s stress on the importance of the Catholic communion. This can be seen in the second aspect of Gelasius’ defense of Chalcedon: his use of heresiological rhetoric.

Gelasius, much as Leo and the earlier heresiologists, conceived of orthodoxy as the legitimate faith passed on through a chain of transmission from Jesus to the apostles and subsequently to the bishops of the church. This tradition was epitomized by the Church Fathers, the Council of Nicaea, and ultimately by the Council of Chalcedon and the teaching of Leo exemplified in his so-called Second Tome to the Emperor Leo. Heresy, on the other hand, was a corrupted form of this chain represented by the various heresiarchs who had threatened the unity of the church. They had too had passed on their errors to their followers who in turn spread them throughout the Christian world. Here, Gelasius’ notion of communion is crucial and was profoundly linked with his understanding of heresy and orthodoxy. Communion was more than the sacrament of the Eucharist, the receiving of the sacred body and blood of Christ; it also represented the sacred fellowship (*consortium*) of Christians with one another, joined together in community.

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114 JK 611 = *de vitanda communione Acacii* (Thiel, pp. 287-311), 33. “Si fides communioque Catholica servatur, dignitas sedis apostolicae minuitur, si illa violator, sedis apostolicae dignitas manet?...Si fides Catholica et communio laeditur, respublica juvatur, et si illa salva sit, respublica laeditur? Absit, ut hoc Christianus et Catholicus profiteatur.”

115 Rather than the *Tomus*: see ibid., §18. As we noted in our discussion of Leo, the Second Tomus balances its attacks against both Eutyches and Nestorius, making it more suitable for an eastern audience suspicious of Rome’s possible Nestorianism.

116 Gelasius uses the word *communio* in all his letters pertaining to the Acacian Schism, and seldom anywhere else.

117 As Gelasius explained in the so-called *Dicta Gelasii*, JK 674 (Thiel *frag*. 49, pp. 509-510). “…id est consortium orationis cum poenitentibus; inter quos expletis iterum annis secundum judicium culpae suae redeat plenius ad communionem, id est consortium ceterorum fidelium et perceptionis sacri corporis et sanguinis Christ.”
Communion represented the liturgical expression of that chain of transmission which linked contemporary Christians to their legitimate and orthodox forbearers - or alternatively to their illegitimate and heretical predecessors. To reject Eutyches meant rejecting his contemporary supporters in the same way that the church had rejected and condemned heretics from the past. Acacius’ agreement to enter into communion with Peter Mongus signalled his tacit acceptance of religious deviance and therefore implicated Acacius in Peter’s error. For Gelasius, anyone who remained in communion with Acacius was for all intents and purposes in communion with Peter and by extension, with Eutyches. To enter into communion with someone already condemned is also worthy of a similar anathema. Furthermore, those who chose to remove themselves from communion with the Apostolic See were also worthy of condemnation. Acacius, who died out of communion with Rome, could not hope to be reinstated posthumously. As Gelasius relates in his letter to Faustus, only those who have died in Christ could hope for absolution. And more than this, citing the famous Petrine passage from Mathew 16:19, Gelasius states that only the apostle Peter (that is, the bishop of Rome) was given the power to bind and loose. Gelasius was claiming to be the ultimate arbiter not only of orthodoxy, but of salvation. The Christian faith itself was in essence defined by Gelasius as communion with Rome; without it, one could not be a true Christian in life or hope for absolution and salvation in death.

Moreover, Gelasius argues that the Catholic faith was precisely that which was free from error and uncontaminated by heretical communion. And if it was right to refuse communion with heretics like Arius and his successors, it was likewise just and correct to refuse communion with any other heretics who had been convicted and condemned both by the Apostolic See and the

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118 e.g. JK 632 (Thiel ep. 12, pp. 349-358), §8; JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398), §2. “…contra unamquamque haeresim quod acta synodus pro fide, communione et veritate Catholic et apostolica decrevisset.”
119 The notion of authentic tradition as the basis for orthodoxy and legitimate authority can be seen, for instance, in JK 632 (Thiel ep. 12, pp. 349-358), §9, discussed in more detail above. Here, Gelasius refers to the “multiplex traditio” and the canons of the fathers which support Rome’s auctoritas.
122 JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398), §2.
124 JK 622 (Thiel ep. 10, pp. 341-348), §3.
Council of Chalcedon. Acacius, who preferred to commune with heretics, and his followers and supporters, must therefore be cut off from the *Catholica atque apostolica communio*.\(^{125}\)

Communion, then, could be both a declaration of ones’ orthodoxy and the means by which heresy spread. Like a disease or a contagion, heresy infected its unsuspecting victims through contact and thus threatened the entire body of the church unless it was isolated, cut off and ultimately destroyed.\(^{126}\) There could be no confusion: since Acacius had communicated with heretics, he could not be in communion with Rome and by extension, with anyone who wished to remain in communion with Rome.\(^{127}\) Moreover, the anti-Chalcedonianism coming from Constantinople, or even any possible compromise of the council such as that advanced in the *Henotikon* (with its implied communion with ‘questionable’ bishops) was for Gelasius no different than the “Eutychian plague (*Eutychiana pestis*)” or the “insanity of Eutyches” (*Eutychetis insania*) and his *sectatores*.\(^{128}\) Of course it was true that Peter Mongus and Acacius and their supporters had specifically condemned Eutyches in the *Henotikon*. But any abrogation of Chalcedon was seen by Gelasius as in essence identical to Eutychianism. As he understood it, it was simply impossible for anyone to on the one hand condemn Eutyches, while on the other to remain in communion with people who were no better than Eutychians themselves.\(^{129}\) It was thus imperative to avoid communion with the Eutychian *pestis* and those who supported it.\(^{130}\) Not even bishops Vitalis and Misenus, who as legates of Felix III had entered into communion with Acacius, could be spared the inexorable conclusion of this logic. The circumstances of Vitalis and Misenus’ communication with Acacius is murky. The account in the *Liber Pontificalis* claims that Misenus later confessed to having taken a bribe (*reos et corruptos paecuniae*) in exchange for taking communion with Acacius – an act which must have deeply concerned Felix, the man on behalf of whom Misenus was acting. The consequences were severe. Both Vitalis


\(^{127}\) JK 611 = *de vitanda communione Acacii* (Thiel, pp. 287-311), 11.

\(^{128}\) e.g. JK 638 (Thiel *ep.*, 18, pp. 382-385 = CA *ep.*, 101, pp. 464-468), §2; JK 664 (Thiel *ep.*, 26, pp. 392-413 = CA *ep.*, 95, pp. 369-398), §1; ibid., 6. *insania*: ibid.

\(^{129}\) JK 665 (Thiel *ep.*, 27, pp. 422-435), §10.

\(^{130}\) JK 671 (Thiel *frag.*, 1, pp. 483-484).
and Misenus were subsequently recalled to Rome where they were deposed and excommunicated.\textsuperscript{131}

Perhaps the most powerful illustrations of the full breadth of Gelasius’ heresiological polemic can be seen in his correspondence with the bishops of Dardania, a Balkan province north of Macedonia and south of Moesia. The particularly strident nature of Gelasius’ rhetoric in his letter to these bishops in particular may well have been intended to persuade (or bully) men who, due to their distance from Rome and their proximity to Constantinople, were vulnerable to influence from the imperial center.\textsuperscript{132} Thus in late 492 or early 493, Gelasius wrote a letter to the Dardanian bishops carried by bishop Ursicinus. Gelasius’ pretence for writing was to announce his election as bishop of Rome; however the bulk of the letter is taken up with a refutation and condemnation of the heresy of Eutyches – once again a reference to the Acacian Schism and the supposedly Eutychian leanings of the eastern court.\textsuperscript{133} Perhaps because of the liminal position of the Dardanians, half-way between Greek east and Latin west, but also perhaps simply as a reflection of a more general growing distance between Rome and Constantinople, Gelasius was intent on stressing the supposedly ‘Greek’ nature of heresy.

The tenor of the letter is in general meant to contrast the steadfast orthodoxy of the Latin Church and of Rome more specifically with the unpredictable and imprudent Greeks. This was an ecclesiastical embodiment of the longstanding and derisive Roman views of Greeks, who had since the time of the Republic been derided by Latin authors as effeminate, crafty and changeable.\textsuperscript{134} Gelasius adopts this view wholeheartedly and applies it not to morality, but to theology. “There is no doubt,” Gelasius claimed, “that many heresies abound amongst the

\textsuperscript{131} This occurred during the pontificate of Felix III. JK 611 = de vitanda communione Acacii (Thiel, pp. 287-311), §35. cf. JK 622 (Thiel ep. 10, pp. 341-348), §2. See also Felix’ biography in the LP (I.252); Gelasius’ description of the events in Gesta de nomine Acacii (Thiel, tract. I, pp. 510-519 = CA ep. 99, pp. 440-453), §13; and Evagrius, Hist. eccl., ed. Whitby, III.21. The primary charge was that Vitalis and Misenus, prompted by bribes, had knowingly entered into communion with heretics. On this ill-fated embassy, see Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum. II.27ff, Duchesne’s comments in LP I.254, nn. 12 and 13, Schwartz, PS, 203-204, and Richards, Popes, 66. On Misenus’ eventual reconciliation with Gelasius, see below, pp. 166f.


\textsuperscript{133} The date of the letter – that is, the year after his election in 492 – suggests that the announcement of Gelasius’ pontificate was secondary to the condemnation of Eutychianism. It is also possible that war between Theodoric and Odoacer and its aftermath could account for the disruption in communications: Ullmann, Gelasius, 217. Moorehead also notes the “various difficulties” that prevented Gelasius from announcing his election to Bishop Aeonius of Arles until after August, 494. See Moorhead, Theoderic in Italy, 27.

\textsuperscript{134} Albert Henrichs, "Graecia Capta: Roman Views of Greek Culture," HSPh, 97 (1995), 243-244.
Greeks,” the most dangerous of which was the heresy of Eutyches, whose preaching that there was only one divine nature or substance in Christ was driving Constantinople into blasphemy. Following Leo, Gelasius described Eutyches’ error as a derivative mix of the errors of the Marcionites and the Manicheans. But it was more than simply an amalgamation of these already condemned sects from the past; in Gelasius’ view, Eutychianism was a particularly Greek phenomenon. In describing the defeat of Eutyches at the Council of Chalcedon, Gelasius claims that “the Greeks were defeated (convictos) by the Apostolic See and by Saint Leo of blessed memory and by his successors as their written records (chartae), which we possess, show without ambiguity.”

It is worth remembering that from the perspective of the emperors, the Patriarch of Constantinople and at least some eastern bishops, the Henotikon was in complete harmony with Nicaea and was no less a condemnation of Eutyches than it was of Nestorius. What Gelasius was attempting to accomplish in letters such as the one written to the bishops of Dardania was to equate the Henotikon, and indeed any position that ignored or compromised Chalcedon in any way, with the heresy of Eutyches. Having rhetorically established the relationship between the Henotikon and Eutychianism, itself an invention of Leo, Gelasius could then mobilize the full arsenal of heresiological tropes used against Eutyches and employ them against the Henotikon and its supporters. When Gelasius compared or even conflated the heresy of Eutyches with those of the Manicheans or the Marcionites, what he was essentially suggesting was that the Henotikon is no better than these ancient errors – a comparison designed to associate a new deviation from orthodoxy with universally condemned heresies from Christianity’s past. In other letters, Gelasius freely interchanges Eutyches with those he felt were his contemporary manifestations,

135 JK 623 (Thiel ep. 7, pp. 335-337 = CA ep. 79, pp. 218-223), §2: “Apud Graecos, quibus multas haereses abundare non dubium est…Eutych quondam presbytero Constantinopolitano in blasphemias proruente, per quas diceret, unam tantummodo, id est solam Divinitatis, naturam sive substantiam in Domino Jesu Christo credere nos susceptae carnis veritate prorsus abolita”. On ‘the Greeks,’ see also. JK 622 (Thiel ep. 10, pp. 341-348), §1. “Greek” or “Greekling” (graeculus) was becoming increasingly common in Latin writing in this period. Ammianus (17.9.3) tells us that Julian’s troops derided him as a graeculus. Ennodius has the nobles of Liguria call Emperor Anthemius graeculus in his vita of Epiphanius. Ennodius, Vita Epiphanius, ed. and trans. Genevieve Marie Cook, §§3. See also Cook’s commentary, 162, as well as Thomas Hodgkin, Italy and Her Invaders: 535-553, vol. II (Oxford, 1885), 467, n.1; and the commentary in Maria Cesa, ed., Vita del beatissimo Epifanio vescovo della chiesa pavese (Como, 1988), 152-3.


137 Ibid., 3. “Super his autem frequenter ab apostolica sede et per beatae memoriae sanctum Leonem et per successores ejus certum est Graecos, fuisse convictos, sicut ipsorum chartis, quas apud nos habemus, sine ambiguitate monstratur.”
especially Peter Mongus and Acacius. They were all members of the sect of Eutyches (Eutychis secta). They were pollution, a pestiferous contagion that must be avoided especially after the bishops had been admonished to do so by Rome. This view was by now so successful and so pervasive that it was even echoed back to Gelasius by the Dardanian bishops themselves.\footnote{138}

Gelasius continues his letter to the Dardanian bishops with an exhortation to Chalcedonian Christology and a stern warning against communion with heretics complete with biblical proof-texts that are meant to refute Eutyches and prove Christ’s humanity and his divinity. But Gelasius has one more important heresiological comparison to make, and given the political context in Italy at the time, it is somewhat curious: Gelasius associates the heresy of Arianism with the error of Eutyches. In this same letter, Gelasius uses a citation from Paul’s letter to the Colossians: “In quo habitat omnis plenitudo Divinitatis corporaliter,” a brief passage that Gelasius interprets to be equally effective in undermining Eutyches as well as the pestis Ariana.\footnote{139} Gelasius’ use of Paul’s passage to disprove Arianism and Eutychianism is meant to suggest that Arianism’s error with respect to Trinitarian theology is akin to Eutyches’ error with respect to Christology – a common theme and similar to the rhetoric employed by Leo, Nestorius and Theodoret, as well as by Cyril of Alexandria against Nestorius. Like these earlier controversialists, Gelasius too was mobilizing the arguments made against the opponents of Nicaea in the fourth century to argue against the opponents of Chalcedon in the fifth\footnote{140}

At first glance, it seems curious that Gelasius would condemn the faith so often associated with Ostrogoths and their king Theoderic, who was ruling Italy at the time. Indeed, as we will discuss in greater detail in the next chapter, Gelasius generally enjoyed friendly relations with the Ostrogoths and never once refers to them as Arian in his correspondence. When Gelasius...

\footnote{138} Preserved in the Gelasian corpus as JK 635 = Epistola Dardaniae episcoporum ad Gelasium (Thiel, ep. 11, pp. 348-349 = CA ep. 80, pp. 223-225). §1. “Eutychis enim vel Petri Acaciique et omnium sectatorum ejus atque consortium velut quaedam pestifera contagia ante vestram quoque vitavimus jussionem, et multo magis nunc post ad-monitionem sedis apostolicae et ab eadem nos pollutione necesse est abstinere.”


\footnote{140} This strategy could be especially effective when Greek authoritative texts such as Athanasius’ De incarnatione et contra Arianos, beloved in the east, could be mobilized in support of Chalcedon. JK 670 = "de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium" (Thiel, tract. III, pp. 530-557), §20. In this same tractate, Gelasius also cites other Greek anti-Arian tractates and letters in his defense of Chalcedon including Athanasius’ letter to Epictetus (§20 and §28), Basil the Great’s Refutation of the Apology of the Impious Eunomius (§23), and Gregory of Nyssa’s contra Eunomium (§24). On this florilegium of texts, see above, n. 101.
does discuss Arianism, in every case it has nothing to do with Theoderic and everything to do with the Christological controversy. His use of Arianism, particularly in his letter to the Dardanian bishops, is purely rhetorical and meant to delegitimize the Henotikon and its supporters by associating them with Christianity’s most famous and universally condemned heresiarch.

Elsewhere, Gelasius, following the polemic of Leo, sought to link Nestorius and Eutyches, placing the two men in a dialectical relationship with one another. This understanding of the history of the Christological controversy also allowed Gelasius to position Leo’s Christology and the Council of Chalcedon as the traditional consensus, a sensible middle position between Nestorianism and Eutychianism – precisely the position that Acacius had attempted to adopt with his Henotikon. In much the same way as Leo had done decades earlier, Gelasius described Nestorius and Eutyches as the opposite and equally incorrect extremes of Christological teachings, united in so far as they both denied the two natures in the incarnate Christ: “the Catholic faith confesses that Christ, the son of God, is true God and true man – not of one nature, but of one essence and of one person.”

141 In de duabus, for instance, Gelasius states that the Eutychians (Eutychiani) say Christ has one divine nature, whereas Nestorius had claimed Christ had one human nature.142 The use of the term “Euchyceans” on the one hand, and the personal name of Nestorius on the other suggests that for Gelasius, the heresy of Eutyches and his

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141 Gesta de nomine Acacii (Thiel, tract. I, pp. 510-519 = CA ep. 99, pp. 440-453), §1. “…Nestorius et Eutyches non nova dogmata suae perversitatis sed nomina prodiderunt. Nam Nestorius ante quinquaginta et octo fere annos, Photini et Pauli Samosateni secutus errorem, Oasitano exilio meruit relegari, dicendo, sicut ab auctorisibus suis dictic, Christum Dominum nostrum hominem tantummodo de Virgine Maria esse progenitum. Contra quem Eutyches post annos non plurimos aestimans disputationem, rectum tramitem tenere nesciens offendit; et in Apollinaris est raptus insaniam, in haec verba prorumpens, quibus assereret, Christum verum hominem non fuisse nec in duas naturas esse credendas, sed unam tantummodo Dei Verbi verumtamen incarnatam. Quam quidem non esse hominis perhbitut sed humanam, ut similitudo magis humani corporis quam ipsa Veritas suaderetur: quum Catholica fides verum Deum verumque hominem Christum Dei Filium esse fateatur, non unius naturae, sed unius essentiae atque personae.” cf. JK 623 (Thiel ep. 7, pp. 335-337 = CA ep. 79, pp. 218-223), §2, in which Gelasius makes a similar statement about Eutyches’ Christology, “…unam tantummodo…” Note again the problem of vocabulary which plagued the Christological controversy in Gelasius’ time as it had in Leo’s and before. Whereas Thiel’s edition (cited above) uses “esse” and “existiua” as synonyms for “persona.” The word “essentia” was used by Augustine, for example, as a replacement for the Latin term “substancia.” In either case, Thiel (p. 511, n.4) reads “essentia” and “substantia” as synonyms for “persona.” The word “essentia” was used by Augustine, for example, as a replacement for the Latin term “substantia.” Both terms were intended to translate the Greek ousia. “Substantia” was also at times used interchangeably with “persona” in order to translate “hypostasis.” On the question of vocabulary, translation of Greek philosophical terms and the ramifications for later medieval theology, see the excellent discussion in F. A. C Mantello and A. G. Rigg, Medieval Latin: an Introduction and Bibliographical Guide (Washington, 1996), 267-283, esp. 274-278. On this letter in particular, see also the comments in Grillmeier, CICT 2.2, 294, n. 211.

142 JK 670 = “de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium” (Thiel, tract. III, pp. 530-557), §3. The “Euchyceans” Gelasius had in mind were, of course Acacius, Peter Mongus, and any other supporters of the Henotikon.
sectatores was an ongoing concern; Nestorius, on the other hand, had evolved into a heresiarch very much a part of history rather than a contemporary threat. The truth, according to Gelasius, lay between the teachings of the Eutychians and of Nestorius: “the Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same, fully God as man and fully man as God, and whatever pertains to humanity, God as man makes his own, and whatever pertains to God, man as God possesses.”143

In a second letter to the Dardaniens sent in 495, Gelasius raises many of the same issues he had raised in his previous epistle two or three years earlier. He once again insisted that communion with an individual or church represented a tacit acceptance of their beliefs and practices. According to Gelasius, to associate with a heretic or his supporters implicated all parties in the original error. Furthermore, he makes the important argument that an anathema against a heresiarch not only condemned the individual, but it also implicitly condemned all his supporters or those who would later take up his corrupt teachings. To illustrate his point, Gelasius begins with the case of Sabellius (fl.ca. 215) who preached a modalistic Trinity. According to Gelasius’ reconstruction, Sabellius’ condemnation was enough to similarly convict any and all who shared in the depravity of his heresy.144 In essence Gelasius suggests that a new synod was not necessary to condemn teachings in the present which had already been condemned in the past. If a wayward Christian took up Sabellius’ teachings in the fifth-century, he would by definition already be worthy of condemnation since Sabellius’ original condemnation was valid not only for Sabellius as an individual, but also for anyone who followed in his footsteps throughout history. Similarly, Arius’ conviction at Nicaea (325), Eunomius and Macedonius’ at Constantinople (381) and Nestorius’ at Ephesus I (431) also applied to anyone who later embraced their beliefs and teachings.145

143 Ibid., §4. Gelasius continues: “so that this sacrament might endure, neither undermined by one side or the other [Christ’s humanity or his divinity], that which is God remained entirely man and whatever pertains to man remained wholly God.” “Quamvis enim unus atque idem sit Dominus Iesus Christus, et totus Deus et totus homo Deus, et quicquid est humanitatis, Deus homo suum faciat, et quicquid est Dei, homo Deus habeat: tamen ut hoc permaneat sacramentum nec possit ex aliqua parte dissolvi, sic totus homo permanet esse quod Deus est, ut totus Deus permaneat esse quod homo est.”

144 JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398), §2. “Et ut brevitatis causa priora taceamus, quae diligens inquisitor facile poterit vestigare, Sabellium damnavit synodus, nec, ut sectatores ejus postea damnarentur, necesse fuit singulas viritum synodos celebrari, sed pro tenore constitutionis antiquae cunctos, qui vel pravitatis illius vet communionis existiere participes, universalis Ecclesia duxit esse refutandos.”

145 Ibid. “Sic propter blasphemias Arii forma fidei communionisque Catholicae, Nicaeno prolata conventu, Arianos omnes, vel quosque in hanc pestem sive consensu sive communione decidet, sine retractatione conclusit. Sic Eunomium, Macedonium, Nestorium synodus semel gesta condemnans, ulterius ad nova concilia venire non sivit, sed universos quocunque modo in haec consortia recidentes tradito sibi, limite synodali refutavit Ecclesia.”
We can see an earlier example of this same argument in Gelasius’ short history of the Christological controversy known as the *Gesta de nomine Acacii* which was written before he became bishop. In this text, Gelasius claimed that neither Nestorius nor Eutyches had produced new teachings in the strictest sense; rather, they were indistinguishable from their universally despised heretical antecedents. Nestorius had been nothing more than a follower of error of Photinus († 376) and Paul of Samosata (bishop of Antioch, † 268) who had taught that Christ was merely (*tantummodo*) a man, born to Mary. Against this heresy, Eutyches, who had been “seized into the insanity of Apollinaris,” denied Christ’s humanity altogether and instead claimed that he was merely (*tantummodo*) the incarnation of the Word of God. Gelasius’ implication here is that the condemnation of Paul of Samosata at the Council of Nicaea (325) in essence also convicted Nestorius; Nestorius’ deposition at the Council of Ephesus I likewise convicted and condemned all those who continued to hold his beliefs in the present. The same logic applied to Eutyches, whose teachings had been overturned in the person of Apollinaris at the Council of Constantinople (381). And Eutyches’ own condemnation at Chalcedon must therefore also apply to those who supported him and his views in Gelasius’ own time. Following this logic, the *Henotikon* represented nothing less than the most recent incarnation of Eutyches’ error.

This notion of heresy and its condemnation followed an irrefutable, if somewhat circular, logic. Of course, it simply would not make sense if the church had to gather in council to universally condemn mere imitators of past heretics who had already been judged and convicted. The implication of Gelasius’ excursus on the history of church councils and the conviction of heretics was that those who supported the *Henotikon* were no better than Eutyches, whose rightful condemnation at Chalcedon in 451 also convicted the supporters of the *Henotikon* in the past and present. Eutyches, who had been dead for decades, is depicted as the head of a nefarious sect or as a heresiarch whose error represents the gravest challenge to orthodoxy since Arianism. Moreover as we have already seen, to remain in communion with anyone who had accepted the *Henotikon* was tantamount to embracing Eutyches and all his teachings. The emphasis placed on Sabellius in his second letter to the Dardians may have been intended to suggest Rome’s authority and its steadfast orthodoxy. Sabellius had been condemned by Callixtus I in Rome.\(^{146}\)

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\(^{146}\) According to the hostile, although generally accepted, account given by Calixtus’ vocal opponent Hippolytus, *Ref. Omn. Haer.*, 9.7. See also Caspar, *Gesch. des Papsttum*, I.22-28. Sabellius’ condemnation was later confirmed at Constantinople (381).
If new heresies were simply amalgams of previous errors and if these had previously been judged by the church and overturned, it was possible for Gelasius to accuse and convict in the same breath: to label someone a Sabellian or a follower of Eumonius or of Arius must by definition place them under the judgement of the church which had already anathematized these heresiarchs. According to this line of reasoning, the *Henotikon* was illegitimate and condemnable because it was tantamount to Eutychianism (which was related to Arianism, Apollinarianism, Manichaeism, etc.). If these heresies were wrong, it must follow that the *Henotikon* was too. But the validity of this kind of accusation did not depend on the actual contents of the beliefs of the accused, but rather on the authority of the accuser to pronounce on the perceived connection to previously condemned errors of the past. Gelasius, of course, claimed this authority. As he wrote to Emperor Anastasius, the *auctoritas* of the Apostolic See, which was given to the universal church for all Christian time, is supported by the canons of the fathers and longstanding tradition. If someone attempted to usurp for themselves some part of this authority, defined by Gelasius as the “constitutions of the Council of Nicaea,” for instance by challenging Rome’s excommunication of Acacius and its continued opposition to the *Henotikon*, such an individual could be brought to the attention of the *collegium* of the one true faith, not to those outside that faith. The corollary of Gelasius’ somewhat convoluted argument is a tautology: Acacius had overstepped his authority by claiming prerogatives that properly belonged only to Rome. The eastern bishops who supported the *Henotikon* had done much the same. But more than this, Gelasius maintained that the only legitimate adjudicator of their errors was the unified and true Christian faith, which was itself defined as communion with Rome. Anyone who stood outside this faith as it was defined by Gelasius was by definition an unfit judge. Only those allied with the *apostolica sedis* and ultimately Gelasius himself, were suited to the task. The bishop of Rome, then, was the embodiment of orthodoxy as well as its arbiter and enforcer.

This emphasis on Rome as the legitimate and authoritative guardian of orthodoxy was the final element of Gelasius’ Christological discourse. It was Gelasius’ authority as bishop of Rome that both proclaimed and protected the ancient traditions of the church. He claimed that the defense of “the orthodox religion” was the responsibility of the bishop of Rome (*sedes*

apostolica,) who in all his letters is consistently portrayed as the ultimate defender of the authentic faith against its heretical challengers.\textsuperscript{148} It was the Apostolic See’s task to defend the communion; to betray Rome was to betray the faith itself.\textsuperscript{149}

The acta of the Roman synod held in March 495 provide a particularly revealing example of this aspect of Gelasius’ rhetoric. This synod was called in order to reconcile Misenus bishop of Cumae, the ambassador of Felix III who had been deposed and excommunicated for communicating with Acacius.\textsuperscript{150} In his profession of faith, Misenus is recorded to have rejected all heresies, especially “the Eutychian heresy along with its author Eutyches and its follower Dioscorus, as well as its successors and communicators, Timothy Aelurus (The Cat), Peter of Alexandria, Acacius of Constantinople, Peter of Antioch, and all their accomplices and those who are in communion with them.”\textsuperscript{151} In what had become common practice in the western church by 495, Misenus explicitly connects the supporters of the Henotikon with ‘Eutychianism.’ Gelasian discourse had succeeded in making Acacius the heir of Eutyches and Dioscorus, at least in the Roman Church. Moreover Misenus is said to have made his profession “under the sight of God and of the blessed Peter, his apostle, and his vicar [sc. Gelasius] and the whole church.”\textsuperscript{152}

The implications are clear. In matters of the faith, it was Gelasius as Peter’s vicar who ultimately had the final say. The Apostolic See (sedes apostolica) “which holds primacy (principatus) delegated by the Lord Christ over the whole church” had rightly and justly excommunicated and deposed Misenus and his fellow transgressor Vitalis because they had entered into communion with followers (sectatores) of the “Eutychian pestilence.” It was now equally within Gelasius’ rights to reinstate Misenus to communion and restore him to his former office.\textsuperscript{153} And what the

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{148}{JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398), §6. JK 632 (Thiel ep. 12, pp. 349-358), §§6, 9.}
\footnote{149}{JK 638 (Thiel ep. 18, pp. 382-385 = CA ep. 101, pp. 464-468), §6.}
\footnote{150}{Vitalis, the second deposed bishop, had already died. See above, p 158.}
\footnote{151}{The Roman synod of May 13, 495, (Exemplar gestorum de absolutione Miseni) = Thiel, ep. 30, pp. 437-447 = CA 103, §5. .."praecipue Eutychianam haeresim cum suo scilicet auctore Eutychete et ejus sectatore Dioscoro, vel successoribus ejus atque communicatoribus Timotheo Aeluro, Petro Alexandrino, Acacio Constantinopolitano, Petro Antiocheno, cunctisque eorum complicibus et communicatoribus respuere, damuarque et anathematizare perpetuo...” cf. Ibid., §14.}
\footnote{152}{Ibid., §5. "...sub conspectu Dei et beati Petri apostoli ejusque vicarii ac totius Ecclesiae mea...”}
\footnote{153}{Ibid., §7. “sedes apostolica quidem, quae Christo Domino delegante totius Ecclesiae retinet principatum, pro dispensatione curaque generali, quam vel pro fide Catholica vel pro paternis canonicibus regulisque majorum necessaria semper circumspectione dependit, Misenum atque Vitagem, quos contra Eutychianae pestilentiae sectatores vel contra eos, qui talium se communione polluerant, suae potestatis legatione suffultos ad Orientem dudum sub sanctae memoriae decessore meo praesule destinarat, quod apostolica praeepta declinantes quotlibet modo in eorum, adversum quos missi fuerant, consortia recidissent, gestis synodalibus rerum discussione patefacta, communione pariter et honore merito jureque submovit. Quibus tamen misericordia locum memor supernae pietatis pro suo moderamine reservavit, et dum conditionem posuit ultionis, spem noluit propitiationis abscedi: sicque suam}
sedes apostolica concluded regarding the true faith was applicable to the whole church. The easterners (referred to as Graeci or Orientales) cannot deny the judgements of Rome.\textsuperscript{154}

The rest of the council predictably agreed with Gelasius’ assessment.\textsuperscript{155} After accepting Misenus’ confession of guilt and his profession of faith, Gelasius sought the affirmation from the rest of the council. The priests and bishops who had gathered in Rome rose from their seats and proclaimed twenty times “life to Gelasius!” They continued: “Carry out that which God has given to you in power! (repeated twelve times) Do that which the lord Peter does! (ten times). We ask that you [Gelasius] be lenient! (nine times).”\textsuperscript{156} Later, Gelasius continues to emphasize Peter’s authority – and by extension, his own – over the entire church, going so far as to cite Jesus’ commission to Peter contained in Matthew. The blessed apostle Peter was, according to Gelasius, placed before all the rest by Jesus with these words: 

\textit{quaecumque ligaveris super terram erunt ligata et in coelis et quaecumque solveris super terram erunt soluta et in coelis.}

Peter’s historic power to “bind and loose” was manifest in the Apostolic See as the right to condemn or to rehabilitate.\textsuperscript{157}

The acta of 495, and indeed the entire process that saw Misenus rehabilitated, sought to present Gelasius as Peter’s representative on earth, the final arbiter of correct faith whose duty (and right) it was to rule on questions of doctrine and dogma. His decisions were universally applicable. Elsewhere, Gelasius states that the other bishops of the church were (merely) preachers whose responsibly was to uphold and preach the faith as interpreted by Rome. This faith was, in Gelasius’ view, synonymous with Chalcedon. Its opponent was “the heretic

\textit{sententiam temperavit, ut istorum veniam cum illorum mallet salute provenire, quorum fuerant participatim decepti, ac potius praeberent eis, quos suo firmaverant in pravitate consensu, et salubrem correctionis inetum et emendationis imitandae consortium.”}\footnote{Ibid., §§8,10.}

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., §§8,10.

\textsuperscript{155} The attendees of the synod were a particularly friendly audience. As Richards notes, only fifty-eight of Rome’s then seventy-six priests attended the synod at a time when 100% attendance was the norm. Richards posits that the absent priests constitute “a hard core of eighteen unwilling to see the errant bishop forgiven.” That is, those who did not participate in the synod represented a small group of uncompromising anti-easterners, more so than even Gelasius, who would soon be sidelined entirely by a church tiring of conflict with Constantinople. This interpretation is possible; however it seems equally likely that the inverse of this argument is true: the “hard-core” faction may represent a minority “pro-eastern” faction protesting Gelasius’ policies in toto. In any case, the missing priests do strongly suggest that at least some members of the Roman Church were uncomfortable with this synod and perhaps Gelasius’ policies more generally. See Richards, Popes, 66-67.


\textsuperscript{157} Ibid., §12.
Eutyches” who represented any opposition to the council and by extension, to the authority of Rome.158

Conclusion

In his letters and tractates that deal with Christology, Gelasius was keen to present the bishop of Rome as the consummate defender of Chalcedonian orthodoxy against the creeping Eutychianism of Emperors Zeno, Anastasius and their supporters. For as important as Leo’s efforts were in his own time as well in the retrospective history of the institution of the bishops of Rome, it was the defense of his Christological definition by his successors that prompted important developments in the way Rome saw itself and its role in the wider Christian world. Of course from the perspective of Acacius, Zeno, Anastasius and their supporters, the Henotikon represented a reasonable compromise. The view from Rome, however, was much different. For Gelasius and the bishops of Rome more generally, the Henotikon threatened to destabilize the traditional relationships between Christendom’s great sees and the empire. Moreover, it overturned longstanding processes of councils and appeals by which decisions on dogmatic questions had been made, a fact which potentially left the church without a clear and effective way to make decisions on significant issues in the future. And ultimately, a Roman bishop could not discard Chalcedon without undermining his own authority and that of his see. To abandon the Tomus as the touchstone of correct Christology meant calling into question Leo’s own orthodoxy – a fact which in turn undermined Rome’s claims of an unbroken chain of apostolic orthodoxy linking the current bishops to Peter and dismissed the most important Roman contribution to the theology of the early church. By Gelasius’ pontificate, Chalcedon had become intrinsically linked with Rome’s own orthodoxy, a cornerstone of its own self-perception and a way in which its bishops justified their larger place in the world – especially over and against the other important eastern sees who so often seemed to fall into various heresies.

Because of the importance ascribed by many in the Latin Church to Gelasius’ defense of Chalcedon, his works that had been composed in the context of the Acacian Schism were valued and preserved long after his death. In these texts, Gelasius used many of the same heresiological tropes as Leo had years earlier. In particular, he sought to cast the Henotikon as in effect a

vindication of Eutyches and those who supported the document as no better than heretics themselves. Because he conceived of heresy genealogically, he could tie contemporary enemies of the faith with their perceived antecedents. Thus Acacius and Peter, and indeed anyone else who accepted any compromise of the Council of Chalcedon, were tantamount to a modern manifestation of Eutyches, who himself had been an amalgam of the teachings of the Manicheans, Marcionites, Apollinarians, and even of Arius— all of whom had fundamentally misunderstood the true and salvific nature of Christ’s incarnation. Moreover Gelasius enthusiastically took up Leo’s rhetorical creation of “Eutychians” and “Eutychianism,” a sect and teaching that could be added to the pantheon of Christian heresy.Indeed it was these Eutychians in distant Constantinople who bore the brunt of Gelasius’ rhetorical broadsides and not the supposedly Arian barbarians in Italy itself. Gelasius would have to mobilize a very different rhetoric of heresy and orthodoxy in order to legitimate his relationship with the Ostrogoths, as well shall see in our next chapter.


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Chapter Five: Gelasius Part II – Italy

Introduction

As we saw in the previous chapter, the question of Christology and the protection of Chalcedon against imperial attempts to abrogate the Council were fundamentally important to Gelasius both before and after he became Bishop of Rome in 492. In this chapter, we will turn away from relations with the East and focus on Gelasius’ more immediate concerns in his own ecclesiastical province in Italy. Here, the most obvious problems Gelasius had to confront were the ongoing ramifications of decades of political and military instability. Numerous military leaders fought with, and often dominated, ineffective emperors in the second half of the fifth-century. Gradually large portions of the empire including much of Gaul, Spain, and North Africa were carved off from imperial authority, forming the nuclei of the new barbarian kingdoms. After 476, Italy itself likewise became a kingdom ruled ably by the former army officer Odoacer until 493 when it was in turn conquered by Theoderic and the Ostrogoths. Theoderic ruled a large kingdom centred on Italy that included Southern Gaul and Dalmatia largely uncontested until his death in 526.

The advent of an Ostrogothic kingdom (or one controlled by Odoacer) in Italy posed a particular problem for the bishops of Rome: like the Visigoths and Vandals, the Ostrogoths are usually understood to have been adherents of the Trinitarian heresy known as Arianism.¹ But despite their heterodoxy and unlike the Vandals in Africa and to a lesser extent in Spain, Ostrogothic religious policy under Theoderic was on the whole generous and his tolerant attitude in turn was publically reciprocated by Rome’s educated Christian elite.² The Anonymus Valesianus reports that the king “so governed two races at the same time, Romans and Goths, that although he himself was of the Arian sect, he nevertheless made no assault on the Catholic

¹ Hodgkin, for example, tells us that Theoderic remained “unshaken in his Arianism which had been, probably for a century, the faith of his forefathers…” Hodgkin, Italy and her Invaders: 535-553, 489. Exactly how his faith relates to that which was promoted by Arius is far from clear.
² For example, Theoderic is acclaimed thirty times by the attendees of the Roman synod of 499 acta synhodorum habitarum Romae I (acta synhodi a. ccccxcviii), MGH AA XII, 405: “Exaudi Christe! Theoderico Vitam!” As Ward-Perkins notes, “The Vandals were the only people [i.e. not the Visigoths or Ostrogoths] who in fact tried to impose their Arian creed on others.” See the discussion in general, and Ward-Perkins’ comment in particular, in T.S. Brown, "Lombard Religious Policy in the Late Sixth and Seventh Centuries: The Roman Dimension," in The Langobards Before the Frankish Conquest: an Ethnographic Perspective, ed. Giorgio Ausenda, Paolo Delogu, and Chris Wickham (Woodbridge, 2009), 305. However, Victor of Vita’s Historia Persecutionis, from which many of the stories of the most egregious Vandal persecution of Catholics is taken, may not be entirely reliable.
religion.” Elsewhere the same work notes that during Theoderic’s visit to Rome, the king met Saint Peter “with as much reverence as if he was himself a Catholic.” Gelasius himself enjoyed friendly relations with Theoderic and his family and other prominent Catholics such as Cassiodorus and Ennodius of Pavia were also strong supporters of the regime. Clearly, Theoderic’s heterodoxy was not a priority for Gelasius or the Catholic Church in Italy despite Rome’s claims to be the consummate defender of orthodoxy. Indeed, Gelasius’ primary concern in Italia suburbicaria was not Gothic heterodoxy at all, but rather the administration of the church and its officers and the management of its growing patrimony. Our evidence suggests that it was especially in the context of disputes over jurisdiction between the church and the Gothic administration of Italy that Gelasius most often came into contact with Theoderic or his representatives.

The friendly relationship between Theoderic and the bishops of Rome in the early years of the Ostrogothic kingdom can be partially explained by a shared distrust and even hostility towards Constantinople. Like the bishops of Rome, Theoderic’s relations with the east were also strained. Despite the fact that Theoderic was a patrician who had served as magister militum praesentalis of the eastern armies and may well have had some form of mandate from the empire for his initial attack on Odoacer, following the conquest of Italy, his official position within the imperial hierarchy remained ambiguous. His attempts to secure recognition from the eastern empire had been rebuffed in 490 and 492. Indeed, Theoderic’s status in Italy was only legitimizied by Emperor Anastasius in 497, possibly aided by Gelasius himself, although there is no clear evidence of a quid pro quo between the church and the Ostrogoths.

In any case, it is clear that Gelasius and Theoderic could find common ground and were willing to cooperate with one another. It is possible that Gelasius viewed Theoderic as simply another magistri militum of Italy such as Ricimer or Gundobad. As Patrick Amory argues, Gelasius may have been able to set aside Theoderic’s heterodoxy and treat him as an acceptable

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3 Anon. Val., §60.
4 Ibid., §65.
5 A dated, although still useful, overview of the sources for reconstructing the relationship between the Roman Church and Theoderic can be found in Pfleilschriften, Theoderich der Grosse, 3-13.
6 Wilhelm Ensslin, Theodorich der Grosse (München, 1947), 98-102. In general on Theoderic’s recognition, see also Jones, "Odoacer and Theoderic," 126.
ruler of Italy precisely because he a military leader rather than an emperor. However, Gelasius commonly called Theodoric *rex* in his various surviving letters written both to members of the Ostrogothic regime and other Italian bishops. This fact suggests that the bishop of Rome understood Theodoric as a legitimate King of Italy rather than simply a soldier in the employ of the empire. However it is true that like the *magistri militum* who had dominated the west for much of the fifth century and unlike Emperors Zeno and Anastasius II in the east, Theodoric could not or did not attempt to command obedience to a particular credal statement.

A final element of the relationship between Theodoric and Gelasius that should not be ignored is the simple fact that the bishops of Rome were dealing with the Ostrogoths from a position of weakness. Especially after 493, the Goths were militarily dominant in Italy. As had been the case since the early fifth century, real power lay in Ravenna, not in Rome. Yet even if we admit that there were practical reasons a bishop of Rome would seek accommodation with Theodoric, it is nonetheless worth considering how Gelasius justified his relationship with a heretical ruler given the traditional and irremediably negative place of Arianism in orthodox Christian thought.

To better understand Gelasius’ views of Ostrogothic heterodoxy, this chapter will attempt to place Theodoric and his faith within the wider context of late-fifth century Italy, a far more diverse place than is sometimes imagined. To accomplish this task, we will begin by examining the management and administration of the Italian church in the later fifth-century. Here, we will see both the instabilities caused by war, but also the importance of the day-to-day operation of the church which had become increasingly sophisticated since the days of Leo. Indeed, the majority of Gelasius’ surviving correspondence deals with the minutiæ of estate management and ecclesiastical politics. Next, we will then turn to a consideration of the relatively diverse religious landscape, where there were important Jewish and pre-Gothic non-Nicene

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8 Amory, *People and Identity*, 197.
9 For Gelasius’ use of *rex* to describe Theodoric, see below, p. 204ff. and n. 161. Interestingly, the word *rex* is not used by Gelasius’ predecessors Hilary, Simplicius or Felix III (perhaps not surprisingly). But more than this, I could find no correspondence with, or even reference to, any western imperial official at all, let alone with Ricimer, Gundobad or even Odoacer, in the letters of these bishops, a fact which makes Gelasius’ surviving instances of interaction with the Ostrogothic regime all the more striking.
12 The importance of Gelasian rulings on conflicts within the Italian Church accounts for the survival of so many of these letters since they entered quickly into the canon law tradition.
communities, as well as Pelagians and Pagans. And at least in the case of the Jews and non-Nicene soldiers, they could transgress many of the boundaries imposed on them by Roman law. These communities were also not entirely disconnected from one another, especially on the ground where hybridity rather than separation may well have been the norm.

With this important context in mind, the greater part of this chapter will investigate Gelasius’ relationship with the Ostrogoths. Somewhat surprisingly and unlike the debates over the nature of Christ with the Eastern Empire, the faith of the Ostrogoths and Gelasius’ orthodoxy were not irreconcilably antithetical; rather they were two positions on a spectrum of acceptable belief which existed in Italy until the time of Justinian. Gelasius certainly recognized that Theoderic was not Catholic. In fact, the ambiguous nature of Theoderic’s faith (and that of many of his followers), together with the king’s stated aim of preserving the traditional Roman legal norms, provided Gelasius with rhetorical ammunition in his fight to protect and extend the jurisdiction of the church in Italy. When it served his purposes, Gelasius could use the religion of the Ostrogoths as a point of commonality, rhetorically incorporating the heterodox Goths into the wider Christian community. At other times, he could mobilize their differences which made Ostrogothic intervention in church affairs unacceptable. In his relations with the Ostrogoths, Gelasius used heterodoxy as a tool.

1. Italy in the Late Fifth-Century

a. Church Administration, Land Holding and Ecclesiastical Politics

As we noted in the previous chapter, more than half of Gelasius’ surviving correspondence is concerned with Italy, his own ecclesiastical province of Italia suburbicaria and in particular, the administration of the Roman Church’s vast and growing patrimony.¹³ Not unlike a contemporary lay aristocratic landholder Gelasius was intimately involved in the smallest details of overseeing the holdings of the church.¹⁴ This included the administration of church property and finances,

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¹³ As we shall see below, Gelasius did attempt to intervene in churches outside his immediate jurisdiction; however Gelasius’ surviving letters suggest that he was more focused on the Italian peninsula and did not, unlike Leo, insinuate himself into the affairs of the Gallic Church. See Justin Taylor, "The Early Papacy at Work: Gelasius I (492-6)," JRH, 8, no. 4 (1975), 317.

¹⁴ Sessa, Papal Authority, passim, but esp. 121-124. See also Moreau, "Les patrimoines," esp. 82-84 on Gelasius. Moreau, 81, n.9, notes that amongst the Gelasian corpus, nine letters including fragments survive that deal with the
counting revenue and even personally issuing *apocha* or receipts. Eminent scholars such as Frederic Marazzi and Charles Pietri have argued that Gelasius, together with Simplicius and later, Symmachus, professionalized the Roman Church and created the essential administrative mechanisms by which the Roman Church would later administer its holdings across Italy. However, Gelasius likely did not have at his disposal the kind of specialized bureaucracy that would exist in the centuries after his death. The professionalization and bureaucratization of the Roman Church was a gradual process that was still in its early stages at the end of the fifth century and only came to full fruition under Gregory the Great and later. In Gelasius’ time, the governance of the church likely remained somewhat less sophisticated, at least in comparison to the seventh, eighth and later centuries.

Gelasius’ letters also point to difficulties that arose with lay monastic and church foundations, often in the form of a chapel or a monastery established on private land. During times of financial difficulty or political uncertainty, it was always tempting for the aristocratic founders of these institutions to reclaim assets from “their” churches – something that Gelasius was keen to prevent. As we discussed in Chapter Two, Leo’s anti-Pelagian campaign might also suggest a continuing unease with private religious practice that took place outside the control and supervision of the central church and its bishops.

To exert a greater degree of control over private religious foundations, Gelasius established a step-by-step procedure by which a lay patron could properly found a church on his or her own estates. First, the local bishop had to be approached with a written petition that included a deed

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19. e.g. JK 631 (Loewenfeld, Gel. ep. 3). On this problem, see also Gaudemet, *Histoire d'un texte: Les chapitres 4 et 27 de la décrétale du Pape Gélase du 11 mars 494*, 290ff.

20. See above, p. 65ff.
so as to clearly establish the church’s ownership of the building and associated lands. Only then would the bishop consecrate the church and provide a priest. And no basilica could be consecrated without the approval of Rome. Moreover, Gelasius was keen to emphasize that once a church had been founded and consecrated, the lay founder should have no special rights to it and its property other than that of processio - the procession bringing gifts to the altar of the church. Private burial chapels were not to be open for public mass, but rather limited to masses said for the souls of the dead. In essence, Gelasius’ reforms meant that the donors had the right to receive communion in their private churches and little else besides.

Another of Gelasius’ concerns stemmed from the significant disruptions in Italy precipitated by the conflict between Odoacer and Theoderic which had in turn severely weakened the Italian church. In the Roman synod of 494, we learn that war and famine had drastically reduced the number of clergy to dangerously low levels – so low in fact, that there often were not enough clerics left to perform the sacraments in some churches. Gelasius responded by making provisions for the rapid promotion of monks to the ranks of lector, notarius and defensor. In a letter sent to bishop Palladius in the province of Tuscia, Gelasius was called upon to decide whether or not a presbyter named Stephen remained canonically fit to perform his duties after he had suffered accidental castration. Stephen had unintentionally wounded the inferiores partes corporis trying to jump a fence in his attempt to “flee the swords of the barbarians,” likely a reference to the war between Odoacer and Theoderic. Self-castration violated canon law and was...
grounds for expulsion from the clergy. But since his injuries were unintentional, Gelasius ruled that Stephen should not be removed from his clerical office.

The deleterious effects of endemic warfare were exacerbated by (or possibly caused) a famine that devastated Italy in the early years of Gelasius’ pontificate according to the Liber Pontificalis. Gelasius’ tractate against the Lupercalia suggests that conflict, famine, harvest failures in Gaul and Africa (obviously not a result of a conflict between Odoacer and Theoderic), as well as an outbreak of disease in Italy caused the pagan festival to be suspended.

Social upheaval, political instability and the effects of war may also have aggravated the already murky and occasionally violent nature of Italian ecclesiastical politics, especially in the south despite the fact this region was relatively untouched by the war between Odoacer and Theoderic. In 496, for instance, at least two bishops had been murdered in the church of Scyllacenorum (Squillace) in Calabria. In late 495 or early 496, Gelasius ordered that a presbyter named Coelestinus, likely from the nearby church of Vibonensis (Vibo Valentia, also in Calabria), should be deprived of his office and excommunicated since he had been convicted of killing his own bishop. In yet another incident, Gelasius deposed an archdeacon named Asellus. Asellus’ bishop had been murdered, and in the aftermath of the crime the archdeacon had permitted the murderer to be killed in a riot (et eum ipsum in tumultu praesenti permisit occidi), a fact which conveniently left no loose ends. Even more suspiciously, Asellus, who was almost certainly complicit in the bishop’s murder, then had himself elected bishop before reporting the whole affair to Rome. Gelasius deposed Asellus from his office.

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25 Gelasius reaffirms this canon in the acta of the Roman synod: JK 636 = generale decretum Gelasii (Thiel ep. 14, pp. 360-379), §4 which bans the ordination of those corpora vitiatos.
26 JK 646 (Loewenfeld, Gel. ep. 6); JK 706 (Thiel frag. 9, p. 488). See also JK 636 = generale decretum Gelasii (Thiel ep. 14, pp. 360-379), §17.
27 LP Gelasius I, §1.
28 Adversus Andromachum (Thiel tract. 6, pp. 598-607 = CA 100, pp. 453-464), §13-14, cf. Moorhead, Theoderic in Italy, 27 and 28 plus notes, esp. 109 on famine in Rome caused by refugees entering the capital. On the war in Italy between Theoderic and Odoacer, see ibid., 17-27; see also the particularly bleak picture of Italy in the late fifth century found in Ullmann, Gelasius, 217.
29 JK 725 (Thiel ep. 37, pp. 450-452). “caedes geminate pontificum…”
30 JK 708 (Thiel ep. 38, p. 452). The town in question is not named. The addressees are Phillip and Cassiodorus. This is not Cassiodorus Senator (PLRE, 2:265). Coelestinus might well refer to a presbyter of the same name who is likewise condemned by Gelasius for continuing to minister to the Dionysii, a family which had been excommunicated for inflicting damages on the church. cf. JK 733 (Thiel ep. 39, p. 453).
31 JK 724 (Thiel ep. 36, pp. 449-450).
Gelasius also intervened in a variety of more mundane cases of discipline, for example the misappropriation of church funds. He even had to deal with the fallout of a bishop who apparently was suffering from epileptic seizures (repente collapsus) and somewhat bizarrely, a deacon who had been teaching a woman magic (ars magicae). Finally, Gelasius also sought to strictly enforce promotion within the church hierarchy based on seniority and attempted to curtail the ordination of unsuitable candidates. As we shall see below, the improper ordination of personae obnoxiae was a recurring problem that brought the church into conflict with the landholding aristocracy – and in turn brought both parties into contact with the Ostrogothic state.

b. Religious Diversity

When we consider the evidence from the period, the notion of a fundamental division between Roman and Goth on the basis of faith or ethnicity seems at least somewhat exaggerated. The situation on the ground must have been far more complex than an Arian-Goth/Catholic-Roman dyad. Indeed, Italy (and the extra-Italian territory that also made up the Ostrogothic kingdom) cannot be described as religiously homogenous before Theoderic. For instance, there was a large and important Jewish community in Italy throughout the late imperial and Ostrogothic periods. But like Christian heretics, they were viewed with deep and growing suspicion by many Christians in this period and suffered various restrictions under Roman law. Nevertheless throughout Late Antiquity, Jews continued to enjoy, in the words of Fergus Millar, “legal recognition, and even (against considerable pressures) legal protection.” This continued protection is clearly articulated in a number of laws preserved in the Theodosian Code, many of which appear at the end of the fourth and the first decades of the fifth centuries – that is, at the

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32 For example, JK 687 (Thiel frag. 22, p. 496).
33 JK 729 (Thiel frag. 8 p. 487). Thiel, 487, n.4, suggests “repente collapsus” denotes “comitalis morbus” – i.e., epilepsy; however this term could refer to many different conditions.
34 JK 642 (Thiel frag. 16, p. 492).
exact same time Roman emperors were prescribing increasingly harsh punishments for religious dissidents and heretics.\textsuperscript{37}

As had been the case in late Roman society, Jews living under the Ostrogothic regime also enjoyed legal protection for their persons and places of worship. Generally speaking Theoderic was tolerant towards the Jews of Italy.\textsuperscript{38} Although his tone may well have been more charitable than that of fifth-century Roman emperors, the essentials of Theoderic’s Jewish policy closely mirrored that which had been set out in Roman law during the previous centuries.\textsuperscript{39} We can also catch glimpses of Italy’s Jewish community in the letters of Gelasius, largely from two fragmentary letters. The first, written to Bishop Quinigesius, is a letter of recommendation written on behalf of a certain Antonius, a relative (\textit{parente suo}) of the \textit{vir clarissimus} Telesinus. The bishop of Rome tells Quinigeius that Telesinus, “although he seems to be Jewish,” has “endeavoured to prove himself to us to such an extent that we ought to rightly call him one of us.”\textsuperscript{40} This backhanded compliment suggests a relationship between Gelasius and this senatorial Jew – to the point that Gelasius was willing to recommend Telesinus’ relative to another Christian bishop.\textsuperscript{41} Elsewhere, Gelasius asked Bishops Siracusius, Constantius and Laurentius to look into the case of a Christian slave named Judah who had been circumcised by his Jewish master. Judah claimed that he had been a Christian since birth (\textit{ab infantia Christiano}), although his name certainly suggests otherwise.\textsuperscript{42} This was an important fact both because Jews were forbidden to proselytize and because in the Late Roman world one’s status (Jew, Christian, free

\textsuperscript{37} e.g. CT 16.8.13 (July, 387), a law of Honorius and Arcadius allowing Jews to live by their own (religious) law, CT 16.8.21 (CJ 1.9.14) (412, 418, and 421), a law of Honorius and Theodosius II protecting synagogues from attack.\textsuperscript{38} On Theoderic’s attitude towards the Jews, see Moorhead, \textit{Theoderic in Italy}, 97-100; Amory, \textit{People and Identity}, 59-60.\textsuperscript{39} ET 143 which confirmed the various privileges given to the Jews under Roman law; \textit{Variae}: II.27 to the Jews of Genoa; \textit{Var IV}.33 and \textit{Var IV}.43, confirming the privileges granted to Jews under Roman law; \textit{Var IV}. 43 to the Senate of Rome, asking them to look into the destruction of a synagogue and punish the perpetrators; \textit{Var V}. 37, to the Jews of Milan again confirming Jewish privileges and commanding protection for the Milanese synagogue against attacks by Christians. cf. Anon. Val. 80-82 on Theoderic’s judgement in favour of the Jewish community of Ravenna who fled to the king when their synagogues were attacked and burnt on two separate occasions. In general, see Alberto Somekh, “\textit{Teoderico e gli Ebrei di Ravenna},” in \textit{Teoderico e i Goti tra Oriente e Occidente: Congresso Internazionale Ravenna, 28 settembre - 2 ottobre 1992}, ed. Antonio Carile (Ravenna, 1995), 139ff.\textsuperscript{40} JK 654 (Thiel frag. 45, p. 508 = Coll. Brit. Gel. ep. 18). “Vir clarissimus Telesinus, quamvis Judaice credulitatis esse videbatur, talem se nobis approbare contendit, ut eum merito nostrum appellare debeamus.”\textsuperscript{41} Either the wording of Gelasius’ letter or the improbability of a friendship between a Roman bishop and a Jewish senator led Thiel to insert as a subtitle for this fragment: “\textit{Judeaeorum quemdam conversum probalae fidei et integritatis episcope commendat}.” (Thiel, p. 508) However, there is nothing in the letter to suggest that either man had converted to Christianity other than the phrase “\textit{Judaicea credulitatis esse videbatur}” which is, in my opinion, better read as a back handed compliment rather than an indication that Telesinus had in fact converted.\textsuperscript{42} Names, however, cannot always be taken as an acurate...
or freed, cleric or layman) affected one’s place under the law. In this case, either a Jewish master had actually forcibly converted his slave and circumcised him, or perhaps the slave was in fact Jewish and he was simply attempting to escape his lot by claiming to be Christian. Gelasius does not pre-judge the case but commands the bishops to look into it *diligenter*. Should Judah be lying, Gelasius commands that he ought to be returned to his rightful master.\(^43\)

Both these cases show that Jews, at least some of the time, could transgress the restrictions imposed by Italian society and Roman law since Jews were neither supposed to own Christian slaves or advance to high office. Of course, we have no way of knowing if these two cases represent the norm or exceptions to the norm. Nevertheless, these examples demonstrate that expected boundaries between religious communities were not absolute in Ostrogothic Italy: a Jewish senator could have friendly relations with a bishop of Rome.

Gelasius also confronted the remnants of traditional Roman polytheism in Rome. He composed a treatise against the ancient festival of the Lupercalia.\(^44\) However, the degree to which it was fully pagan in its religious content has been disputed by Neil McLynn. The Lupercalia in the late fifth century is perhaps better understood as an example of aristocratic euergetism in the city of Rome rather than a pagan revival or a popular nostalgia for the past.\(^45\) Gelasius’ attack on this festival might not necessarily have been a reaction to a pagan revival, although it certainly suggests that at least some of the ancient traditions of Rome were being preserved.

As had been the case with Judaism, Arianism – or at least a certain type of Arianism – could in certain cases benefit from the protection of the law in Late Roman society. From the fourth century onwards, polemical writing often collapsed any theological position that disagreed with Nicaea into the category of Arianism.\(^46\) This also became common practice in Roman law.\(^47\)

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\(^43\) JK 742 (Thiel *frag.* 43, pp. 506-507). “Quapropter diligenter vestra inter utrumque sollicitudo rerum fideliter examinet veritatem, quatenus nec religio temerara videatur, nec servus hac objectione mentitus competentis jura dominii declinare contendat.”

\(^44\) *Adversus Andromachum* (Thiel *tract.* 6, pp. 598-607 = CA 100, pp. 453-464). The attribution to Gelasius has been challenged, but not convincingly. On the authorship of the tractate, see McLynn, “The Pope and the Lupercalia,” 162, n.9.

\(^45\) In general, see also the introduction in Pomarès, ed., *Lettre contre les Lupercales*; A. W. J. Holleman, *Pope Gelasius I and the Lupercalia* (Amsterdam, 1974); Ullmann, *Gelasius*, 252-254. However McLynn’s analysis is by far the best and the earlier works should be read with caution. See especially his conclusion McLynn, “The Pope and the Lupercalia,” 174-175.

\(^46\) For instance Epiphanius terms the *Homoiousian* teaching of Basil of Ancyra as ‘semi-Arian’ despite the fact it was relatively close to Nicene orthodoxy. Epiphanius, *Pan.*., 73.1.2-3 (433). On this question, see R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: the Arian Controversy 318-381* (Edinburgh, 1988), 349-357, with
Various non-Nicene groups such as the Anomoians and Homoiousians had been condemned as Arian heretics in late fourth-century Roman law; but at least one important exception remained. In a western law of 386, promulgated by Valentinian II, the emperor differentiated *Homoianism* as represented by the Creed of Rimini (359) from the other proscribed versions of non-Nicene Christianity. This law made Homoian Christianity a legally acceptable form of the faith, providing a loophole that legitimated the religion of many of the *foederati* who were important members of the Roman army. As Ralph Mathisen suggests, this law may well have acted as a “legal safety-valve for Arians who adhered to this formula even though it had been anathematized by the Nicene church. Adherence to the Creed of Rimini then became the touchtone for the acceptability of barbarian Arianism in the Nicene world.” The inclusion of this law in the Theodosian code in 438 suggests that it was still in effect half a century after its original promulgation and that it was meant to remain in effect for the foreseeable future. It is interesting that a particular form of Arianism (although, of course, not identified as such) could be officially tolerated at the very same time emperors busily legislated against various other heresies, revealing a very real dissonance between the rhetoric of heresiology, Roman law and

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notes. Hanson considers Epiphanius’ statements about the Homoiousians, particularly the accusation of Arianism, to be “almost worthless.” Ibid., 349, n.4. Unfortunately, the category of ‘semi-Arian’ is still sometimes used in modern scholarship.

47 The Trinitarian debate is as complex as the Christological controversy. In brief, the main positions taken by the protagonists in the debate in the second half of the fourth century are: the Homoousians, the position that emerged as orthodox and which claimed that Christ was the same nature (*homoousios*) as the Father; the Homoiousians who proposed that Christ was of a similar nature (*homoiousios*) to the Father (see note above); Anomoians who claimed that the Son was in fact completely unlike (*anomoios*) the Father; and the Homoiousians, who, perhaps sensibly considering the labyrinthine nature of the debate, simply denied the usefulness of any philosophical terms that sought to define or speak of the Godhead in terms of *ousios*. The best single-volume overview of Arianism remains that of Hanson, cited above. But among many others, see also J. Rebecca Lyman, “A Typography of Heresy: Mapping the Rhetorical Creation of Arianism,” in *Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts*, ed. Michel R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams (Edinburgh, 1993); Joseph T. Lienhard, "The ‘Arian’ Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered," *ThS*, 48 (1987); Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford, 2004); Manlio Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo*, Studia ephemeridis "Augustinianum". (Roma, 1975).

48 The law is in the names of Valentinian, Theodosius and Arcadius; however Humfress characterises this law as a deliberate attack by Valentinian against “Theodosius’ definition of orthodoxy” which established an inclusive rather than exclusive definition of orthodoxy. Humfress, *Law and Orthodoxy* 146.

49 The Council of Rimini (Ariminum) took place in 359. The creeds promulgated at Rimini and at the parallel Council at Seleucia, and finally in Constantinople in 360 all rejected the terms *homoousios* and *homoiousios*, and while they do not claim that Jesus was created, they do state that he was “like the Father (*homoios*) as the divine Scriptures teach.” The Creed of Ariminum/Rimini is preserved in Theodoret *HE* 2.21. The creed accepted at Constantinople can be found in Anthanaius, *De Syn. 30. PG 26*, translated in J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd ed. (London, 1972), 293.

50 CT 16.1.4

reality. A division could be made by emperors and churchmen between orthodox and ‘Arians’ at the very same time accommodation was found for the followers of the Creed of Rimini.

At least in part because of the protection they received under Roman law, non-Nicene communities continued to exist throughout the empire long after the supposed defeat of Arianism at the hands of Ambrose of Milan at the Council of Aquileia (381). In Constantinople, for example, we know of non-Nicene Goths from at least the time of John Chrysostom (archbishop, 398-403/404) who worked hard to convert them to orthodoxy.\textsuperscript{52} A comparable situation existed in Italy in the fifth-century, which as we have already seen was also far from religiously homogenous. Besides Jews, a number of non-Nicene churches also existed in Italy prior to the Ostrogothic conquest.\textsuperscript{53} There were also Latin-speaking Homoian communities in Illyricum on the Dalmatian coast and in parts of Pannonia.\textsuperscript{54}

Textual evidence for these communities is limited but not insubstantial. A small number of non-Nicene homilies and bible commentaries survive from the fourth and fifth centuries. These texts include the so-called Arian scholia found in the margins of a fifth century manuscript containing Hilary of Poitier’s \textit{De Trinitate}, \textit{Contra Auxentium} and \textit{De synodis}, Ambrose’s \textit{De fide} and the acts of the Council of Aquileia. The marginalia include an exhortation from Ufila, a letter from bishop Auxentius (either of Milan or Durostorum), a refutation of Ambrose’s \textit{De fide} by Palladius (likely Palladius of Ratiaria) and a non-Nicene account of the council itself.\textsuperscript{55} This final text was likely composed as late as the 440s.\textsuperscript{56} In addition, we also have the fourth-century \textit{Collectio Veronensis} which contains a number of otherwise unknown texts including sermons.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{52} See, for example, Theoderet HE 5.30 together with Jaclyn LaRae Maxwell, \textit{Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and his Congregation in Antioch} (Cambridge ; New York, 2006), 84-86. On John’s views of Goths, see his VIII homilia, habita postquam presbyter Gothus, I PG 63.502 and Rochelle Snee, "Gregory Nazianzen's Anastasia Church: Arianism, the Goths, and Hagiography," \textit{DOP}, 52 (1998), 177-79.

\textsuperscript{53} The important study by Zeiller remains worthwhile: "Étude sur l'arianisme en Italie à l'époque ostrogothique et à l'époque lombarde," \textit{Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire}, 25 (1905), esp. pp. 128-136 on the non-Nicene church in Italy and the Ostrogoths. More recently, see Carlo Cecchelli, "L'arianesimo e le chiese Ariane d'Italia," in \textit{Le chiese nei regni dell'Europa occidentale e i loro rapporti con Roma sino all' 800: Settimane di Studi del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo} 7 (Spoleto, 1960), 743-888.


\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Scripta Arriana I: Scholia Arriana in concilium Aquileiense}, CCSL 87 (1982), xxi-xxii.

\textsuperscript{57} Verona Biblioteca capitolare ms. 51 (49). A full study of the \textit{Collectio Veronensis} manuscript can be found in Roger Gryson, \textit{Le recueil arien de Vérone (MS. LI de la Bibliothèque capitulaire et feuillets inédits de la Collection}}
Two more problematic Arian texts also survive: the *Anonymi in Iob Commentarius* and the *opus imperfectum in Mattheaeum*.

Analysis of these western non-Nicene texts is complicated by the fact that most survive in a single exemplar, and even when more than one line of transmission exists, as Steinhauser notes, it has “often has been interpolated and in some case hopelessly corrupted...In other words the textual transmission of Latin Arian works generally tends to be either fragmentary or unreliable.” Moreover, there is a significant overlap in the vocabulary used by orthodox and non-Nicene Christians to describe Jesus. Both the *opus imperfectum* and the *Anonymi in Iob* were clearly composed in a Homoian milieu, but this did not prevent them from being attributed to orthodox authors (*opus imperfectum* to John Chrysostom, the *Anonymi in Iob* to Origen) – a fact which accounts for their survival. That Homoian texts could in any way be confused and deemed acceptable by fifth- and sixth-century readers suggests that the incompatibility of Nicene and so-called Arian Christianity (be it Gothic or Roman) has been exaggerated at the local level. Whether or not fifth- and sixth-century Italy, together with the Balkans, was an “Arian stronghold” as claimed by Patrick Amory can be debated. But it seems clear that a native form

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Giustiniani Recanati: étude codicologique et paléographique, Instrumenta Patristica 13 (The Hague, 1982). Both the Collectio Veronensis and the Arian scholia have been collected into a critical edition together with other Latin Arian texts in Scripta Arriana I.

58 *Anonymi in Iob commentarius*, ed. Kenneth B. Steinhauser, CSEL 96 (Vienna, 2006); *Opus imperfectum in Mattheaeum*, ed. J. van Banning, CCSL 87B (1988). A list of Arian Latin sources can be found in (Steenbrugis, 1995), §680-708. Meslin proposed that both the *opus imperfectum* and the *Commentarius* were composed in Illyricum by Maximinus the Arian, thus placing them firmly in a western Latin tradition. Amory, following Meslin, has used this conclusion to as evidence for a continuous native western Homoian Christian community prior to the advent of the Gothic kingdom in Italy. However, both the attribution to Maximinus and the location of their composition has recently been called into serious question. Steinhauser (pp. 38-45) has argued that it was indeed written by western Latin Homoians in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. But this has been forcefully countered by Dossey and others who place this text in a Vandal African milieu. Meslin’s extensive analysis of the *opus imperfectum* and the *commentarius* can be found in Meslin, Les Ariens, 15-180, 201-226. But cf. the arguments of Pierre Nautin, "Review of 'Les Ariens d'Occident',” *RHR*, 177 (1970), 74-77, 80-81; Pierre Nautin, "L' "Opus imperfectum in Mattheaeum" et les Ariens de Constantinople,” *RHE*, 84 (1972), 271ff. Dossey’s conclusions can be found in "The Last Days of Vandal Africa: An Arian Commentary on Job and its Historical Context,” *Journal of Theological Studies* (n.s.), 54, no. 1 (2003), 62ff. See also (Steenbrugis, 1995), 244-245.

59 *Anonymi in Iob commentarius*, ed. Steinhauser, 10.

60 See ibid., 11-12, esp. n 13 with references.

61 Ralph W. Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops and the Churches "in Barbaricis Gentibus" During Late Antiquity," *Speculum*, 72, no. 3 (1997), 693-94 and notes.

62 Amory, *People and Identity*, 238 n.8, citing a map in Meslin, 416. While there certainly are a number of Homoian communities indicated on the map, they cannot be said to be concentrated in Italy. It would be something of a stretch to read it as showing Italy as an important Arian centre, especially in the fifth-century. Indeed while Amory’s study (esp. chap.7) emphasizes the “Latin-speaking fourth- and fifth-century Arians” in the west studied by Meslin and their importance for the evolution of sixth-century western Arianism, the majority of western Arians identified
of non-Nicene Christianity survived, if not prospered, after the fourth century and remained a part of the religious landscape in the western half of the empire well into the second half of the sixth century.

Together with this indigenous form of heterodoxy (to whatever degree it survived), we must also consider the more obvious source of non-Nicene Christianity in the years prior to the advent of the Ostrogothic kingdom: the army. In the second half of the fifth century, the west was dominated by the magister militum Ricimer († 472) and his successor, Gundobad. Both men were non-Nicene Christians and Ricimer in particular is known to have patronized the Homoian Church and was likely responsible for the construction of Saint Agatha in Rome. Saint Agatha existed into the late sixth century and was only re-consecrated to orthodoxy by Gregory the Great, possibly in 591 or 592. There was also at least one other non-Nicene church in Rome during the late sixth century on the Via Merulana about which we know much less. But like the church of St. Agatha, this second church was purged and rededicated by Gregory to Saint Severus in the last decade of the sixth century. What is striking is that both of these churches existed for so long; their ultimate closure may well have become a priority only with the encroachment of the supposedly heretical Arian Lombards.

by Meslin and Amory are from the fourth century. Still, it seems clear that there was at least some form non-Nicene Latin-speaking Christians in the west prior to 476 who were not members of the Roman Army or its barbarian federates, although they were perhaps concentrated more in Noricum, Illyricum and Pannonia than in Italy itself.

The claim that Ricimer was Homoian is usually based on his Suevic and Gothic ethnicity, although no source actually explicitly states his confession. Ricimer did decorate the church of St. Agatha in Rome (today, Sant'Agata dei Goti) with mosaics and the ILS (inscriptiones latine selectae) 1294, preservers the inscription: “Fl. Ricimer v.i. magister utriusque militae patricius et ex cons. ord. pro voto suo adornavit.” Ward-Perkins, noting epigraphical evidence from the Inscriptio Christianae Urbis Romae (vol. ii, p. 438 no. 127 = Inscriptio Christianae Veteres 1637) states that Ricimer not only decorated but actually built “the Arian church of S. Agata dei Goti (459/70).” Ward-Perkins, Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages, appendix 2, p.240. On St. Agatha, see also M. J. Zeiller, "Les Eglises ariennes de Rome à l'époque de la domination gothique,” Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire, (1904), 19-23.

This church was re-dedicated to Nicene Christianity by Gregory the Great in 591 or 592 (Dialogues, 3.30). It is possible that it was constructed as an orthodox church, only to be converted to an ‘Arian’ (Homoian) church later. Nevertheless, the preponderance of admittedly circumstantial evidence does strongly suggest Ricimer’s adherence to a non-Nicene form of Christianity. On the (supposedly Arian) iconography of Sant’Agata dei Goti, see Mathisen, Ricimer's Church, passim, but esp. 309.

Non-Nicene churches, largely fourth-century foundations, also existed in Aquileia and Milan. Other possible fifth-century non-Nicene churches can be found in Naples as well as in Grado and perhaps Spoleto. It is sometimes difficult to reconstruct whether these were pre-existing foundations by Italian Homoians or if they were created especially for heterodox members of the army (or later, for Theoderic’s Ostrogoths). In Ravenna, we do know that there was a prominent community of non-Nicene Christians in the fifth century, likely made up of soldiers in the imperial army and slightly later, from Odoacer’s army.

It should also go without saying that these Homoians did not consider themselves either Arians or heretics. Like earlier western Homoians such as Palladius of Ratiaria who had been deposed by Ambrose of Milan in 381, Ricimer and his soldiers would not have considered themselves to be followers of Arius’ teachings, nor would they have used Arius’ name to describe their own faith. Instead, they may well have imagined themselves to be part of a righteous community of Christians set apart from the majority Catholics by their very sanctity. And whatever one concludes regarding the faith of Ricimer or the other western Homoians, it is worth noting that heterodoxy (from the perspective of the Roman Church) says nothing at all about loyalty or dedication to the empire: Ricimer happily fought ‘Arian’ Vandals and Visigoths. A similar situation may well have existed in Constantinople during the late fifth century. The supposed ‘Arianism’ of Aspar and Ardabur was at least grudgingly accepted at exactly the time Theoderic himself would likely have been in the eastern capital as hostage.

Even after 476, the heterodoxy of the foederate soldiers who came to control Italy prompted little reaction. Odoacer ruled Italy without much surviving comment for thirteen years - at least

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70 Palladius and most western bishops at this time were not supporters of Arius’ theology – they instead voiced their opposition to the term *homoousios* on the grounds that it was not scriptural. On Palladius’ rejection of the term ‘Arian,’ see Michel R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams, "Introduction," in *Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts*, ed. Michel R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams (Edinburgh, 1993), xv n. 7. and more generally on Ambrose’s condemnation of the ‘Arian’ bishops, see John Moorhead, *Ambrose: Church and Society in the Late Roman World* (London, 1999), 118-122.


not about his religion. He is viewed positively (or at least not negatively) by Eugippius’ Life of St. Severinus, and is not described as an Arian. The Anonymous Valesianus is also generally positive, describing Odoacer as a man of good will who favored the Arian sect. Odoacer’s religion, like that of Ricimer before him and Theodoric after, was perfectly licit and acceptable, having been a legitimate part of the Italian religious landscape for almost a century and would continue to be tolerated well into the reign of Justinian I. Procopius reports the presence of non-Nicene soldiers in the army of Belisarius. Indeed, it was feared that the Vandals and subsequently the Ostrogoths might appeal to the sectarian loyalties of their coreligionists when fighting for the empire both during the invasion of North Africa (533-534) and subsequently of Italy (535). And as late as 527, Justinian, who is well known to have enacted various edicts against heresy within the Byzantine Empire, issued a law that granted limited toleration to Gothic soldiers in his army.

The examples of the Jews and the various Homoians including native Italians as well as soldiers like Ricimer, Gundobad and Odoacer are a clear indication that Italy prior to the advent of the Ostrogothic kingdom was not simply divided between orthodoxy and heresy, but rather it must have been a jumble of peoples and perspectives. A small community of Italians together with a significant number of federate soldiers must have comprised a substantial non-Nicene community in Italy even before Theodoric’s conquest. And although Roman law actively

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75 Anon. Val. 48: “Nam dum ipse esset bonae voluntatis et Arrianae sectae favorem praeberet…” cf. Anon. Val. 37 (describing Odoacer’s deposition of Romulus Augustulus). In general, the Anonymous is not overtly critical about Odoacer in general or his religion in particular. Of course its tone does change for the sections detailing the final years of Theodoric’s reign. See John Moorhead, “The Last Years of Theodoric,” Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte, 32, no. 1 (1983), 106-120.
76 Proc. Wars IV.xiv: “In the Roman army there were, as it happened, not less than one thousand soldiers of the Arian faith and most of these were barbarians, some of these being of the [H]erulian nation.” All translations from Procopius, History of the Wars, ed. and trans. H. B. Dewing, 7 vols., Loeb classical library (London, 1914).
78 CJ 1.5.12.17: “Taking, however, into consideration that we often enrol the Goths…among the devoted foederati, we have decided to relieve them somewhat of the severity [of the edict against Arianism] and permit them to be among the foederati and enjoy their honours insofar as we please.” Translation from Geoffrey B. Greatrex, "Justin I and the Arians," Studia Patristica 34, (2001), 79. Greatrex also notes another law of 528 in which an exception was made for Exakionite Arians. On the law of 527, see Sundwall, Abhandlungen, 252-57; A. A. Vasilev, Justin the First: An Introduction to the Epoch of Justinian the Great (Cambridge, 1950), 244-45.
legislated against various forms of ‘Arianism’ in the fifth century, adherence to the Creed of Rimini provided a veil of legitimacy for non-Nicene churches and men like Ricimer, making it possible for them to be acceptable in Roman society while remaining loyal to their heterodox religion.

Not only were there various kinds of faiths being practiced in Italy in this period, but there also was a degree of hybridity and flexibility amongst these faiths that has not been adequately appreciated. Jews, various kinds of heretics, orthodox Christians and non-Nicenes may well have been divided from one and other by the competing organizational structures of their respective faiths. But the real impact of these differences may not have been as important at the local level, especially between the various versions of Christianity. 79

These conclusions have important implications for the study of the bishop of Rome’s relationship with Theoderic and the Ostrogoths more generally. In Gelasius’ Italy, the church and the Ostrogoths were not opposite sides of a Catholic/heretic dichotomy, but rather two positions on a spectrum of ethnic identity and acceptable belief. This is not to say that Catholic and Homoian Christianity necessarily overlapped or that their respective adherents did or could not distinguish one form of the faith from the other. Rather, both Catholics and Homoians seem to have recognized in the other at least some degree of legitimacy or perhaps at a minimum, a grudging acceptance. Nor can (perceived) ethnicity be used as a reliable indicator of religious conviction. It does not follow that because Theoderic himself was an adherent to a non-Nicene form of the faith that all his followers were as well. 80 Theoderic’s own mother Ereleuva converted to Catholicism, possibly from paganism, and she later exchanged letters with Gelasius. 81 To imagine Gelasius as the paragon of Roman orthodoxy over and against Theoderic’s Gothic Arianism misses the pluralistic and contested nature of religious culture in the Ostrogothic kingdom.

79 Mathisen, “Barbarian Bishops,” 693.
80 Amory, People and Identity, 236.
81 PLRE2 Ereleuva quae et Eusebia. Gelasius, JK 721 (ETV ep. 5 = Ewald, Coll. Brit. Gel. ep. 46); JK 743 (ETV ep. 8 = Thiel frag. 13, p. 490). See also Anon. Val., §58. “Mater, Ereriliva dicta Gothica, Catholica quidem erat, quae in baptism Eusebia dicta.” If we can trust this account, Ereleuva’s baptism into Catholicism suggests that she converted from Paganism rather than some form of non-Nicene Christianity given the various prohibitions against re-baptism in canon law. However Amory argues the conversion was from Arianism – a possible but perhaps not demonstrable suggestion. See Amory, People and Identity, 268-69, esp. note 138. Contra Amory, see Moorhead, Theoderic in Italy, 89-90. The choice of the Greek name εὐσέβεια is certainly suggestive of Theoderic’s mother’s piety, but not of her confession prior to her conversion.
2. The Ostrogoths and Arianism

Despite the jumbled nature of both ethnic and religious identity that must have been the norm in Italy in the later fifth century, a number of scholars have suggested that due in part to the relatively small number of Ostrogoths who entered Italy (even accepting the largest possible estimates) and the concomitant threat of assimilation, religion must have served as an important way for Theoderic’s followers to distinguish themselves from the Roman population of Italy.  

Peter Heather has asserted, “Ulfila’s brand of [Arian] Christianity became, in the fifth and sixth centuries, a distinctive feature of Gothic societies inside the Roman frontier.” Moorhead, discussing the Ostrogoths after establishment of their kingdom in Italy, claims that Arianism “was simply that it was not the faith of the Romans…Arianism [in the time of Theoderic] could afford to be tolerant because, having become a mark, perhaps something of a defiant one, of national identity, it had no aspirations to universality.” Margherita Cecchelli and Gioia Bertelli too have claimed that Arianism constituted a mark of distinction between the Goths and the subject peoples of Italy. Herwig Wolfram states that Arianism, at least in part, acted as “a
“Gothic” faith as a means of preserving ethnic identity.” And Michael Kulikowski notes that “[w]hen, a hundred years after Ulfila’s first mission, a powerful Gothic kingdom existed inside the Roman Empire, Arianism functioned both as a defining symbol of Gothic identity, and as a major obstacle to peaceful coexistence between Gothic kings and the Nicene Romans over whom they ruled.” Thomas S. Brown, somewhat more cautiously, writes, “Arianism remained an ethnic rallying point for some Goths, although perhaps not all.”

Perhaps the most radical example of this approach can be found in Walter Ullmann’s 1981 study of Gelasius in which the author presents Goth and Roman in Italy during the late fifth and sixth century as two completely separate, largely isolated communities. This perspective is based on the assumptions that the Ostrogoths were more or less uniformly Arians; and second, that Italy in the fifth and sixth century was to a great extent homogenously Catholic. Moreover, it also assumes that Arianism was a more or less cohesive system of beliefs that had been created by Arius and passed on to the Goths via Ulfila. If we accept these assumptions, then it would follow that these distinctive, coherent communities – Goths and Romans – would have had little in common, ethnically, culturally, linguistically or religiously. From the perspective of the Goths, Arianism helped preserve their distinctiveness in the face of massive demographic, cultural and political pressures to assimilate. It made them different from everyone else in Italy and they liked it that way. For instance, Ullmann claims that services in Gothic (Arian) churches were held in the vernacular (Gothic) – a language completely unintelligible to ‘Romans’ in Italy. Thus, language, culture and religion (all three of which were intimately connected) created an almost impenetrable barrier between the conquered and the conquerors. Indeed, considering how little interaction there was between Gelasius and the Goths, Ullmann states that as far as the bishops of Rome were concerned, “die Goten in Italien gar nicht existierten.”

86 Wolfram, Goths, 85.
89 Ullmann, Gelasius, 218-220. This view is tied closely to Ullmann’s rejection of Gelasius’ correspondence with Theoderic.
c. Gelasius’ views of ‘Arianism’ and The use of the word ‘Arian’

However, this reconstruction ignores the fact that there was clearly a legitimized place for Homoians during the later fifth-century. Indeed, far from opposing the supposedly barbarian king on account of his faith (or any other reason for that matter), Rome’s Christian elite publically endorsed Theoderic.\footnote{For example see above, n. 2.} Prominent Catholics in Italy at the time seem to have shared this sentiment as well. The \textit{vita} of the exiled Catholic African ascetic Fulgentius of Ruspe (468-533) described Theoderic’s visit to Rome in 500 as “a time of great celebration in the city; the presence of King Theoderic brought great rejoicing to the Roman Senate and people.”\footnote{Vita S. Fulgentii, PL 65, 118-150, §23. On Theoderic’s visit to Rome, see Massimiliano Vitiello, ”Teodorico a Roma. Politica, amministrazione e propaganda nell'adventus dell'anno 500 (Considerazioni sull'”Anonimo Valesiano II”) ” Historia, 53 (2004).} There was no mention of the Ostrogothic king’s supposed Arianism despite the fact that Fulgentius himself was a vocal opponent of the Vandals whom he does not hesitate to condemn for their heresy.\footnote{For example, Fulgentius’ letter to Donatus in which he provides detailed Trinitarian arguments and numerous proof texts in both the Hebrew Bible and New Testament to best refute Arians when engaging them in debate. He also wrote a \textit{libellus} to counter a sermon by a Catholic priest and monk who had apostatised to Arianism named Fastidious (presumably not his real name!). Fulgentius of Ruspe, \textit{Opera}, ed. J. Fraipont, CCSL 91/91a, epp. 8, 9.}

A similar perspective is advanced by the two most obviously (and famously) pro-Gothic Italo-Roman Catholic authors from this period: Cassiodorus (c. 485 - c. 585) and Ennodius (573/4-521). Cassiodorus was born around the year 485 and by 503 was serving under his father who was praetorian prefect under Theoderic. Cassiodorus advanced through the \textit{cursus} of high offices of the Ostrogothic government, serving as \textit{quaestor} (507-511), \textit{magister officiorum} (523-527 or 528) and finally Praetorian Prefect (533-538/40). He is best known as the author of numerous letters on behalf of Theoderic and his successors preserved in his \textit{Variae}.\footnote{On Cassiodorus’ career and the \textit{Variae} Barnish’s introduction in his edition of \textit{The Variae of Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator}, trans. S. J. B. Barnish (Liverpool, 1992), xiv-lii; James Joseph O’Donnell, \textit{Cassiodorus} (Berkeley, 1979); Andrew Gillett, ”The Purposes of Cassiodorus’s \textit{Variae},” in \textit{After Rome’s Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History: Essays Presented to Walter Goffart}, ed. Alexander Callander Murray (Princeton, 1988), 37-50; Michael Shane Bjornlie, ”What Have Elephants to Do with Sixth-Century Politics?: A Reappraisal of the “Official” Governmental Dossier of Cassiodorus,” \textit{Journal of Late Antiquity}, 2, no. 1 (2009), 144-147; Michael Shane Bjornlie, \textit{Politics and Tradition Between Rome, Ravenna and Constantinople: A Study of Cassiodorus and the \textit{Variae},} 527-554 (Cambridge, 2013), 16-19.}\footnote{Var. IX.25.5. Cassiodorus’ history was likely composed sometime between 519 and 533. Cassiodorus, speaking about himself in the third person, states, “Originem Gothicam historiam fecit esse Romanam.” The translation of this} But he also composed a number of theological works, a chronicle, and a history of the Goths which he described as turning “the past of the Goths into a Roman-style history.” Cassiodorus’ \textit{Gothic}
History is, of course, lost — although some scholars have argued that it may persist to some degree as an echo behind Jordanes’ own history, the Getica. Setting aside the decades of debates over the degree to which Jordanes used the lost Gothic History as a source for his own work, Cassiodorus’ own description of his work suggests that he had attempted to insinuate the Ostrogoths into Roman history, thereby legitimizing Theoderic and his family, the Amals. At a minimum, Cassiodorus’ Gothic History “envisioned a future for the Amals,” in the words of Walter Goffart.

Ennodius, a contemporary of Cassiodorus, was a deacon in the Church of Milan who eventually became bishop of Pavia in 514. He also was deeply implicated in church politics, distinguishing himself as a prominent supporter of Symmachus during the Laurentian Schism. Ennodius was effusive in his praise for the Ostrogothic regime. He penned a panegyric for Theoderic in early 507 that celebrated his conquest of Italy as a restoration of good governance and the glory-days of the res publica. Of course, one can hardly expect to hear criticism of Theoderic’s faith (or regarding any aspect of his rule) in a panegyric delivered to him in front of the senate. But even in his private correspondence, Theoderic is praised and nowhere in Ennodius’ writing is he called an Arian.

However, the support of the Italian Church for Theoderic and his regime does not indicate their acceptance of Arianism. These same authors could, on the one hand praise the Gothic King, while on the other condemn the perfidious heresy of Arius. Ennodius’a vita of St. Epiphanius of Pavia relates a story in which the saint is said to have excused himself from dining with the

deceptively simple passage is suggested by Walter Goffart, "Jordane's "Getica" and the Disputed Authenticity of Gothic Origins from Scandinavia," Speculum, 80, no. 2 (2005), 81-82; but cf. Barnish, Variae, 128.
95 Argued by Wolfram, who reads Jordanes’ Getica as a calque for Cassiodorus’ lost history. See his Goths, passim, but esp. 3-4. However, arguing strongly (and convincingly) against this view, see Barnish, S. J. B. Barnish, "The Genesis and Completion of Cassiodorus' Gothic History," Latomus, 43 (1984), 337ff; Walter Goffart, The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550-800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon (Princeton, 1988), 23ff, esp. 31-42 and more recently, Goffart, "Jordanes's Getica," passim, but esp. 393-398 where Goffart argues that to the degree that Jordanes used Cassiodorus' history, it was as "a hostile appropriator".
96 Goffart, Goffart, Narrators, 42.
97 See, for example, his "libellus pro synodo," in Theoderich der Grosse und das Papsttum. Die Quellen zusammengestellt nach den Ausg. der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, ed. Erich Caspar (Berlin, 1931).
99 A fact noted by Rohr in Panegyricus, 18.
100 E.g. Ennodius’ letter to Caesarius of Arles (not Symmachus, as Vogel thought), ep. 9.30, 10.
Visigothic king Euric so as to avoid being polluted by his Arian priests. Indeed, Euric’s regime is generally depicted by Ennodius as cruel and despotic, making for an interesting contrast with that of Theoderic in Italy. However despite Euric’s barbarity and heterodoxy, Ennodius nonetheless portrayed Epiphanius as able to appeal to the Visgoths’ Christian faith.

Like Ennodius, Cassiodorus’s writing also suggests an aversion to Arianism. For example, there are some striking anti-Arian statements in his Explanation of the Psalms, written sometime in the 540s or 550s – when the political situation in Italy had changed significantly. Cassiodorus’ movements during the period are unclear. He may well have come to Constantinople in 540 as a member of the court of the captured Gothic king Witigis, and he was still in the eastern capital with Pope Vigilius in 550-551, but may well have traveled back to southern Italy for parts of this period as well. In any case, it was during this period that his Expositio Psalmorum was composed. In this work, the now former Ostorogthic government official utterly condemns “the lunatic rashness of the Arians” which prompts them to preach “that the Creator of all times is subject to time, for the only-begotten Son continues without change in the company of the Holy Spirit to be coeternal and consubstantial with the Father.” It is possible to imagine this new anti-Arian sentiment expressed by Cassiodorus reflect hardening attitudes towards this heresy prompted by the Gothic Wars. Justinian had begun to promulgate anti-Arian legislation in Africa following its recapture for the empire by Belasarius in 534. By the 540s and 550s, the word “Goth” was becoming synonymous with an intractable and barbarian enemy of the empire which was attempting to restore Italy to lawful Roman rule and Catholic belief. In this context, it became natural for eastern writers in this period to not only emphasize the barbarous nature of the regime, but also its heretical nature. But as Shane Bjornlie has persuasively argued, Cassiodorus reacted against this reimagining of the Ostrogothic regime. Indeed, it was precisely

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102 Ennodius, Vita Epiphanii, §80.

103 ibid., §§62, 89. cf. Kennell, Ennodius, 139.

104 On the dating of the Expositio, see Bjornlie, Politics and Tradition, 22-23.


106 Cassiodorus, Explanation of the Psalms, ed. P. G. Walsh, 3 vols., vol. 2, Ancient Christian Writers (New York, 1990), 54.20, p.26. A similar sentiment is expressed in ibid., 55.11, p. 35. For Cassiodorus in Constantinople during the writing of the Expositio, see O’Donnell, Cassiodorus, 136. For his possible travels in southern Italy during this same period, see Cassiodorus, Explanation of the Psalms, ed. P. G. Walsh, 3 vols., vol. 1, Ancient Christian Writers (New York, 1990), 3.

107 See, for example, Amory, People and Identity, 144-147, 187-194, 221-223. Justinian issued his Novella de Africana Ecclesia (Novel 37) in August, 535.
in response to the “polemical barbarization of Ostrogothic rule,” in Bjornlie’s words, which may have prompted Cassiodorus in the late 530s or 540s to revise and publish various documents epitomizing his service to Theoderic and his successors. The heavily edited Variae portrays Theoderic and the Ostrogothic regime as the defenders of traditional Roman social, legal and cultural mores - a perspective that was increasingly at odds with the anti-Gothic propaganda being advanced in the eastern court. Moreover, it presents the men who served the Ostrogothic government in Ravenna (sc. Cassiodorus) as dutiful civil servants, suitable for a return to positions of influence after the conclusion of the Gothic Wars.108 Considering the position vis-à-vis the Ostrogoths taken in the Variae, it is difficult to imagine that Cassiodorus had the Ostrogoths in mind when he made his statements against Arianism in the Expositio.

Finally, even Gelasius, according to the biography found in the Liber Pontificalis, composed or compiled in the mid-sixth century, wrote “two books against Arianism.”109 Gelasius also condemns Arianism in various letters and tractates.110 In all these works – Ennodius’a vita of St. Epiphanius of Pavia, Cassiodorus’ Expositio, and in Gelasius’ writings – there was a significant disconnect between the rhetorical construction of Arianism and the faith of the Ostrogoths.

This assertion is strengthened when we turn to Gelasius’ extant works in which he discusses Arianism. Surprisingly rather than referring to the Ostrogoths, in every case Arianism is discussed in the context of the Acacian Schism. A good example of this is Gelasius’ correspondence in 493 with Succonius, a bishop from proconsular Africa who had fled the Vandal persecution in 484 and settled in Constantinople. Gelasius’ letter begins pleasantly enough, although the Vandal persecution of Catholics certainly is lurking in the background. Gelasius recollects Succonius’ good reputation: “divine grace had prepared (in you) an excellent instrument, especially useful in a time of war.”111 Gelasius goes on to express his sympathy for

108 Bjornlie, "What Have Elephants to Do with Sixth-Century Politics?: A Reappraisal of the “Official” Governmental Dossier of Cassiodorus," 148-149, 155-156. Bjornlie (p. 148) argues convincingly that the Variae, adapted heavily later in Cassiodorus’ life – possibly as late as the 540s - served to demonstrate “how the Italian bureaucratic elite had maintained the state despite the presence of a “barbarian” regime, in contrast to the invention of 476 as the fall of the western empire as a piece of propaganda originating at Justinian’s court during his wars of reconquest” For a full development of this argument, see now Bjornlie, Politics and Tradition, 186ff.
109 These five books are not mentioned in any other ancient source according to Duchesne LP, 257, n. 14. If these works were actually written, they do not survive.
110 As we saw last chapter and will see in more detail, immediately below.
111 JK 628 (Thiel ep. 9, pp. 339-341), §1. “Quum tuae dilectionis in Christo constantiam ferventque doctrinam celeberrima loqueretur opinio, dici non potest, quantis gaudis exsultavimus in Domino, quod vas egregium belli tempore maxime profuturum divina gratia praeparasset.” PCBE 1, SVCCONIVS probably to be identified with SACCONIVS.
the bishop’s exile. As an African himself, Gelasius would likely have been intimately familiar with many members of the Catholic Church in Africa and we can easily imagine that their persecution by the Vandals was a particularly difficult and emotional subject.

But Gelasius’ sympathetic tone fades when the subject turns to the Acacian Schism. Gelasius chastises Succonius as a man who prefers the charms of the present age rather than taking a stand with the people of God. Succonius had been in communion with “the enemies of truth” and those who were not in communion with the bishops of Rome - almost certainly a reference to the Patriarch Euphemius, who, despite being a convinced Chalcedonian, nonetheless refused Felix and Gelasius’ demand that Acacius be removed from the diptychs after his excommunication. Gelasius goes on to express his shock that Succonius, a man so learned and who had suffered so much for the sake of his faith in Africa, would abandon that same faith in Constantinople: “Surely this cannot be true of you who, spurning the threats of kings and loathing the fatal laws of the rampaging barbarians (saevientium barbarorum feralia jura despiciens) set aside your fatherland, the resources and privileges of the priesthood so that you could be worthy to take up these things perpetually in Christ?”

The historical context of the letter strongly suggests that feralia jura refers to the Arianism of the Vandals - which for Gelasius was no better than the philo-Eutychianism of the emperor (now Anastasius I) and his patriarch. It is useless to avoid one of these deadly dangers (funesta pericula) if in the end, one finds oneself supporting the other. In an increasingly angry tone, Gelasius continues, attacking Succonius as an enabler and supporter of the Antichrist himself: “It is possible that you did not understand that the Antichrist is striving to destroy Jesus by preparing his two horns at one and the same time, no less in the East than in Africa? For in Africa, they confess that Jesus is God in such a way that he is not God, while in the East, they preach that

112 Ibid. “teque votis omnibus ambientes, et quasi cominus constitutum toto cordis affectu comitabamur absentem.”
113 Ibid., §2. “Communicasse enim dilectionem tuam in partibus Orientis adversariis veritatis primum fama detulit’, deinde plurimorum relatio non spernenda patefécit.” Ibid., §3. “ne te illorum communioni misceres’, quibus communionem suam beatum Petrum noveras denegasses.” On Euphemius, see for example F. K. Haarer, Anastasius I: Politics and Empire in the Late Roman World (Cambridge, 2006), 127. Euphemius’ refusal was in part because he saw this command from Rome as a slight against his authority as Patriarch.
114 JK 628 (Thiel ep. 9, pp. 339-341), §2. “Nonne tu ille es qui spretis regum minis et saevientium barbarorum feralia jura despiciens, simul patriam, facultates et honoris sacerdotalis privilegia posuisti, ut ea perpetua recipro meraris in Christo?” Here “feralia jura” might refer to the fact that salvation was impossible, from Gelasius’ perspective, in an Arian church like that of the Vandals.
Jesus is man in such a way that they remove his humanity.”\textsuperscript{115} The two horns of the Antichrist are Arianism and Eutychianism – a shocking comparison and a powerful indication of Gelasius’ antipathy for both.

This twinning of Arianism and Eutychianism is taken up again by Gelasius in a letter carried by bishop Ursicinus to the bishops of the Balkan province of Dardania which we discussed in the previous chapter. In this letter, Gelasius cited Paul as having, in a single passage, disproved Arianism as well as Eutychianism, a statement that is designed to link the two errors in their twin misunderstanding of the Incarnation.\textsuperscript{116} When these examples are considered together, the Arian heresy appears to exist in Gelasius’ letters and tractates as a polemical term of reprobation rather than an accurate description of religious practice or belief amongst the Goths or anyone else; it was not a concrete and practiced reality, but rather a discursive marker of error used in a similar way to Gelasius’ references to the second-century heresy of Marcionism and the third-century heresy of Manichaeism – comparisons which seem designed to associate a new deviation from orthodoxy with a universally condemned error from Christianity’s past.\textsuperscript{117}

In all of Gelasius’ correspondence, neither of the terms Arian nor Arianism were ever applied to the Ostrogoths. Indeed, these terms were generally not applied to the Ostrogoths by any writers during the first decades of Theoderic’s kingdom.\textsuperscript{118} Nor is there evidence that the Goths considered themselves to be ‘Arian’ or followers of Arius. Thus we should not be surprised that at least in the early part of the kingdom, they would not be referred to as such by their allies in the aristocracy and the church. For Gelasius, Arianism was not an accurate descriptor for Gothic religiosity but rather one among various epithets in his arsenal of heresiological descriptions. Interestingly, Gelasius did refer to Theoderic’s deposed predecessor Odoacer as a “barbarian heretic” in a later letter to the bishops of Dardania.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., §3: “Itane non senseras, quod duobus cornibus praeludendo uno eodemque tempore non minus in Oriente quam in Africa Jesum solver nitetur Antichristus? quum et illi sic Deum fateantur, ut Deus non sit, et isti sic hominem praedicent, ut hominem vacuare contendant.”
\textsuperscript{116} JK 623 (Thiel ep. 7, pp. 335-337 = CA ep. 79, pp. 218-223).
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., §2.
\textsuperscript{118} This would change with the accession of Justinian and the Vandalic and Gothic Wars. See below.
\textsuperscript{119} JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398), §11. “…Odoacri barbaro haeretico regnum Italie tunc tenenti...”
**d. Gelasius, heterodoxy and the Ostrogothic State**

As we have seen, despite the fact that Gelasius clearly opposes Arianism in his writing, the term was not used by him to describe the Goths in Italy. Indeed, in stark contrast to his strained relationship with the East, Gelasius was on good terms with Theoderic and the Ostrogothic administration. Of course, Gelasius recognized that Theoderic was not Catholic. In fact, the ambiguous nature of Theoderic’s faith (and that of many of his followers), together with the king’s stated aim of preserving the traditional Roman legal norms, provided Gelasius with rhetorical ammunition in his fight to protect and extend the jurisdiction of the church in Italy. We can gain some insight into Gelasius’ perspective on Theoderic’s regime by examining the three documented occasions when the bishop of Rome interacted with the Gothic military and civil service, the king and his family.

1) The case of Silvester and Faustinianus. Our first example comes from the early years of the Ostrogothic kingdom. In 494/95, Gelasius received a petition from two clerics of the Church of Grumentium named Silvester and Faustinianus. Although their original letter does not survive, the case can be reconstructed from two letters of Gelasius. In the first letter, to bishops Crispinus and Sabinus, Gelasius tells his fellow bishops that Silvester and Faustinianus had written to him complaining that they had been mistreated. The men had been born slaves but claimed to have been clerics almost from the cradle, having been manumitted by their former master while he was still alive (*manumissore vivente*).\(^{120}\) Gelasius emphasised that they had been appointed as clerics during the lifetime of their owner rather than in his will after his death – a fact which presumably meant their status as freedmen was well-known and affected the legal basis for any claims by the manumittor’s heirs.

However, the heiress Theodora, evidently the widow or daughter of the unnamed master, was challenging their freedom and wished to reclaim the two men as her property. Theodora’s accusation can be inferred: Silvester and Faustinianus were lying about the circumstances of their manumission and they had illegally and improperly become clerics in order to escape their

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\(^{120}\) JK 727 (Thiel *ep.* 23, pp. 389-390). “Silvester et Faustinianus ecclesiae Grumentinae clerici lacrymosa nobis insinuatione conquisti sunt, libertatem sibi domini sui benignitate concessam haeredum ejus oppressione pulsari, sibique in clericatus officio pene a cunabulis servientibus, etiam manumissore vivente in eodem actu nihilominus constitutis, divinis mysteriis impedere servitium non licere.” According to PCBE 2, p. 2071, Grumentium is the modern city of Palazzo San Gervasio/Grumento Nova, Potenza, Italy. Thiel, p. 389, states: “Grumentium olim urbs erat Lucaniae episcopali sede decorata.”
rightful servitude. If the clerics were telling the truth (and Gelasius seems to have more or less accepted the veracity of their claims) Theodora’s actions would both be against the wishes of the former owner and the law. Gelasius insists that no heir has a legal basis to oppose the decision of the auctor, especially one made while he was alive. If, however, they had become clerics when they were in fact slaves, they would be in violation of Roman law. Theodora’s claims were supported by the archdeacon of Grumentium.

According to Gelasius, Silvester and Faustinianus complained that “they are oppressed by the archdeacon of the said church who in their absence, having trampled all reason underfoot, has, against the laws of God and man, deemed that the form of his court be denied to the accused (pulsatis) and promised that they would fall under the jurisdiction of the [provincial?] governor (moderator). This fact suggests as far as the archdeacon was concerned, the status of the two men as slaves superseded and negated their status as clerics. From a second letter we learn that the above-mentioned governor was the Gothic count Teia and that the two clerics had been transferred into the jurisdiction of Teia’s court by royal authority.

Theodora’s accusation was far from improbable. As we have seen, the ordination of personae obnoxiae and originarii by Italian bishops was an ongoing problem for Gelasius. In the late Roman period, both ecclesiastical and imperial authorities had repeatedly legislated against the ordination of slaves by bishops without the dispensation of their masters, in part because it threatened to bring disrepute to the church and also to avoid potentially adverse social implications of vast numbers of slaves using the priesthood to escape their servile lot. Although the practice was clearly contrary to both canon and Roman law, it seems to have been a relatively

121 Ibid. cf. JK 728 (Thiel ep. 24, pp. 390-391), in which Gelasius gives a similar account of the case to Teia. Of the “heirs” mentioned, only Theodora can be identified, and only in the letter to comes Teia.
122 JK 727 (Thiel ep. 23, pp. 389-390). Gelasius repeats the claim that according to Silvester and Faustinianus, their former owner (auctor) manumitted them. cf. NVal 35.18: “...translatos originis iure et titulo revocari non liceat.”
123 NVal 35.6 given in April, 452 (trans. Pharr, 1952): “Persons of ignoble birth status or slaves who evade the yoke of their birth status and transfer themselves to an ecclesiastic order shall return to the ownership of their masters, except when they have become bishops or priests, unless they have completed their thirtieth year in the aforesaid church.” Cf. NVal 35.3, which prohibits slaves from becoming priests or monks in order to escape their bondage.
124 JK 727 (Thiel ep. 23, pp. 389-390). According to CJ 1.3.10, a moderator provinciae is a provincial governor.
125 JK 728 (Thiel ep. 24, pp. 390-391). PLRE TEIA 2, APA TEIA/ZEIA, PCBE 2 TEIA/ZEIA, vir sublissimus, comes, possibly the comes civitatis of Volaterra and/or the Gothic commander of the garrison there. Volaterra/Volaterana is today Volterra in eastern Tuscany. I can find no good reason why this Gothic count would be called upon to intervene in the affairs so far south of his area of influence unless he was previously/afterwards stationed in the south. Nevertheless, Jones, Amory and Pietri all argue that Teia/Zeia is the same person. We should probably imagine that the Z is a scribal emendation for T in Teia, a known Gothic name, most famously of the last Ostrogothic king. On the office of comes, see Dieter Timpe, "comes," in Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde 5 (1982); Wolfram, Goths, 290-292; Jones, LRE, 366-368.
common occurrence. Gelasius himself confirms this picture when he complains, “almost no bishop seems to be free from this fault.” A related problem was the ordination of curiales. These local magistrates had been the subject of harsh legislation forbidding them from abandoning their duties and the burdens of taxation and some clearly saw the church as a means of escaping their obligations. The upheaval caused by the war between Odoacer and Theoderic may well have served to exacerbate the problem, giving slaves, curiales and other personae obnoxiae the opportunity to flee or otherwise avoid their duties. Some did so by attempting to join the priesthood.

Theodora would have certainly argued that Silvester and Faustinianus’ ordinations had been invalid in the first place due to their status as slaves. It is likely that Gelasius would have agreed. At the Roman synod of March, 494, Gelasius reaffirmed that bishops should not permit servi and originarii to escape into monasteries or church servitude by “using the excuse of religious conversion” (sub religiosae conversationis obtentu). In another letter, Gelasius scolded…

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128 As noted in a formulary of Gelasius used for the ordination of new bishops, preserved as JK 674 (Thiel ep. 15, pp. 379-380). Cf. Liber Diurnus, VII, Synodale quem Accipit Episcopus. This formulary bans new bishops from ordaining bigamists, the illiterate, and curiales amongst others: “Probabilibus desideriis nihil attulimus tarditatis. Fratrem jam et coepiscopum nostrum illum vobis ordinavimus sacerdotem. Cui dedimus in mandatis, ne unquam ordinationes praesumat illicitas: ne bigamum, aut qui virginem non est sortitus uxorem, neque illiteratum, vel in qualibet corporis parte vitiatum, aut ex poenitente, vel curiae aut cuilibet conditioni obnoxium notatumque ad sacros ordines permittat accedere.” On the curiales and the often harsh imperial legislation preventing them from abandoning their duties, see, for instance Jones, LRE, chapter XIX, especially pp. 734-766; more recently, see Chris Wickham, Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400-800 (Oxford, 2005), 62-64. Some curiales in Late Antiquity also joined the imperial bureaucracy or the army to escape their lot. Gelasius was at least somewhat sympathetic to the plight of the curiales. In 496, he relates the story of a Beneventan curial who fled his duties and sought sanctuary, only to be violently seized by two other curiales. Gelasius responded by banning the offenders from the church, if the charge is proven. See JK 737 (Thiel frag. 40, pp. 504-505).

129 As Gelasius confirms on at least three other occasions: JK 651 (Thiel ep. 20, pp. 386-388 = Col. Brit. Gel. ep. 15). “…personas obnoxias coelestis militiae cingulo non praecingi…” We can get a sense of the scale of the problem of personae obnoxiae becoming clerics when Gelasius continues: “Ita enim nos frequens et plurimorum querela circumstrepit, ut ex hac parte nihil penitus putetur constitutum.” Cf. JK 653 (Thiel ep. 21, p. 388). “Frequens equidem et assidua nos querla circumstrepit de his pontificibus, qui neque antiquas regulas nec decreta nostra noviter directa cogitantes, obnoxias possessionibus obligatasque personas venientes ad clericals officii cingulum non refutant.” JK 658 (Thiel, ep. 22, pp. 389). “Actores siquidem filiae nostrae illustris et magnificae feminae Maximae petitorii nobis insinuatione concjuesti sunt, Silvestrum atque Candidum originarios suos contra constitutiones, quae supra dictae sunt, et contradicetion praeeunte pontificie diaconos ordinatos.” The constitutiones mentioned might refer to NVal 35.6, cited above (n. 123), NVal 31.1 and following, as well as a novel of Majorian (7.7).

130 JK 636 = generale decretum Gelasi (Thiel ep. 14, pp. 360-379), §14. Presumably being a church slave (the term Gelasius uses is “ecclesiasticus famulatus”) was a better option for many than remaining in their current positions.
bishops Justus and Martyrius, holding them responsible for the ordination of men who were legally obligated to a senator named Amandianus.\footnote{JK 651 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 20, pp. 386-388 = Col. Brit. Gel. \textit{ep.} 15). cf. JK 653 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 21, p. 388).} As Gelasius explained, the ordination of \textit{personae obnoxiae} was prohibited by ancient rules and by the new decrees of the recently held synod.\footnote{Noted above, n. 130. The reference to the ancient laws (\textit{antiquae regulae}) might well refer to a letter of Leo from 443, JK 402 = \textit{ep.} 4 (PL 54, pp. 610-614), §2.} Of course, things became tricky once one was ordained into the upper echelons of the church. In the end, Gelasius ruled that deacons would be permitted to retain their offices while members of the lower clergy and those who had illegally joined monasteries were to be returned to their owners.\footnote{On this case, see Sessa, \textit{Papal Authority}, 158-159.}

But in the case of Silvester and Faustinianus, Gelasius clearly considers that the clerical status of these men must preclude their transfer to and judgement in a secular court. Either Gelasius simply did not believe the claims of Theodora, or he simply thought that the case ought to proceed in a church court. Roman law had granted only limited immunity from prosecution in civil court to bishops rather than to all clerics.\footnote{A law of 355: CT 16.2.12.} Indeed, later legislation stated that in lawsuits between clerics, if either party wished, the case could be moved to a public court. In litigation between a layman and a cleric, a novel of Valentinian III (452) states that the case must be heard in a public court unless the layman specifically agrees to the episcopal court.\footnote{NVal 35.1.} Even bishops could theoretically be brought into secular court; however they were given special dispensation to make use of a procurator to argue their cases, although this advantage did not apply in criminal cases.\footnote{See JK 665 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 27, pp. 422-435), §9 to the eastern bishops explaining Rome’s position on Acacius’ excommunication. In this letter Gelasius states, “Taceo, et ad sedem apostolicam ex more deferri, ne nostra privilegia curare videamur. Satis sit ostendere, quid secundum regulas et patrum canones facere deberetis, praecipue quum etiam ipsae leges publicae ecclesiasticis regulis obsequentes, tales personas non nisi ab episcopis sanxerint judicare.”} Despite these emendations, Gelasius nonetheless sought to vigorously defend the immunity of clerics, and especially bishops, from prosecution in civil and criminal courts.\footnote{NVal. 35.1.}

Upon learning the details of the case, Gelasius wrote to Count Teia telling him that Silvester and Faustinianus,

\begin{quote}
...have been brought to [your] court through the archdeacon of the town of Grumentium by means of a royal directive that is against the public laws,
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{\textit{bishops Justus and Martyrius, holding them responsible for the ordination of men who were legally obligated to a senator named Amandianus.}}\footnote{\textit{personae obnoxiae} was prohibited by ancient rules and by the new decrees of the recently held synod.} \footnote{Of course, things became tricky once one was ordained into the upper echelons of the church. In the end, Gelasius ruled that deacons would be permitted to retain their offices while members of the lower clergy and those who had illegally joined monasteries were to be returned to their owners.} \footnote{Gelasius clearly considers that the clerical status of these men must preclude their transfer to and judgement in a secular court. Either Gelasius simply did not believe the claims of Theodora, or he simply thought that the case ought to proceed in a church court. Roman law had granted only limited immunity from prosecution in civil court to bishops rather than to all clerics. Indeed, later legislation stated that in lawsuits between clerics, if either party wished, the case could be moved to a public court. In litigation between a layman and a cleric, a novel of Valentinian III (452) states that the case must be heard in a public court unless the layman specifically agrees to the episcopal court. Even bishops could theoretically be brought into secular court; however they were given special dispensation to make use of a procurator to argue their cases, although this advantage did not apply in criminal cases. Despite these emendations, Gelasius nonetheless sought to vigorously defend the immunity of clerics, and especially bishops, from prosecution in civil and criminal courts.}
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since they are entitled to the right of clerics. For let it be clear that he who
sues a heavenly servant must pursue the suit only in his [ecclesiastical]
forum.\textsuperscript{138}

Gelasius continues, asking the count to protect the two clerics from Theodora: “And so, beloved son [sc. Teia]...I commend to you the above-mentioned clerics so that if their adversary refuses to come, let them enjoy the protection of your Sublimity, in case that seizure or force, inimical to the laws, is inflicted on them. For he who flees judgment is evidently separated from justice.”\textsuperscript{139} From Gelasius’ letter it appears as if there was a very real threat that Theodora was in fact not thinking of pursuing the case at all, but rather had planned simply to seize the two men and forcibly return them to their lot after they had been removed from the safety of their church. Gelasius consequently asked Teia to protect the two men.

The case of Silvester and Faustinianus suggest some interesting conclusions. First, the interaction among Gelasius, the clerics and the archdeacon, and the Gothic count Teia demonstrate that in Theoderic’s Italy, there was always the potential for confusion due to the multiple, overlapping and at times conflicting levels of legal authority and jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{140} Cassiodorus’ \textit{Variae} famously encouraged the notion that Goths protected and defended a kingdom in which Roman law still held sway.\textsuperscript{141} Cassiodorus’ rhetoric also linked ethnicity to functional roles: the Goths representing the military, Romans the civilians; consequently, Ostrogothic soldiers and Roman civilians would fall under different legal jurisdictions (civil vs. military) and would have their own courts. As had been the case in the late empire, in the Ostrogothic kingdom each province within Italy was overseen by a governor, notionally a civilian magistrate whose role included that of judge for serious cases. The decisions of a governor could be appealed – now no longer to the emperor, but to Theoderic’s court. In cases

\textsuperscript{138} JK 728 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 24, pp. 390-391). “et per auctoritatem regiam contra leges publicas, quem clericali cingulo tenerentur adstricti, per archidiaconum urbis Grumentinae esse conventos; quem constet eum, qui coelestem militem pulsat, nonnisi ejus forum debere sect.”

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid. “Et ideo, dilecte fili, depenso salutationis aflatu supradictos clericos tibi commendo, ut si ad delegatorum judicium eorum adversaria venire contemptserit, subliimatis tuae tuitione vallentur, ne quid illis aut subreptio, aut inimica legibus violenta necessitas imponat: quia qui judicium refugit, appare eum de justitia diffisum.”

\textsuperscript{140} Conflict arising from overlapping or conflicting jurisdictional claims was not, of course, a uniquely Ostrogothic phenomenon. Rather, it can be found in Roman law in all periods and indeed, is a general fact of life.

\textsuperscript{141} For example, \textit{Var.} 3.43.1; 9.14.8. See also, Jill Harries, "Resolving Disputes: The Frontiers of Law in Late Antiquity," in \textit{Law, Society, and Authority in Late Antiquity}, ed. Ralph W. Mathisen (Oxford, 2001); and on the divisions between civilian and soldier, see Rosario Soraci, "Rapporti fra potere civile e potere militare nella legislazione processuale tardoantica," in \textit{Atti dell’Accademia Romanistica Costantiniana. XI Convegno Internazionale}, ed. Giuliano Crifò and Stefano Giglio (Naples, 1996).
between a Goth and Roman (i.e. a soldier and a civilian), disputes were to be settled in consultation with Roman legal experts, almost certainly using Roman law.  

In Gelasius’ letters, we are presented with a Gothic comes (that is, a military leader) acting as a Roman governor (that is, a civilian administrator) into whose court two Roman Churchmen have come by order of King Theoderic. Perhaps this should not come as a great surprise given the fact that during the late empire, what had hitherto been distinct military and civilian aspects of governance increasingly coalesced as military officers took the place of civilian administrators. Indeed, it was not uncommon for civil cases to be adjudicated before a military judge despite the fact that military and civilian courts were intended to be separate. This trend continued in Ostrogothic Italy. As noted in a recent thesis by Sean Lafferty, between the years 394-476 there are thirty-three known governors for the Italian peninsula. For the period of 476-553, only 12 are known. While this fact may be partially explained by issues of evidence survival, it nonetheless suggests that Theoderic “progressively appropriated the functions of the Roman iudices through such officers as the Gothic saio and comes.”  

Gelasius’ intervention with Count Teia would seem to support Lafferty’s conclusions that in the late fifth-century Italy, civilian and military courts had become largely assimilated. This case also suggests that the question of the relative jurisdiction of ecclesiastical and civil courts in Ostrogothic Italy remained fluid. Silvester and Faustinianus’ case was fundamentally a question of their status and position (clerical or lay? Free or unfree?) which had direct bearing on what venue the case should be heard (civil or ecclesiastical court). In this case, Gelasius felt he could convince Teia to uphold the clerical immunity of Silvester and Faustinianus.

2) The case of Eucharistus and Faustus. Gelasius’ intervention in the Silvester and Faustinianus affair can be usefully compared to another dispute between Eucharistus, a deacon of Volterra, and the defensor Faustus. Upon the death of the bishop of Volterra named Opilio,  

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142 Sean D. W. Lafferty, ”The Edictum Theoderici: A Study of a Roman Legal Document from Ostrogothic Italy” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2010), 49, 122-123.
143 That is to say, a military judge commonly oversaw civil courts. Harries, Law and Empire in Late Antiquity, 106. Compare with. CT 2.1.7 (397, East); NTh 7.1-4. The law administered in these courts was Roman civil law as it applied to soldiers and civilians alike.
144 Lafferty, Edictum Theoderici, 124-125.
145 The dating of the two disputes is somewhat tricky. While the chronology may well overlap, the two letters to Teia are dated by Jaffé to AD 496, with the Silvester and Faustinianus affair pre-dating the Eucharistus and Faustus case. This is disputed by Amory (p. 420) who places the series of letters regarding Silvester and Faustinianus before those about Eucharistus and Faustus.
Eucharistus, was elected as Opilio’s replacement following what appears to have been a widespread bribery campaign. Eucharistus was also accused of having illegally alienated church property.\textsuperscript{146} The corruption in the Volterraean Church was then brought to the attention of Gelasius by Faustus who, together with Eucharistus, was summoned to Rome so that Gelasius could hear the case in person.\textsuperscript{147} Initially, Faustus was unable to travel because of illness and Eucharistus, perhaps hoping to present his side of the story before that of his accuser, hastened to Rome. However, Gelasius reasonably refused to hear the case until Faustus could attend. When Faustus did recover, Eucharistus fled, making a somewhat suspicious retreat from Rome. Gelasius then appointed Anastasius, another defensor, to bring Eucharistus back to Rome in order to defend himself against the charges; however knowing he would actually have to face his accuser before the bishop of Rome, the newly minted bishop declined.\textsuperscript{148}

It was at this point that Count Teia – the same comes from the above-mentioned case – intervened. He wrote a letter to Gelasius (no longer extant) informing him that Faustus’ accusations against Eucharistus should not be taken at face value. He attacked Faustus’ character, noting that certain of his relatives (parentes) had been found guilty of crimes in the past. It seems that Teia also suggested that the case should be left to the judgement of the local provincial bishop.\textsuperscript{149}

Gelasius responded in a firm letter stating that it was not the place of a secular count to interfere in the affairs of the church. This had long been a principle recognized in Roman law which, according to Gelasius, Theoderic had agreed would be upheld.\textsuperscript{150} But the particular justification Gelasius employs is interesting. Gelasius tells the count,

we impress upon your nobility all the more to avoid involving yourself in ecclesiastical cases and affairs, and, ceasing all [your] disturbance, to stop all meddling and permit the rule of religion to be protected – especially since there is no doubt that you are of another communion (praecipue cum te alterius communionis non dubium sit). Nor should you, no matter what

\textsuperscript{146} To the archdeacon Justin and the defensor Faustus: JK 741 (Thiel frag. 23, pp. 496-497).
\textsuperscript{147} Faustus himself was given 63 solidi by Eucharistus to secure his election, only to be later accused of misappropriating the funds.
\textsuperscript{148} As recounted by the pope in a letter to Teia: JK 650 (ETV ep. 2 = Loewenfeld ep. 9), §1.
\textsuperscript{149} Reconstructed from ibid., §3. “quid autem visum fuerit nobilitati tuae, ut mihi iniuriam faceretis, ignoro, dum putatis, quia de nostro iudicio causa debetet auferri, et ad episcopos intra provinciam positos pro Eucharisti et sociorum voluntate transferri: quod non poterit ulla omnino ratione fieri.”
\textsuperscript{150} CT 16.2.12, a law of Constantius II and Constans (Sept. 355). According to Gelasius, Theoderic had stated his desire to preserve Roman law. See for example his letter to the king (also discussed below): JK 722 (ETV ep. 6 = Thiel frag. 12, pp. 489-490 = Ewald, Coll. Brit. Gel. ep. 47).
your intentions are, involve yourself in affairs that do not concern you or else you will force us, as we said above, to send a report of all these things to the lord, my son the king. Since he, in his wisdom, wishes in no way to be in conflict with ecclesiastical cases, it is only right that whoever lives in his kingdom imitate the action of the most magnificent king lest he seem to act contrary to his will.151

This passage is an remarkable example of the kinds of rhetorical techniques a bishop of Rome could use in Ostrogothic Italy. As we noted in the case of Silvester and Faustinianus, Gelasius wished to promote the notion that clerics ought to have their legal cases heard in ecclesiastical court rather than civil court. This was all the more true when the offense was simony, a violation of canon law and church discipline. Moreover, because Eucharistus was in fact a bishop of a see that was directly subject to Rome, Gelasius was on much firmer legal ground than had been the case with the two clerics Silvester and Faustinianus in demanding that Eucharistus be judged in an ecclesiastical court (whether he liked it or not). Gelasius threatened to bring the issue before King Theoderic, a man who he believed was keen to follow the ancient (Roman) traditions and avoid involving himself in the affairs of the church.

Gelasius’ use of religion against Teia is also worth noting. The phrase *alter communio* is key. It is possible to interpret *alter communio* in a number of ways. It could be a reference to Teia’s diocesan or parish church. Perhaps as a Gothic *comes*, his home church was in Ravenna and not in Volterra, a fact which might preclude his interference in a church not his own. Gelasius might also be arguing a question of ecclesiastical vs. secular jurisdiction, essentially asking Teia’s court to keep out of a case that ought to be judged by Gelasius alone. Indeed, despite the fact that the Diocletianic province of *Tuscia et Umbria* had been divided as early as the fourth century, *Tuscia* becoming part of *Italia Annonaria*, Volterra nonetheless remained directly subject to Rome in Gelasius’ time and afterwards.152 In the fifth and sixth centuries,

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151 JK 650 (ETV *ep.* 2 = Loewenfeld *ep.* 9), §4.: “nobilitatem tuam magis ac magis commonemus, ut se ab ecclesiasticis causis et rebus abstinere dignetur et permittas omni exagitatione cessante religionis regulam custodiri, praecipue cum te alterius communio non dubium sit, nec personam tuam debas rebus ad te non pertinentibus qualibet intentione miscere, ne nos compellas, ut supra diximus, ad domnum filium meum regem haec omnia missa relatione referre, quia, cum ipse pro sua sapientia causis ecclesiasticis in nullo velit esse contrarius, iustum est, ut quicumque sub illius regno vivit, quod facit rex magnificus imitetur, ne videatur supra illius tendere voluntatem.”

152 The new province was called (rather unimaginatively) *Tuscia Annonaria*. When *Tuscia* was divided from Umbria is debated – Ammianus Marcellinus (*Res. Gest.* 21.5.12) may imply the province was split by 364-365, however there are significant problems including later epigraphical evidence that still uses the name *Tuscia et Umbria*. It may be that the division occurred later in the fourth century, perhaps between 385-392 when *Aemilia et Liguria* were also split into two. On the division of the province and the evidence in Ammianus, see J. den Boeft, *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus* XXVII (Leiden ; Boston, 2009), 34-36.
ecclesiastical boundaries did not always match the shifting administrative ones.153 The final possibility to explain alter communio, and one that seems most convincing, is that Teia was not a Nicene Christian and it was for this reason that Gelasius argued the count must be disqualified from intervening in the affairs of the church.154

There is no other example of alter communio in Gelasius’ correspondence; however as we noted in the previous chapter, he does make use of the noun communio and the verb communicare quite frequently in his correspondence regarding the Acacian Schism. And as we saw above in the case of Succonius, to communicare with the enemies of Chalcedon was akin to heresy.155 To the Dardanian bishops, Gelasius states that those who are in communion with an erroris communicator are no less worthy of damnation.156 Communio was nothing less than a question of faith.157 Alter communio, then, would certainly suggest a clear differentiation between Gelasius and the Volterraean Church and that of Teia, although it was certainly not an outright condemnation. Alter communio was certainly not as nearly divisive or contentious as the more polemical and accusatory Arrianus. Indeed as we have noted, Gelasius’ letters do not identify the Ostrogoths with Arianism at all. The similar phrase aliena religio is used by Theoderic’s successor Athalaric (or Cassiodorus in Athalaric’s name) in a speech given after August 526 to the Roman Senate in which Athalaric praised the senators for accepting Felix IV (526-530), who had been appointed by Theoderic, as bishop of Rome: “For it was right to obey the judgement of a good prince [bonus princeps, sc. Theoderic]; taking thought with prudent deliberation, although about an alien faith, [quamvis in aliena religion], he evidently chose such a pontiff [Felix IV] as should displease no worthy man.”158 If the two phrases are analogous, alter communio might even retain some sense of Christian fellowship between the Gothic comes and the Bishop of Rome.

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153 Gaudemet, L’Église, 384-386; Sotinel, The Three Chapters, 85-87.
154 He is called an Arian by Ewald, Neues Archiv 5, 514; Amory, People and Identity, 420. Jones, PLRE and Pietri, PCBE. If this Teia is to be identified with the same comes civitatis of Volterra discussed above, his church was likely in the civitas over which he had responsibility.
155 JK 628 (Thiel ep. 9, pp. 339-341), §2.
156 JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398), §4.
157 JK 611 = de vitanda communione Acacii (Thiel, pp. 287-311). “Communio enim ad fidem pertinet.” On communio between East and West during the Acacian Schism (and its physical and liturgical expression in the writing of names in the dyptichs – a crucial debating point in the schism – see Grillmeier, CICT 1, 297-298, esp. n. 230.
158 Var. VIII.15, trans. Barnish, p. 105. “oportebat enim arbitrio boni principis oboediri, qui sapienti deliberatione pertractans, quamvis in aliena religione, talem visus est pontificem delegisse, ut nulli merito debeat dislicere, ut agnoscat illum hoc optasse praecipue, quatenus bonis sacerdotibus ecclesiarum omnium religio pullularet.”
When we compare the occasions that Gelasius was in communications with Teia, we can see how the bishop of Rome could use religion to his advantage in his dealings with the Goths. In the case of Silvester and Faustinianus, Teia’s help was needed to protect the two clerics. Thus Gelasius insinuated a spiritual relationship between the church and the Ostrogoth, placing Teia firmly within the boundaries of the wider Christian community. Gelasius describes the count as *dilectus filius* – an obviously affectionate term that even suggests a spiritual relationship between the two men. Despite their heterodoxy, Gelasius clearly feels he can appeal to the Christianity of the Goths. The opening line of Gelasius’ letter to Teia in particular is suggestive. The very first word of this letter is *Christianis* which was in all likelihood not random, but a conscious choice of an experienced rhetorician who made use of the full arsenal of Latin style to communicate his point: “For Christians, it should always be pleasing to furnish what is asked of their office, since it is fitting not to deny a favour to the servants of God.”

Here, Teia is clearly being classed as a Christian and it suggests that Gelasius could appeal to Teia’s sense of himself as a member of the wider Christian community and thus to his responsibility to look after those who serve God (even if they were Catholics). Indeed, as we noted above, Gelasius also uses this same friendly tone in his direct communications with Theoderic, for instance, appealing to “the piety of your [Theoderic’s] Christian mind.”

There are also similar statements in Gelasius’ letters to Catholic leaders about the king. To bishops Quinigesius and Constantinus, Gelasius calls the Theoderic “my son” twice, a phrase which he repeats in other letters to Teia (written on a different occasion), and in two letters sent to Theoderic’s mother Erelevuva. To bishops Gerontius and John, Gelasius refers to the king as “our son, Lord [Theoderic].” Although we might set aside those letters to members of Theoderic’s own family or members of the Gothic court as mere flattery, it is nonetheless noteworthy that the phrase persists even in Gelasius’ correspondence with other bishops. Moreover even if *filius* was a relatively standard expression

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159 JK 728 (Thiel *ep*. 24, pp. 390-391). “Christianis gratum semper debet esse, quod ab eorum poscitur dignitate praestandum, quia Deo servientibus beneficium negare non convenit.”


162 JK 723 (ETV *ep*. 7 = Thiel *frag*. 11, p. 489), “ad comitatum domini filii nostri...”
by which Gelasius addressed laymen, it is still notable that a bishop of Rome would use similar language to describe members of the senatorial aristocracy and heretical Goths. And in the limited cases when he does refer to members of the Roman nobility as *filius*, he never uses the adjective *delectus*.  

In the case of Eucharistus, Gelasius takes precisely the opposite tact. Teia’s protection of and advocacy on behalf of a bishop accused of violating the canons undermined Gelasius’ ultimate role as arbitrator in cases that involve members of the clergy. Before, Teia’s Christian faith had been a point of commonality and a reason he should intercede on behalf of clerics who had been wronged; now, it was his heterodoxy that should preclude him from having a role in the affairs of the church. Gelasius could on the one hand minimize theological differences when it served his purposes; on the other hand, he could and did distinguish between Catholic and non-Nicene when it was advantageous to do so.

Interestingly, the fact that Teia *was* involved in ecclesiastical cases suggests that he did not think that his faith should prevent such involvement. That Teia wished the Eucharistus/Faustus case to be remanded back to the local bishop, a fact which probably accounts for Gelasius’ forceful tone, could suggest Teia’s intervention was itself precipitated and possibly even supported by the Volterraean Church who may not have been particularly keen to have Gelasius intercede in their affairs. Teia may also have been representing the interests of Theoderic’s court. But in the end, it seems Teia and the local church relented and Gelasius had his way. Eucharistus was condemned and deposed.  

When considered together, the Silvester/Faustinianus and Eucharistus/Faustus affairs demonstrate that Gelasius could effectively ignore or mobilize the issue of Teia’s faith, describing him as a part of the larger Christian community or cutting him off from that same community as circumstances dictated. Heterodoxy was, at least in these cases, a tool that could help Gelasius navigate the complex and at times conflicting levels of jurisdiction between the

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163 Gelasius uses *filius* on at least three occasions to refer to non-Goths, but never with the adjective *delectus*: *ep.* 41 (Thiel p. 454), in which he mentions the senator Theodore (PLRE 2, Theodorus 2); JK 711 (Thiel *frag.* 41, pp. 505-506), in which Gelasius refers to “Filius enim noster vir spectabilis Petrus;” and JK 732 (Thiel *frag.* 42), which mentions Hoerthasius, a *spectabilis* who is described as “filius noster vir.” One additional example comes in a fragmentary letter to the *defensor* Dulcius which contains a reference to Aemilianus, *vir magnificus* in Gelasius, *frag.* 3 (Thiel, p. 484) However this letter has now been firmly attributed to Pelagius I ( = JK 949) making Aemilianus a Byzantine *magister militum* in the late 550s. See the entries for Aemilianus in APA, p. 356, PLRE3 Aemilianus 3 = PLRE2 Aemilianus 5.

164 As noted in JK 720 (Loewenfeld, *ep.* 22, pp. 11-12); JK 740 (Thiel *frag.* 24, p. 498); JK 741 (Thiel *frag.* 23, pp. 496-497).
affairs of the Catholic Church and the Ostrogothic state. It was not Teia’s ethnicity but his faith that was an issue for Gelasius, at least when it suited him to raise it.

3) The case of Felix and Peter of Nola. Let us consider one final case – that of two clerics of Nola named Felix and Peter. In AD 496, the two men had been found guilty by an ecclesiastical court of the theft or misuse of church resources. They were ordered to repay funds to the Church of Nola, although the amount they actually owed had been reduced out of the kindness of their bishop, Serenus. However, Felix and Peter were unwilling to abide by the sentence and instead “against the laws of man and God” hid their clerical status and appeared at Theoderic’s court complaining that force had been used against them (dicentes sibi vim fuisse generatam), presumably by Serenus. It appears as if someone at court believed the two men and they were given authorization, contra civilitatem according to Gelasius, to employ barbarian soldiers (redemptis barbaris) to violently distrain property and/or goods from the bishop, probably whatever Felix and Peter had lost in the ecclesiastical court. Serenus was even summoned to appear in the royal court to answer charges. 

Felix and Peter’s actions prompted a flurry of letters from the bishop of Rome. To the bishops Gerontius and John, Gelasius asks for help for “our brother and fellow bishop Serenus” who had been wrongly compelled to go to Theoderic’s court. To the king, Gelasius wrote to

\[165\] AD 496: JK 721 (ETV ep. 5 = Ewald, Coll. Brit. Gel. ep. 46).: “…cum iustis ex causis ante convicti, quod ecclesiasticam pecuniam reddere cogendi, magna sit eis sui humanitate pontificis quantitas relaxata.”

\[166\] Reconstructed from two letters, the first to Theoderic’s mother, ibid.: “Felicem et Petrum Nolanae ecclesiae clericos surripere potuisse sensibus vestrae sublimitatis admiror, ut contra divinas humanasque leges ecclesiastica privilegia respuentes suppresso nomine clericali ad iudicia publica convolarent.” cf. a similar report also written in 496 to bishops Quinigesius and Constantius which says that the court was in fact that of the king himself: JK 743 (ETV ep. 8 = Thiel frag. 13, p. 490).: “Felix et Petrus ecclesiae Nolanae clerici contumaciect contra constitutum rebelles ad comitatum filii mei regis putaverunt esse properandum dicentes sibi vim fuisse generatam tacito clericatus officio.”

\[167\] That Serenus was summoned to Theoderic’s court is also stated in JK 723 (ETV ep. 7 = Thiel frag. 11, p. 489), see below. Wolfram, Goths, 292-93, interprets this sentences differently, claiming that Gelasius “protested vigorously that clerics were allowed to appeal to a court that “even included barbarians”. I am unsure from what source Wolfram’s quotation of Gelasius is taken. His reference (on page 503, n. 226) is rather vague to letters 5-8 of the Epistulae Theodericiae Variae (MGH AA 12), i.e.: V = JK 721, VI= JK 722, VII= JK 723, VIII = JK 743. None of these letters complain about a court that “even included barbarians.”

\[168\] To the king, Gelasius wrote to
remind Theoderic of his stated wish to preserve the laws which had been decreed by the emperors in the past (leges Romanorum principum) – presumably a reminder that cases involving clerics belonged in an episcopal court.\textsuperscript{169} To Ereleuva, the king’s mother, Gelasius expressed his shock and disappointment that Felix and Peter’s deception had been so successful. He reminded her that Roman law (which her son claimed to support) decreed that the rulings of the Apostolic See were to be upheld (in this case, that the two men had been found guilty in ecclesiastical court). By hiding their clerical status and hiring barbarians to attack their own bishop in the name of her house (that is, with Theoderic’s authorization), Felix and Peter mocked the king’s justice. Gelasius then begs Ereleuva not to allow the ancient prerogatives of St. Peter to be trampled by such a deception – presumably a none-too-subtle suggestion that she intervene with her son on behalf of the church.\textsuperscript{170}

In this case, the question of Gothic religion is absent. Rather, it is a clear-cut example of Gelasius lobbying the king to preserve traditional ecclesiastical jurisdiction and to uphold Roman law regarding the separation between lay and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The divisions between religious and secular realms was in this case of greater importance than that between Goth/soldier/heretic and Roman.

\textit{Gothic Arianism after Gelasius}

It has been the contention of this chapter that Gelasius may not have conceived of Theoderic and the Goths as Arian, but rather as a separate communion of Homoians – a categorization that had a precedent in Roman law which created a legal space for non-Nicene Christians within an increasingly Catholic empire. But of course there are a number of sources that do call Theoderic an Arian. The increasingly common use of Arian to describe the Ostrogoths in the first part of the sixth century can be attributed to the changing attitudes in Constantinople regarding Italy and its place in the empire. As Brian Croke highlighted almost 30 years ago, the perception that the western empire had fallen in 476 was a gradual process. It was only in the second and third

\textsuperscript{169} As we saw in the case of Teia above, a reference to CT 16.2.12. JK 722 (ETV \textit{ep. 6} = Thiel \textit{frag. 12}, pp. 489-490 = Ewald, Coll. Brit. Gel. \textit{ep. 47}). “Certum est magnificentiam vestram leges Romanorum principum, quas in negotiis hominum custodiendas esse praecepit, multo magis circa reverentiam beati Petri apostoli pro suae felicitatis augmento velle servari.”

\textsuperscript{170} JK 721 (ETV \textit{ep. 5} = Ewald, Coll. Brit. Gel. \textit{ep. 46}).
decade of the sixth century that, at least in Justinian’s court, it became obvious “that a Gothic kingdom was not part of the Roman Empire,” and so “agitation began for unification once more under a Roman emperor.”171 The earliest example of an author emphasizing the deposition of Romulus Augustulus as the end of Roman rule in Italy comes from the Latin chronicle of Marcellinus Comes, an official in the court of Justinian. The chronicle was composed in Constantinople in 518 or 519 and the entry for the year 476 states that after Romulus, the Gothic kings held Rome.172 This view was part of a process that began under Emperor Justin and culminated under Justinian, becoming a key part of Justinian’s renovatio ideology.173 AD 476 was gradually reimagined as the catastrophic fall of the western half of the empire which had been replaced by a barbarian kingdom. Thanks in part to Justinian’s anti-Arian polemic that emerged as a justification for his re-conquests of Africa and Italy, it became increasingly common after the 530s to equate Ariani and Gothi – something which, as we have seen, was not the case in Gelasius’ own day.174

The growing tendency to see Theoderic’s regime as politically and religiously problematic can help to explain the wildly varied depictions of Ostrogothic Arianism in our later sources. The Liber Pontificalis, the series of biographies of the bishops of Rome first composed around the mid-sixth century, contains a conflicted view of Theoderic and his faith.175 Theoderic is described neutrally as “king” in the biographies of Felix III (483-492), Gelasius (492-496), Anastasius II (496-498), Symmachus (498-514), and Hormisdas (514-523).176 Theoderic is even credited with presenting a gift “to the apostle St. Peter” during the pontificate of Hormisdas of two silver candlesticks weighing 70 lbs.177 However, the tone shifts markedly after the biography of Hormisdas. After the death of Emperor Anastasius and the accession of Emperor Justin I in 518, the Acacian Schism was healed on Rome’s terms (with Theoderic’s approval, if we believe

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173 Amory, People and Identity, 135-147, 175.
174 Deliyannis, Ravenna, 164; Amory, People and Identity, 260-261.
175 For Duchesne’s dating, see LP, xxxiii-xlvi.ii. See also Liber Pontificalis, xlvi-xlvi.ii. An excellent summery of Duchesne’s dating of the LP, its epitomes and the Laurentian Fragment can be found in Blair-Dixon, Memory and Authority, 65-66; cf. P. A. B. Llewellyn, “The Roman Church during the Laurentian Schism: Priests and Senators,” ChHist, 45, no. 4 (1976), 418; Llewellyn, “The Roman Church during the Laurentian Schism,” 246, n.3.
176 LP, Gelasius, Anastasius I, Symmachus, Hormisdas.
177 LP, I.271, §10.
In the biography of John I (523-526), Justin is referred to as “devout” and “orthodox”, burning “in his love for the Christian faith.” On account of his zeal for orthodoxy, we are told that Justin made plans to seize the churches of the Arians in the east and consecrate them as Catholic. It was Justin’s anti-Arian persecutions which provoked the now “heretic King Theoderic” to wish to put “all of Italy to the sword.” This in turn precipitated the martyrdom of John at the hands of “King Theoderic the heretic.” Finally, the text then suggests a causal relationship between John’s death in prison and the now heretical Theoderic’s own death soon after.

Similarly contradictory views are expressed in another mid-sixth century text known as the Anonymus Valesianus. Echoing the positive view of Theoderic in the vita of Fulgentius mentioned above, the Valesianus reports that the king “so governed two peoples at the same time (duas gentes in uno), Romans and Goths, that although he himself was of the Arian sect, he nevertheless made no assault on the Catholic religion.” The same work notes that during Theoderic’s visit to Rome in 500, the king met Saint Peter “with as much reverence as if he was himself a Catholic.” But after heaping praise upon the king in its initial chapters, the Valesianus’ tone changes drastically when reporting events later in Theoderic’s reign. After a series of ominous portents (including the odd detail of a “woman of the Gothic race” giving birth to “four snakes,” and the appearance of a comet and frequent earthquakes), Theoderic turned against Boethius in 525 and had him executed. Theoderic is subsequently described as “no longer a friend of God but his enemy (non ut dei amicus sed...eius inimicus)” and fearing an alliance between the bishop of Rome and Constantinople, caused the death of John I (523-526). Finally, Theoderic is said to have announced (through the Jew Symmachus) that the Catholic churches would be seized by the Arians. However, having initiated his anti-Catholic persecution,

178 LP, I.270. “Hic papa Hormisda perrexit ad regem Theodericum Rauenna et cum eius consilio misit auctoritatem ad Iustinum et cum unico cyrographi et textum libelli reintegravit ad unitatem sedis apostolicae damnantes Petrum et Acacium uel omnes hereses.”
179 LP, I.275, §1. “Iustinus imperator, uir religiosus, summo ardoris amore religionis christianae.”
180 Ibid, §2. Pro hanc causam hereticus rex Theodoricus audiens hoc exarsit et uoluit totam Italiam ad gladium extingueru.
182 Anon. Val., §60.
183 Anon. Val., §65.
died as Arius himself had done, “seized with diarrhoea, and after three days of open bowels, [he] lost both his throne and his life.”

In the end, it was not the Catholic churches of Italy that were seized by heretical barbarians; it was the Homoian churches that were appropriated by the Catholics. As late as 551 we have evidence from the ecclesia legis Gothorum of St. Anastasias holding on in Ravenna, selling off property it possessed in the swamplands around the city. But the non-Nicene churches of Italy, now always contemptuously referred to as “Arian,” were ultimately suppressed entirely after 565.

Conclusion

The history of the Ostrogothic kingdom and its relationship with the bishops of Rome is fascinating because of its many contradictions. Rome was at once engaged in a bitter conflict with emperors and patriarchs of Christological heresy in the east while simultaneous enjoying relatively good relations with the Arian heretics who ruled Italy, while condemning Arianism but not the religion of the Ostrogoths.

Gelasius wrote that to permit error was no different than to endorse it. Yet despite his fiery rhetoric, he clearly chose not to oppose the heterodoxy of the Goths in his own ecclesiastical province. Perhaps he was able to reconcile his failure to oppose heterodoxy in Italy itself by separating his understanding of the Ostrogothic religion and “Arianism.” Nowhere in his numerous surviving letters does Gelasius use the term to describe the Goths. Indeed, the bishop of Rome by and large approved of the Ostrogothic king because he seemed to respect the long-established lay and ecclesiastical jurisdictions. For Gelasius, ‘Arianism’ was an abstract notion - a heresy from previous centuries and a traditional target for the refutation and denunciation expected from bishops taking up the defence of orthodoxy. ‘Arian’ was an epithet used not against the Goths, but against Acacius and his supporters in the east. The religion of the Ostrogoths, in contrast, was a real, living issue for Gelasius whose primary concern in the early

184 Portents: §84; death of Boethius: §§85-87; no longer a friend of God: §88; mission of John I to Constantinople and his subsequent death, §§88-93; seizure of Catholic churches, §94. Theodoric’s death, §95. See also S. J. B. Barnish, “The Anonymus Valesianus II as a Source for the Last Years of Theodoric,” Latomus, 42 (1983).
186 On the date of the suppression of the “Arian” church, see Deliyannis, Ravenna, 146 and n. 42, p. 357.
187 JK 632 (Thiel ep. 12, pp. 349-358). See also McGrade, ”Two Fifth-Century Conceptions of Papal Primacy,” 17.
years of the Ostrogothic kingdom was not the fight against heresy at all, but rather the preservation of the distinct jurisdictions of the church and laity. Indeed Gelasius could use Ostrogothic heterodoxy as a rhetorical tool to help him navigate the confused and overlapping levels of authority in Theoderic’s Italy. If it was appropriate and it served his purpose, Gelasius could rhetorically incorporate the heterodox Goths into the larger Italian Christian community. But those same Goths could also be excluded from this same community because of their beliefs.
Chapter Six: Conclusion

This dissertation has investigated how two fifth-century Roman bishops, Leo and Gelasius, understood heresy, how they responded to it, how historical contingencies affected this reaction and how a powerful sense of their own orthodoxy acted as a locus of their authority in Italy and throughout the Christian world. This world was marked by political transformation and theological controversy. During the twenty-one year reign of Leo as Bishop of Rome (September, 440 – November, 461), Italy and the Western Empire more generally suffered through economic uncertainty, political upheaval and attacks by barbarians, most famously Attila and his Huns. After Leo’s death, the gradual loss of territory slowly sapped the Western Empire of territory, taxes and soldiers. By the time Gelasius became Bishop of Rome in 492, Italy had become a barbarian kingdom, one of many that had taken the place of the empire in the Latin West. Increasingly isolated from Constantinople, Roman bishops were hypothetically freed from some of the less appealing aspects of imperial power. But they were simultaneously placed in a precarious position, surrounded by potentially hostile and heretical kings.

The key premise of this study, and one that helps illuminate Leo and Gelasius’ attitudes towards orthodoxy and religious deviance, is that neither heresy, nor orthodoxy, nor ‘the papacy’ - a term this study has generally eschewed as anachronistic - were static, cohesive and unified entities. Instead, all three of these concepts were flexible ideas that evolved greatly over the course of the fifth century. Heresy and orthodoxy in particular do not represent pre-existing ideas, but rather they are answers to questions that emerged out of debate. This debate was long; it predated the chronological period covered in this study, and in important ways, it continues to the present.

From the perspective of the bishops of Rome, these debates were as much over who possessed the legitimate authority to rule on fundamental questions of correct belief as they were about the specifics of theology. Indeed, Leo and Gelasius’ opposition to heresy was one facet of the increasingly vocal and comprehensive claims to authority made by Roman bishops in this period which were often articulated in terms of Petrine ideology. Leo for instance, had referred

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1 Jones, LRE, 204 ff; McShane, *Romanitas*, 11-13.
to himself as the *indignus haeres beati Petri*. As he understood it, Leo was *indignus* in so far as he did not claim to be able to match Peter’s personal merits; nonetheless, he was the full and legitimate *haeres* in that he claimed the full gamut of Peter’s power and authority, discharging the duties and responsibilities in Peter’s place. This kind of authority is not always coercive, although it could be. Instead, it tended to be a softer form of authority that depended on recognition and legitimization by others. Leo and Gelasius’ opposition to heresy and proclamations of their own orthodoxy, even though essential acts of pastoral care such as preaching, simultaneously asserted and validated their positions in the Christian world. In this view, heresy was not the inevitable foe of Late Antique Roman bishops. In fact, it is not a ‘thing’ at all, but rather it was a flexible category whose definition evolved alongside the understanding of the faith and which could be acted against when it was ideal to do so, or disregarded when conditions dictated. The language of heresiology in particular could be used to delegitimize foes and to emphasize Rome’s own almost inevitable orthodoxy and continuity with the authentic faith.

Heresy also touched on various related issues: who had the right to teach legitimately, questions of church discipline, battles over jurisdiction both within the church and between Rome and the state, a deep and growing discomfort with private religious practice, the desire to more firmly inscribe the boundaries between correct and incorrect faith, and ultimately who had the authority to decide the nature and definition of orthodoxy itself. Many of these aspects are apparent in Leo’s battles against Pelagianism, Manichaeism and Priscillianism which are marked by an ongoing concern with establishing boundaries between orthodox and inauthentic belief, anxiety regarding private religious practice and church discipline.

His encounters with Pelagianism in particular provided Leo a chance to connect his hierarchical ecclesiology with the fight against heresy. In Leo’s view, Pelagian ideas had spread because of the failings of the bishop of Aquileia to properly oversee and control his clergy. Leo thus saw it as his duty to intervene in the internal affairs of a church outside his own jurisdiction as Metropolitan Bishop of *Italia suburbicaria*. Moreover, as we saw, Leo also was deeply suspicious of any private religious practices that took place outside the supervision of the official church.

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2 *tr. 3 (CCSL 138, pp. 10-15), §4. See also the discussion above, 37ff., with notes.*
Against the Manicheans, Leo blurred the lines between secular and ecclesiastical law and sought to expose and destroy any and all heretics whom he feared might be passing for authentic Christians in Rome. He accomplished this task by organizing and heading a tribunal in Rome and encouraging secret accusations and denunciations of anyone who seemed to be practicing a deviant form of the faith. Following the writings of Augustine, Leo used heresiological rhetoric pioneered in the second century by polemicists such as Justin Martyr and Irenaeus of Lyon to vilify Manichaeism and to emphasize his vigilance and authority to proscribe religious deviance and to decide the nature and boundaries of Christian orthodoxy.

Leo’s single encounter with Priscillianism points to similar issues. As was the case with Roman Manichaeism, Leo was concerned over the potential interaction between orthodox, authentic Christians and Priscillian heretics. Thus Leo described Priscillianism as an amalgam of previous and already condemned errors, all of which were the negation of true Christianity.

But it was in the ongoing debate over the relationship between Christ’s human and divine natures in which Leo made his most enduring contribution, both in terms of Christian theology and in his fight against what he perceived to be inauthentic forms of the faith. Prior to Leo, Rome’s participation in the great theological controversies of the early church had been limited. The prime movers in the Arian controversy in the fourth century, for example, had been Athanasius of Alexandria († 373) and later, the Cappadocian Fathers (†† late fourth century). Augustine († 430) and the African Church had decided Pelagius and the resulting debate over free will. Rome had played its role, but it was a largely passive one. Leo’s pontificate, on the other hand, was exceptional. Unlike his predecessors, Leo played an active and determinative role in the Christological controversy. His Tomus ad Flavianum was eventually accepted at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 as the definitive statement of Christological orthodoxy. Indeed he was the first Roman bishop to write any kind of major work on theology.

Unlike his approach to Manicheans, Pelagians and Priscillians, the question of Christology involved the complex interconnection of theology and politics and relations between Greek East and Latin West. Leo, who only became an active participant in the debate after 448, gradually

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5 tr. 9 (CCSL 138, pp. 32-38), §4. tr. 16; tr. 24 (CCSL 138, pp. 109-116); JK 405 = ep. 7 (PL 54, pp. 620-622).
7 For example, Rome’s largely passive role in the Pelagian controversy, Described in Wermelinger, Rom und Pelagius, 46-87.
8 Leo’s Christology: the Tomus, JK 423 = ep. 28 (ACO II.2, pp. 24-33). To Emperor Leo: JK 542 = ep. 165 (ACO II.4, pp. 113-119).
9 Green, Soteriology, 249.
came to see the Constantinopolitan monk Eutyches as a heresiarch and eponymous founder of Eutychianism, comparable to Christianity’s most famous heretical villains.\(^{10}\) Here again Leo mobilized the rhetoric of heresiology to place Eutyches and his supporters in a demonic genealogy of error, making his teachings nothing more than the most recent preacher (\textit{redivivus assertor}) of Manichaeism, Apollinarianism, and even Arianism.\(^{11}\) Especially after the Council of Ephesus II in 449 and the Council of Chalcedon in 451, Leo sought to portray any opposition to his own Christological teaching as synonymous with either Eutychianism or its antithesis, Nestorianism.\(^{12}\) By condemning both extremes of Christological speculation, Leo effectively delineated what would constitute orthodoxy by defining what was heretical.

For his part, much of Gelasius’ energy as bishop of Rome was dedicated to the preservation of Leo’s Christological legacy against attempts by Roman emperors and some eastern bishops to overturn Chalcedon. But he also had to come to terms with the political consequences of the declining fortunes and ultimate collapse of Roman power in the west. By the time Gelasius became bishop in 492, Italy and most of the west had been lost to the empire. The former imperial heartland was now under the control of the heterodox Ostrogoths and their king Theoderic (ruler of Italy, 493-526).

Gelasius’ opposition to heresy took place in two distinct spheres. First, outside his own ecclesiastical province, he vigorously opposed imperial attempts to impose a Christological settlement that invalidated the Council of Chalcedon and ignored the contributions of Leo. Taking up the rhetoric of heresiology and adopting Leo’s own condemnations of Eutyches and Eutychianism, Gelasius sought to categorize any potential compromise of Leo’s teachings with heresy.\(^{13}\) Specifically, he linked theologically suspect emperors and their supporters with the already condemned Eutyches.\(^{14}\) This Eutychian contamination was spread by communion. Thus, it was imperative to cut off entirely anyone who opposed Rome.\(^{15}\)

Within \textit{Italia suburbicaria}, Gelasius was faced with a friendly, although heterodox, Gothic kingdom and its king, Theoderic. Gelasius’ relationship with the Goths provides a useful counter example to the above instances in which heresy was used to validate Rome’s own position or to

\(^{10}\) JK 459 = \textit{ep.} 79 (ACO II.4, pp. 37-38).
\(^{11}\) JK 463 = \textit{ep.} 83 (ACO II.4, pp. 42-43).
\(^{12}\) e.g. JK 469 = \textit{ep.} 87 (ACO II.4, p 45-46); JK 541 = \textit{ep.} 164 (ACO II.4, pp. 110-112).
\(^{13}\) JK 623 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 7, pp. 335-337 = CA \textit{ep.} 79, pp. 218-223).
\(^{14}\) e.g. JK 665 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 27, pp. 422-435), 3.
\(^{15}\) JK 624 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 8, pp. 337-339), §1.
delegitimize its enemies. Rather than opposing heresy on principle, Gelasius took advantage of Gothic heterodoxy, shifting his tone and approach depending on the circumstances. When it was advantageous, Gelasius could minimize the differences between Catholic and Goth and point to the common Christian fellowship between himself and members of the Ostrogothic regime. Other times, he could maximalize heterodoxy to exclude these same Goths from interference in the affairs of the church. In all his dealings with the Ostrogoths, the question of jurisdiction rather than theology or heresy, was of primary importance to Gelasius.

In sum, this study has attempted to demonstrate that the history of the bishops of Rome in the fifth century was at least in part that of the articulation of institutional orthodoxy and the instrumentalization of heresy. It should go without saying that the fight against heresy was not the only way Leo and Gelasius reinforced their reputations as spiritual leaders and emphasized the legitimacy of their role in Christian society. As a number of recent studies have shown, Roman bishops anchored their authority in local politics, their growing wealth, traditional systems of patronage, and even in the domestic sphere of household management. But as this study has hoped to demonstrate, there is good reason to add the bishops of Rome’s opposition to heterodoxy to this list. Indeed, heresy could and was used in this way not only by Roman bishops, but also by other bishops and even emperors who tied their legitimacy with their enforcement of orthodoxy and opposition to heretical challengers to the true faith.

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16 JK 728 (Thiel ep. 24, pp. 390-391).
17 JK 650 (ETV ep. 2 = Loewenfeld ep. 9), §4.
18 For example, Blair-Dixon, Memory and Authority; Brian E. Daley, "Position and Patronage in the Early Church: the Original Meaning of 'primacy of honour'," JThS, ns 44 (1993); Julia Hillner, "Clerics, Property and Patronage: the Case of the Roman Titular Churches," Antiquité Tardive, 14, no. 1 (2006); Charles Pietri, "Évergétisme et richesses ecclésiastiques dans l'Italie du IVe à la fin du Ve siècle: L'exemple romain," Kiêma, 3 (1978); Pietri, "Aristocratie et Société Cléricale."; Lizzi Testa, Senatori, popolo, papi: il governo di Roma al tempo dei Valentiniani; Sessa, Papal Authority.
Epilogue: Manicheans in the *Liber Pontificalis*

**Introduction**

In this epilogue, we will consider how the Roman Church understood the memory of their bishops as opponents of heresy from the context of the mid-sixth century, that is approximately one generation after the death of Gelasius. As we have seen throughout this dissertation, the rhetoric of heresy could be mobilized in order to delegitimize and defame, but also to justify and legitimise. Interestingly, we can see a very similar use of heretical labels in the *Liber Pontificalis* (LP) – our earliest collection of biographies compiled in the mid-sixth century detailing the lives of the bishops of Rome all the way back to Peter himself.¹ The LP is a fascinating text and an important source for reconstructing the lives, activities and building projects of Roman bishops in Late Antiquity. Initially compiled in the 530s and later reworked during the pontificate of Vigilius (537-555), the *Liber Pontificalis* was not intended as a dispassionate set of biographies. Rather, it began as an emphatically polemical text created in the context of the Acacian and Laurentian Schisms.

Various heresies are mentioned in the LP, but one of the most interesting and potentially the most illuminating is that of the Manicheans who are described as having suffered persecutions initiated by six Roman bishops: Miltiades (310-314), Siricius (384-399), Anastasius I (399-401/2) Gelasius, Symmachus (498-514) and Hormisdas (514-523). All six of these persecutions are often taken at face value in secondary literature. However, the persecutions by these last three bishops are at a minimum historically problematic. They are said to have occurred more than half a century after Leo’s extensive legal and religious attack against the sect in the 440s which most historians agree must have devastated Manichaeism as a coherent religious movement in Italy.² Moreover, there is no corroborating evidence to substantiate the anti-Manichean activities of Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas.

¹ The best Latin edition, complete copious and helpful notes, remains that which was originally published between by Louis Duchesne in the late nineteenth century. It was extensively updated by Cyrille Vogel and published in a second edition in 1955-1957 and it is this edition that is cited throughout this study. Both Duchesne and Davis’ editions have excellent introductions (Duchesne in French, Davis in English). Also useful are Mommsen’s partial edition with introduction (in Latin), Theodor Mommsen, ed., *Gestorum Pontificum Romanorum vol. I, Libri Pontificalis pars prior* (1898); and the introduction to the LP in Louise Ropes Loomis, *Book of the Popes (Liber Pontificalis)* (New York, 1916).

² See above, 88f. and n. 211.
Given the polemical nature of the LP, this epilogue will argue that the depiction of Gelasius, Symmachus, and Hormisdas as opponents of Manichaeism in Rome may represent an attempt by the authors/compilers of the LP to shape the way these particular bishops were remembered by the subsequent generation. Both the LP itself and the portrayal of the Manicheans contained therein was part of a larger discursive project intended to propagate an image of the Roman Church – and of Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas in particular – as consummate enemies of heresy and defenders of orthodoxy. Indeed, the use of Manichaeism as a trope in the Liber Pontificalis is reflective of a wider trend that can be observed in this period. Rather than designating an authentic, practicing religious sect, by the sixth century Manichaeism had become a heresiological chimera – a derogatory epithet divorced from its original meaning, laden with inimical theological and perhaps equally important, moral connotations that could be mobilized to defame opponents and also to reinforce the orthodoxy and authority of those who were said to oppose it.

To contextualize the references to Manicheans in the Liber Pontificalis, this epilogue will begin with an overview of the complex political and religious division in Rome in the late fifth and early sixth centuries exemplified by the Laurentian Schism. We shall then consider the Liber Pontificalis itself, its composition and its polemical nature. With this important overview complete, we shall then turn to consider the persecutions of Manicheans reported in the LP before considering the evolution of ‘Manichean’ as an epithet in Christian polemical writing.

1. Context: the Laurentian Schism

To make sense of the references to the persecution of Manichaeism in the Liber Pontificalis, we must first step back and consider the political and theological context in which the text was composed. As we have seen repeatedly throughout this study, this context was the Christological Controversy which raged for much of the fifth and sixth centuries. As we discussed in Chapter Four, the Acacian Schism divided Rome and Constantinople over the question of the Henotikon – a theological formula sponsored in 482 by Emperor Zeno and created by Acacius, Patriarch of Constantinople in order to reconcile moderate anti-Chalcedonians with the universal church. The bishops of Rome, first Simplicius (468–483), then Felix III (483–492) and finally Gelasius (492–

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3 On the fight over the shape of “Roman memory,” see Cooper and Hillner, Introduction, 4-5.
496), saw the *Henotikon* as an abrogation of Leo’s *Tomus* which had been accepted by a legitimate and universal council. As far as the Roman Church was concerned, the issue of the nature of Christ was closed. Simplicius, Felix and Gelasius were uncompromising and stood firm against any possible betrayal of Chalcedon.

However, not all members of the Roman Church were as adamantly opposed to some type of compromise with Constantinople. The election of Gelasius’ successor Anastasius II (496-498) signaled that at least some in Rome wished to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards the East. By Gelasius’ death, a significant roadblock to resolving the dispute was the issue of Acacius’ post-mortem condemnation (not by a synod while he was alive) and Gelasius’ demand that Acacius’ name, along with that of Peter Mongus, be permanently and irrevocably stricken from the diptychs. Whereas Gelasius in particular had claimed that Acacius, who had died out of communion with Rome, was irreconcilably condemned, Anastasius made it clear that it was not for him but for God to judge the actions of Acacius, a statement that implied his willingness to compromise on the issue of Acacius’ condemnation if not on the overarching question of the *Henotikon*. Anastasius also seems to have sent two bishops, Cresoconius and Germanus, and possibly the senator Festus (see below) to negotiate an end to the Acacian Schism, but we cannot be sure what terms Rome would have been willing to accept.

But in the end, Anastasius’ short pontificate ended in 498 with no resolution to the schism and growing divisions within Rome itself over the direction that should be taken. The result was a contested episcopal election. In November 498, a group of clergy and senators elected the deacon Symmachus at the Lateran Basilica. A second group led by the powerful senators Festus and Probinus, simultaneously elected Laurence, a presbyter of the *titulus* S. Praxedis, at the Basilica of S. Maria Maggiore. This dual election led to the Laurentian Schism.

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4 Anastasius II (496-489) who, somewhat confusingly for historians, was bishop of Rome at the same time that Eastern Emperor Anastasius I (491-518) ruled in Constantinople.


7 Symmachus’s biography in the *LP* (§1-2) states “Hic sub intentione ordinatus est uno die cum Laurentio, Symmachus in basilica Constantiniana, Laurentii in basilica beatae Mariae. Ex qua causa separatus est clerus et diiusus est et senatus, aliui cum Symmachum, aliui uto cum Laurentium.”

8 Richards calls it the ‘Symmachan Schism.’ For a very brief survey of other contested elections in antiquity, see Wirbelauer’s introduction to his study, *Zwei Päpste in Rom*, 5-8.
The details of the Laurentian Schism have been considered in great detail in a number of excellent studies, and so we shall only outline the basics here. Soon after the dual-election, the partisans of Symmachus and Laurence began to openly attack each other in Rome. If the conflict was to end, some form of arbitration was needed and Theoderic himself imposed Symmachus as rightful pope since he had been elected by a majority of the clergy. Backed by Theoderic, Symmachus was now relatively secure in his position. He called a synod in Italy that officially recognized his legitimacy. Laurence was not harshly treated; rather, he was made Bishop of Nuceria. However in 502, Symmachus was accused by Laurentian partisans including the senator Festus of celebrating Easter on the incorrect date. Theoderic was informed and the king asked Symmachus to come to Ravenna in order to explain himself. When it became clear to Symmachus that he would also be charged with a number of other offences, he escaped to the safety of St. Peter’s. By fleeing rather than confronting the accusations, Symmachus appeared guilty in the eyes of many Italian bishops, many of whom withdrew from communion with him. Theoderic too withdrew his previous support of Symmachus and agreed that the administration of the church should be taken over by a visitor until a new synod could be convened. From August to October, a Roman synod eventually did clear Symmachus of all charges, or more accurately, the synod left his judgement to God – not exactly a ringing endorsement.

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9 For a general reconstruction of the schism, see for example, Caspar, Gesch. des Papsttum, II:82-129; Haller, Das Papsttum: Idee und Wirklichkeit, I:215-242; Moorhead, "The Laurentian Schism."; Richards, Popes, 70-99; Henry Chadwick, Boethius (Oxford, 1981), 30-41; Moorhead, Theoderic in Italy, 114-145; Wirbelauer, Zwei Päpste in Rom, 9-40; Amory, People and Identity, 203-206.

10 According to Symmachus’ vita in the LP, §1, both parties agreed to the arbitration. The so-called ‘Laurentian Fragment’ (discussed below) claims that Theoderic imposed his decision on the church. In any case it is noteworthy that a heretical king either settled a dispute within the church and effectively chose the pope. Also noted by Richards, Popes, 69.

11 Acta. synh. habit. Romae I. Laurence himself signed the acclamation of Symmachus.

12 The events that below are sometimes (incorrectly) dated to 501. However, the accusation against Symmachus was that he had celebrated Easter on the wrong date in 501; what follows takes place in 502. See G. B. Picotti, "I Sinodi Romani nello Scisma Laurenziano," in Studi Storici in onore di Gioacchino Volpe, vol. 2 (1958).

13 The synod was at least nominally called by Symmachus, but was in fact called by Theoderic to clear up the situation once and for all. The LF states that the synod was convoked in part “at the king’s bidding” as well as for the sake of religious scruples (“pro religionis intuitu quam pro regia iussione”). The bishops met in 502 and Symmachus appeared before them. However, he refused to present any evidence in his favor while Peter of Altinum, the visitor appointed by Theoderic to celebrate Easter while Symmachus’ case was decided, remained in the city. The synod gathered once again on September 1, 502, and yet again the bishops failed to come to suitable conclusion. For one, Symmachus now denied that he, as bishop of Rome, could be judged by a synod at all. As Moorhead, Theoderic in Italy, 118 aptly states, the bishops “compelled to judge someone who refused to be judged, found themselves in an impossible situation. In their letter to Theoderic (preserved inacta synhodorum habitarum Romae II.3 (Relatio episcoporum ad regem), MGH AA XII) the bishops asked to be absolved of their task. The king, who wanted a resolution but did not wish to directly interfere in the internal working of the church (interestingly referred to as “vestra religio” nevertheless pushed the bishops to conclude the affair. The so-called “Synodus palmaris”,

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Laurentians ignored this pronouncement and Laurence returned to Rome. Between 502 and 506, Laurence acted more or less as bishop of Rome while Symmachus remained a virtual prisoner in St. Peter’s. This period was also marked by a great deal of mob violence as Symmachians and Laurentians fought each other in the streets of Rome for control of the city and its churches. Finally in 506, after a great deal of lobbying by Symmachians like Ennodius of Pavia and the deacon Dioscorus, Theoderic finally intervened to stop the violence in Rome and ruled in favour of Symmachus. Symmachus was once again confirmed as bishop of Rome and the king instructed Festus and Laurence to hand over their churches to Symmachus. The schism in Rome was over. As we shall see, the significant and even violent division within the Roman Church was the context for the compilation of the Liber Pontificalis.

2. The Liber Pontificalis

Much of our information about the Laurentian Schism comes from the Liber Pontificalis. A detailed analysis first published by Louis Duchesne in his monumental nineteenth-century edition suggests that the text went through two early redactions. The first was completed sometime shortly after 530 and contains the biographies of the Roman bishops down to Felix IV († 530). It survives in two epitomes known as the epitoma Felicianae and the epitoma Cononianae. These epitomes contain similar information to that of the second edition; however as we shall see, it also departs significantly when discussing the persecutions of the Manicheans.

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14 Richards, Popes, 76.
15 For Duchesne’s dating, see LP, xxxiii-xlvi; On the epitomes and the ‘first edition,’ see ibid., xlix-lxvii. An excellent summery of Duchesne’s dating of the LP, its epitomes (referred to below) and the Laurentian Fragment can be found in Blair-Dixon, Memory and Authority, 65-66; cf. Llewellyn, “The Roman Church during the Laurentian Schism: Priests and Senators,” 418; Llewellyn, “The Roman Church during the Laurentian Schism,” 246, n.3.
16 The two epitomes are referred to as F (epitoma Felicianae) and K (epitoma Cononianae) and are edited in LP I.47-113. As per their names, F is claimed by Duschene to represent an abridgement of the original LP down to the death of Felix IV; K is very similar to F and is also said to represent the earliest text of the LP and may have been compiled from the original during the life of Conon, ca. 686-687. Llewellyn, “The Roman Church during the Laurentian Schism: Priests and Senators,” 418, notes that although the two epitomae derive from the same source, they have unique emphases with F largely ignoring the clergy and blaming the Laurentian schism largely on the senate, while K, which is more concerned with the tituli and the endowments of the church, admits that the clergy
The second edition was composed during the pontificate of Vigilius (537-555) and forms the basis of the LP as we know it.\textsuperscript{17} The compiler of this later version reworked some of the early lives and composed biographies up to the middle of the reign of Silverius (536-537). This text was likely produced no later than the 540s and is similar in theme to the first redaction.\textsuperscript{18} Its compiler was also influenced by slightly later but no less bitter ecclesiastical politics at Rome. He was a strong supporter of anti-pope Dioscorus against Boniface II (530-532).\textsuperscript{19}

Crucially, there also exists another series of biographies that predated the LP known to scholars as the Laurentian Fragment.\textsuperscript{20} Whereas all the variants of the LP are clearly pro-Symmachian in its perspective, the Laurentian Fragment provides us with the opposing perspective. It was produced shortly after Symmachus’ death in 514 by still-embittered opponents of Symmachus - that is, it was composed about ten to fifteen years before the \textit{Liber Pontificalis} and four years before the conclusion of the Acacian Schism. The Fragment originally contained \textit{vitae} down to Symmachus. Unfortunately, most of the Laurentian Fragment has been lost.\textsuperscript{21} What remains is essential a character assassination of Symmachus, prefaced by a portion of Anastasius’s biography. The pro-Symmachian \textit{Liber Pontificalis} was almost certainly initially did take part. Partial extracts from the epitomes are translated as ‘Appendix 3’ in \textit{Liber Pontificalis}, 99-105. The Latin texts are from Duchesne’s edition of the LP. Against Duchesne, Mommsen argues that the LP was compiled in the first half of the seventh century, although most scholars agree with Duschene’s dating, especially for the ‘first edition’ represented by the two extant \textit{epitomae}. For an appraisal of Mommsen’s edition of the LP and Duschesne’s response to Mommen’s dating, see L. Duchesne, "La nouvelle édition du Liber Pontificalis," \textit{Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire}, 18 (1898); Caspar, \textit{Gesch. des Papsttum}, II, 774-775; and more generally, Cyrille Vogel, "Le 'Liber pontificalis' dans l'édition de Louis Duchesne, Etat de la question," in \textit{Monseigneur Duchesne et son temps}, \textit{Collection de l'École française de Rome} (Rome, 1975). On two epitomae, see also René Viellard, "Les titres romains et les deux éditions du Liber Pontificalis," \textit{Rivista di archeologia cristina}, 5 (1928).

\textsuperscript{17} Duschene, LP, I.294, notes a change in tone at the midway point (section 15, “eodem tempore ambulavit…”) of Silverius’ vita (536-537) suggesting that it was a compilation of two texts, one hostile, the other relatively benign. The numerous oddities and errors in the \textit{vita} of Vigilius (AD 537-555) and the “jejune character of the remaining lives in the sixth century” in the words of Davis, suggest that the original work was at this point set aside (before the siege of Rome in AD 546) and was not taken up again for over 70 years. Contemporary entries then resume under the pontificate of Pope Honorius (625-638) and the missing lives were added. Future biographies were more or less added shortly after the death of their subjects. See \textit{Liber Pontificalis}, xlvi-xlvii. Interestingly, Claire Sotinel, "Vigilius in the \textit{Liber Pontificalis}: a Memory Lost, or Manipulated?,” in \textit{Church and society in Late Antique Italy and Beyond, Variorum Collected Studies Series} (2010), 8, 19-21 suggests that the vita of Vigilius was not composed by someone unfamiliar with his pontificate. Rather, the errors, distortions and omissions contained in his biography are not the result of the ignorance of the author, but of his design. Sotinel argues that the lives of Silverius, Vigilius and Pelagius could have been composed or compiled during the pontificate of Gregory the Great (590-604) and must be situated firmly within the context of the Three Chapters controversy.

\textsuperscript{18} A number of the \textit{vitae} contained in the LP depend on pro-Symmachian texts including the so-called \textit{Symmachian Aprocrypha}. See LP, I, cxx-cxxvi, cxxxiii-cxli; also noted in Blair-Dixon, \textit{Memory and Authority}, 66.

\textsuperscript{19} As can be inferred by the tone of Boniface’s biography: LP, I.281, §1.

\textsuperscript{20} On the Laurentian Fragment, see LP, I.xxx-xxxii: \textit{Liber Pontificalis}, xiv-xv.

\textsuperscript{21} The Laurentian Fragment is translated in as ‘Appendix 2’ in \textit{Liber Pontificalis}, 93-98. Unfortunately, the only surviving manuscript lacks the first 18 of its 23 pages. On its dating, see, LP, xxx-xxxvi.
compiled in order to counter these Laurentian biographies, reinterpreting recent history in light of the successful and uncompromising defense of Chalcedon and the victory over Acacius, the emperor and the faction that had supported them in Rome. This is especially true if we accept Moorhead’s assertion that, at least during Symmachus’s pontificate itself, only a minority of the church supported the position advocated by the LP.²²

That at least two groups existed amongst the Roman Church and senate, one of which supported Symmachus, the other, Laurence, is apparent. However, the exact nature of these parties and their motives remains uncertain. It is possible that some within the church were uncomfortable with the inflexible position vis-à-vis the Henotikon advanced by Felix and Gelasius. Following this line of argument, Anastasius’s election after Gelasius’ death signals a possible rapprochement with the east engineered by those weary of Ostrogothic rule or perhaps nostalgic for the days of a unified empire.²³ Moorhead, for one, has described the Laurentian schism in part as a conflict between pro- and anti-Byzantine (and thus, pro-and anti-Gothic) elements within the church. In this view Laurence can be seen as a partisan of the Anastasian position which was at least potentially more sympathetic to the empire, while Symmachus represented the hard-line Gelasian faction who favored Roman independence from Constantinople and in general supported the Gothic regime in Italy. Other historians have described the schism as an inter-aristocratic quarrel, or as a conflict between priests and deacons in the Roman Church or between circus factions and even the senate against the Roman plebs. But perhaps we ought to be wary of imagining well-developed factions with particular ideologies in either the church or senate. To describe Laurence and his supporters as “pro-Henotikon,” for example, seems overly simplistic.²⁴ Nor can the sources be clearly divided between supporters and opponents of Theoderic’s regime. As Amory notes, “the documents from either side [of the schism] reveal sympathy or antipathy towards the king based exclusively on his favouring or disfavoring that side.”²⁵ Indeed, the creation of a tangible and uncompromising Gelasian

²³ Ibid., 136. “The Roman Church of the late fifth and early sixth centuries harboured a pro-Greek element whose strength and continuity should not be underestimated.”
²⁴ Pace, Haarer, Anastasius 115. This is especially true given the fact that the actual scope of the compromise with Constantinople considered by Anastasius was in all likelihood limited to the restoration of Acacius to the dyptichs.
²⁵ Amory, People and Identity, 203-206, is convincing. Other potential factions noted by Amory that have been suggested to explain the schisms include: Decii vs. Anicii: Giuseppe Zecchini, "I "Gesta de Xysti purgatione" e le fazioni aristocratiche a Roma alla metà del V secolo," RSCI, 34 (1980); Greens vs. Blues, senate vs. Plebs: Charles Pietri, "Le Sénat, le peuple chrétien et les partis du cirque sous le pape Symmaque (498-514)," Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'école Française de Rome, 78 (1966); priests of the tituli in Rome vs. deacons:
‘faction’ may be a product of later texts such as the LP which retrospectively described clear divisions where none existed. From the perspective advanced in the Liber Pontificalis, the Laurentian Schism was nothing less than a continuation of the Acacian Schism pursued in another forum. Symmachus is firmly situated by the LP within the Gelasian camp and he is portrayed as a staunch defender of the orthodoxy of Leo’s Tomus who like Gelasius (and unlike Anastasius and Laurence), refused to contemplate any compromise with the east over the issue of the Henotikon.

3. Manichaeism in the Liber Pontificalis

Manicheans are mentioned six times in the LP, the first of which occurs during the pontificate of Miltiades (310-314). The entry is very brief, noting only that during Miltiades’ pontificate, “Manicheans were discovered in the city.”²⁶ It is difficult to know how far we can trust this early account. However, external evidence at least confirms that Manichean missionaries arrived in Alexandria about the year 260 and as such, it would not be surprising to learn that they had reached Rome itself by the early fourth century.²⁷ The LP tells us that Miltiades was born in Africa, a fact that at least circumstantially signals his possible familiarity with Manichaeism. Or perhaps later biographers naturally associated him as an African with (opposition to) Manichaeism.

Seventy years later, two consecutive references appear in the biographies of Siricius (384-399) and Anastasius I (399-401/2). Siricius is said, like Miltiades before him, to have “discovered Manichaeans in the city and sent them into exile.” However, Siricius’ account is far more detailed than that of Miltiades and begins to give us a better sense of the nature of Rome’s concerns:

He [Siricius] decreed that any convert from the Manicheans who returned to the church should on no account be given communion but should be

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²⁷ Gardner and Lieu, eds., Manichaean Texts, 2.
removed to a monastery and held in subjection throughout his life, so that tortured till the final day of his death, through the church’s mercy the viaticum should be given them. He decreed that a heretic should be reconciled by the laying on of hands in the presence of the whole church.²⁸

Compared to that of Siricius, the entry for Anastasius I is brief and reports only that he “decreed that no cleric from overseas should be received unless he had a certificate signed by five bishops because at that time Manicheans were discovered at Rome.”²⁹ Importantly, both the biographies of Siricius and Anastasius suggest that Manicheans were not only in communion with orthodox Christians, but that some were coming and going between the two faiths. The fact that Manichaeism and orthodox Christianity could be seen as even vaguely analogous (or at least not mutually exclusive) by some portion of the Roman populace suggests a motive for Siricus’ strong reaction.³⁰ He worked diligently to ensure a rigid and uncompromising separation between orthodox Christians and the Manichean heretics and was particularly harsh on those who had ‘converted’ from Christianity to Manichaeism and later wished to return to the fold. Orthodoxy, at least in part, was defined in opposition to heresy (as heresy is in its opposition to orthodoxy); clear boundaries between right and wrong belief were essential. The greater the potential for hybridity between orthodoxy and heresy – the more heresy could look like orthodoxy and vice versa – the more acerbic the response it prompted from men like Siricius.

Moreover, the concern for Manichaeism in the biographies of Siricius and Anastasius I is paralleled in near-contemporaneous imperial anti-Manichean legislation. With Emperor Theodosius I (378-395), whose reign corresponds to that of Siricius, there was a perceptible radicalization of imperial policies toward heresy, especially Manichaeism. This can be seen from a series of laws issued by Theodosius in May, 381. Manicheans were denied Roman citizenship and branded with infamia, legally removing their right to testify in court, to make wills and to transfer property.³¹ In an edict dated March 31, 382, Theodosius authorized the praetorian prefect

²⁸ LP, I.216,§2. trans, Davis. “Hic inuenit Manicheos in Urbe, quos etiam exilio deportavi; et hoc constituit ut si quis conuersus de Manicheis rediret ad ecclesiam nullatenus communicaretur, nisi tantum religatione monasterii die utiae suae teneretur obnoxius et ut ieiuniis et orationibus maceratus, probatus sub omni examinatione usque ad ultimum diem transitus sui, ut humanitatem ecclesiae uiaticum eis largiatur. Hic constituit hereticum sub manum inpositionis reconciliari prae sente cuncta ecclesia.”
²⁹ LP, I.218, §2. “Et hoc constituit ut nullum clericum transmarinum suscipi, nisi V episcoporum designaret cyrographum, quia eodem tempore Manichei inueni sunt in urbe Roma.”
³⁰ As had been the case for Leo’s persecutions, discussed in Chapter Two.
³¹ CT 16.5.7. In this law, infamia is accompanied by the loss of testamentary rights as well as Roman citizenship (or perhaps the right to live according to Roman law): “quoniam isdem sub perpetua inustae infamiae nota testandi ac vivendi iure Romano omnem protinus eripimus facultatem.” On the loss these rights, see Jean Rougé, Roland
to receive the reports of denunciators without the dishonour of delatio and to establish a special tribunal in order to investigate Manicheans in Rome.\textsuperscript{32} Theodosius, as well as his sons and successors, continued to issue a series of increasingly harsh anti-heretical rescripts throughout the late fourth and into the first half of the fifth century, culminating in an edict of Theodosius II and Valentinian dated July 425, which called for the total expulsion of Manicheans from the city of Rome.\textsuperscript{33} Interestingly, after this date the imperial legislation against Manicheans, particularly in Rome, ceases almost completely. This fact makes the almost century-long absence of the arch-heretical Manicheans particularly conspicuous, for if we were to limit our investigation to the LP itself, it would appear that Manichaeism lay completely dormant for an entire century only to have an abrupt and unexpected resurgence in the last decade of the fifth and the first quarter of the sixth centuries during the pontificates of Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas.

4. Schism and the Polemic of Heresy

The persecutions of Siricius and Anastasius I fit well into the more general context of an increasingly orthodox and intolerant Christian Roman Empire under Theodosius I. Their concern for heresy as it is expressed in the LP is mirrored by imperial legislation, much of which specifically targeted Manichaeism. Leo’s persecution in the 440s which was discussed in detail in Chapter Two can also be seen as part of this same context and is likewise confirmed by imperial rescripts against the sect.

However, the references to Manichaeism that occur in the biographies of Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas are not corroborated by imperial decrees and in important ways are markedly different in tone from the examples considered above. For one, compared to the entries in the biographies of Siricius and Anastasius I, these later anti-Manichean activities are far more aggressive. Gelasius is said to have ordered the Manicheans exiled. But he also is reported to have initiated some form of inquiry, sought out their books and had them burned “with fire

\textsuperscript{32} CT. 16.5.9. Here too, especially on the loss of rights to inherit property, see Rougé, Delmaire, and Richard, eds., \textit{Code Théodosien. Livre XVI}, 238, nn. 2 and 3.

\textsuperscript{33} CT 16.5.62. This decree was issued during the pontificate of Celestine I, though interestingly there is no mention of Manicheans in his biography contained in the LP.
before the doors of St Mary’s basilica.”  

Symmachus likewise, “found Manicheans in Rome; all of their images and books he destroyed by fire outside the doors of the Constantinian basilica, and he sent the actual persons into exile.”  

Finally, Hormisdas not only discovered Manicheans, but tried with “an investigation under blows (cum examinatione plagarum)” and he too burned their books “before the doors of the Constantinian basilica.”  

One way to explain these references is to read them as an attempt to portray Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas as the locus of authority and legitimacy over and against their opponents in Rome and in the east. The overtly polemical nature of the LP itself suggests that the sudden reappearance after a century of arch-heretical Manicheans during the pontificate of Gelasius was not merely coincidental. Indeed, from 492 until 523, three out of four consecutive Roman bishops whose reigns correspond almost exactly to the Acacian Schism are said to have initiated active anti-Manichean persecutions and to have burned Manichean books. Significantly, throughout the early sixth century only Anastasius II is not said to have fought Manichaeism in Rome. These biographies, compiled in the aftermath of a bitter schism, retrospectively emphasize the orthodox and zealous nature of the defenders of Chalcedon by depicting them as overcoming an ancient and deadly threat to the faith.

The polemical and reactive nature of the Liber Pontificalis can be clearly seen when it is contrasted with the Laurentian Fragment. The official story as reported in the LP predictably has little to say about the pontificate of Anastasius, and the few details that are preserved are unapologetically hostile. Clerics and priests are said to have removed themselves from communion with Anastasius on account of his secretive efforts to reinstate Acacius. However, Anastasius failed to achieve his nefarious objective thanks to divine intervention; Anastasius was “struck down by God’s will.”  

This is not the type of statement one expects to find in a sanctioned history of the bishops of Rome. The LP’s version of events continues in the biography of Symmachus and describes the contested election. Theoderic is reported to have sided with Symmachus not because of a backroom room deal furtively negotiated in Ravenna, but because he had been ordained before Laurence and because he had the largest following.  

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34 LP, I.255, §1.  
37 LP I.258. “Qui nutu diuino percussus est.”  
38 LP, I.260, §1. This detail is generally accepted by historians as accurate. See, for example, Wirbelauer, Zwei Päpste in Rom, 10-11.
Unsurprisingly the Laurentian Fragment tells a much different story. First, Anastasius’ pontificate is given a much more sympathetic interpretation:

[Anastasius II wrote a letter to] the emperor Anastasius and sent it by Bishops Cresconius and Germanus; it was backed up with so much authority from the heavenly scriptures that anyone who reads through it attentively and in fear of God can see that the persistence up till now of so atrocious a schism between the churches of the East and of Italy is quite pointless.\(^{39}\)

Here, those who continued the fight against the *Henotikon* were responsible for the ‘pointless’ and ‘atrocious’ division of the church. Moreover, it appears that at least two bishops, some members of the senate including the influential Festus, and much of the Roman clergy were in favour of some form of reconciliation with the east. The hostile biography of Symmachus in the Laurentian Fragment describes the contested election and the machinations that took place in its aftermath. It states that both sides agreed to appeal to Theoderic as a moderator and judge. However, Theoderic was bribed to rule in favour of Symmachus while “Laurence was severely threatened and cajoled, and forcibly dispatched to govern the church of Nuceria, a city in Campania.”\(^{40}\) The accusation of bribery does not appear to have been merely a polemical invention. Ennodius, a partisan of Symmachus’ who penned a *libellus* on his behalf, mentions the distribution of 400 *solidi* to various influential people.\(^{41}\)

Worse was to come, according to the Laurentian Fragment. Symmachus was subsequently accused of “committing many crimes” and was summoned to the court of Theoderic in order to give his explanation.\(^{42}\) Instead, fearing the judgement of the king, Symmachus fled to Rome and locked himself within the confines of St. Peter’s.\(^{43}\) When Laurence learned the king’s decision,

\(^{39}\) LF. “...[ad] imperatorem Anastasium directa per Cresconium et Germanum episcopos, quae tanta scribaturarum caelestium auctoritate suffulta est, ut qui hanc intenta mente sub divino timore perlegerit, inaniter hactenus inter ecclesias Orientis et Italiae schisma tam nefarium perdurare cognoscat.” trans. Davis, 103. PCBE 2 CRESCONIVS 2, *episcopus ecclesiae Tudertinae* (= Todi, Perugia, Umbria); PCBE 2 GERMANVS 1, *episcopus ecclesiae Pisaurensis* (= Paesaro).

\(^{40}\) ibid.

\(^{41}\) Ennodius, ep. 3.10; ep. 6.16, 33 (MGA AA vii) cf. Ennodius, "Libellus apologeticus pro synodo = Opusc. 2." On Ennodius’ activities in support of Symmachus, see Kennell, *Ennodius*, XXX; Thomas F. X. Noble, "A New Look at the Liber Pontificalis," *Archivum Historiae Pontificae*, 23 (1985). The Laurentians also resorted to bribery. Theodore Lector claims that the senator Festus “corrupted many with money [and] called upon a certain Roman whose name was Laurentius to be elected bishop [of Rome] contrary to custom.” Theodore Lector (Anagnostes), Historia Ecclesiastica, II.17, cited in Richards, *Popes*, 70.

\(^{42}\) The crimes included that Symmachus had celebrated Easter on the wrong date in 501. See Richards, *Popes*, 71.

\(^{43}\) Not the *basilica Constantiniana*, the usual residence for the bishops of Rome. See Moorhead, "The Laurentian Schism," 134. LF claims that while Symmachus was waiting at Ariminium [Rimini] for Theoderic, Symmachus happened to run into the very women with whom he had been accused of “committing sin.” Symmachus reasoned
the Laurentian Fragment tells us that he peaceably departed Rome for “he did not want the city to be troubled by daily strife.” But the author of the Laurentian fragment cannot help but take one last shot at the unjustly triumphant Symmachus, about whom we are told that “disgusting stories blackened him on many counts, particularly about the women they commonly call Conditaria, and about the orders in the church which he was prostituting by openly accepting cash for them.” The anti-Symmachian position of the author of the Laurentian Fragment is obvious. And despite the fact that Symmachus ultimately managed to hold on to the sedes apostolica, the position of the Laurentian Fragment may not represent that of a radical minority fringe within the western church. A detailed analysis of Symmachus’s ordinations and building projects by John Moorhead reveals that a minority in the western church as a whole likely supported Symmachus, although the Italian bishops favoured him. In this context, the Liber Pontificalis in its origin appears to have been constructed specifically to counter many of the charges made in the Laurentian Fragment.

The polemical nature of the LP is also evident when we turn to the two surviving epitomae of the first edition of the LP, produced in the early 530s. In these texts, heresy and the language of heresiology is frequently employed; Theoderic is interestingly described numerous times as a heretic; the emperor Anastasius is described as an “Eutychian.” The fact that the earliest variant of the pro-Symmachian LP calls Theoderic a heretic whereas the Laurentian fragment does not must surely complicate any straightforward notions that Symmachus represents a pro-Gothic faction. The epitomae describe Symmachus himself as a lover of the clergy; he was “good,
prudent, humane and gracious.” Four years after the contested election had been decided by Theoderic in Symmachus’ favour, his Laurentian opponents were “driven by jealousy and treachery to bring a charge” against him. They “suborned false witnesses whom they sent to the heretic king Theoderic at Ravenna with their accusation against blessed Symmachus.”\textsuperscript{49}

Moreover, when we compare the treatment of the Manicheans in the earliest \textit{epitomae} with the accounts reported in the later ‘official’ version of the LP, the rhetorical nature of these persecutions seems evident.

The first encounter under Miltiades is noted in both the \textit{epitomae} and the LP.\textsuperscript{50} Similarly, the epitomes also refer to Siricius’ battle against heretics, but do not name the Manicheans as the target of his efforts. But both Felician and Cononian epitomes also claim that no priest “was allowed to consecrate without the consecrated element of the bishop of each place,” almost certainly a reference to Manicheans.\textsuperscript{51} This episode is reported to be as a direct consequence of the discovery of Manicheans in the LP version of his vita.\textsuperscript{52} The Cononianan epitome also echoes the claim found in the LP that Anastasius I banned clerics from overseas (“\textit{transmarinum}” = Africa?) because of potential Manichaecism (“\textit{propter Manicheos}”) unless they could produce a certificate testifying to their orthodoxy signed by five orthodox bishops. But this account omits the detail that Manicheans were actually uncovered in Rome.\textsuperscript{53} Still, there are enough details in the epitomes to at least confirm that tradition of persecutions of Manicheans under these Roman bishops was original to the text and not a creation of the second edition. The additional details contained in the LP itself may have been derived from sources unavailable to the first compiler, or alternatively were the result of later literary embellishment.

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\textsuperscript{49} \textit{LP, epitomae} F and K: Symmachus, I:96. trans. Davis, 110-111.
\textsuperscript{50} \textit{LP, epitomae} F and K: Miltiades [Miltiades], I:74: “Et Manichei inuenti sunt in Urbe[m, in F].”
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{LP, epitomae} F and K: Siricus [Siricius], I:86. Both epitomes refer to Siricius’ decree sent to the provincial churches, but omit the detail as reported in the LP that it was a degree “against every heresy.” Epitome F, for example, simply states; “Hic constitutum fecit de ecclesia et direxit per prouincias.” Cf. Siricius’ biography in the LP: “Hic constitutum fecit de omnem ecclesiam uel contra omnes hereses et exparsit per uniuersum mundum ut in omnem ecclesiae archibo teneantur ob oppugnationem contra omnes hereses.” Both F and K echo the LP in stating that Siricius declared that heretics should be reconciled by the laying on of hands. From these multiple and early mentions of heresy, we can surmise that it was indeed a concern for Siricius. However, there is no specific mention of Manicheans. \textit{LP,} 87, n.3.
\textsuperscript{52} \textit{LP, I:168-169. “ab eodem die fecit ut obligationes consecratas per ecclesias ex consecratu episcopi dirigentur, quod declaratur fermentum.” On the fermentum, see ibid., 169, n.4,ibid, n. 4.}
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{LP epitoma} K: Anastasius, p. 86 “et constituit ut nullum clericum transmarinum suscipi, nisi V episcoporum designaret cirographum, propter Manicheos.”
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But when we turn to the biographies of Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas contained in the Felician and Cononianan epitomae, only that of Hormisdas mentions the persecution of Manicheans: “He discovered Manicheans whom he tried with an investigation under blows, and he brunt their books before the doors of the Constantinian basilica.”\(^{54}\) Almost the same wording is used in Hormisdas’ biography in the LP, noted above. There is no mention of Manicheans in either the biographies of Gelasius or Symmachus contained in the epitomes. Thus, at least two of the three supposed persecutions are not in fact original to the text, but must have been added during the compilation of the second edition ten years after the first. Hormisdas’ persecution is only known from his vita in the Liber Pontificalis.\(^{55}\)

Of the three persecutions, that of Gelasius, despite the fact that it is not cited in the first edition of the LP, is the least problematic. Duchesne for one does not completely dismiss the possibility that the Gelasian persecution reflects a historical event since it would have taken place relatively close to the time of the LP’s author compiled the work. He is, however, more skeptical about the persecutions supposedly initiated by Symmachus and Hormisdas.\(^{56}\) Indeed, there is at least some evidence that Gelasius was concerned with Manicheanism. In a widely-copied formulary, Gelasius warns new bishops not to accept any Africans into the ecclesiastical ranks without consideration (nulla ratione) since some of them are known to be Manicheans while others are often rebaptized.\(^{57}\) In another letter to bishops Maioricus and John, Gelasius complains that there are some in the church of Squillace (Scyllaceum in Calabria) who refuse to partake in the Eucharistic wine (corporis sacri portione a calicis sacri crurore abstineat) – the same accusation that had led Leo to discover the Manicheans in Rome years before.\(^{58}\) However the particular superstition in Squillace is not named. In the case of Symmachus and Hormisdas, there is no evidence outside the LP to suggest they were concerned with Manichaeism at all.

Other circumstantial details from the Liber Pontificalis call into question the Gelasian, and especially the Symmachian and Hormisdasian persecutions. For once, it seems strange that Leo’s essential role in the eventual destruction of Manichaeism in Western Europe is completely

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\(^{54}\) LP epitoma F, Hormisdas. “Hic inuenit Manicheos, quos etiam discussit sub examina plagarum; quorum codices incendio consumpsit ante foris basilicae Constantiniani.” trans. Davis, 112. 

\(^{55}\) As Duchesne notes, LP, I:265, n. 14.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., I:256, n.3. See also I:265, n. 14 and I:274, n. 21.

\(^{57}\) JK 674 (Thiel ep. 15, pp. 379-380), §1. “Afros passim ad ecclesiasticos ordines praeendentem nulla ratione suscipiat, quia aliqui eorum Manichaei, aliqui rebaptizati saepius sunt probati.”

\(^{58}\) JK 725 (Thiel ep. 37, pp. 450-452), §2. “Comperimus autem, quod quidam in eadem regione sumpta tantum corporis sacri portione a calicis sacri crurore abstineant”
ignored in his LP biography.\textsuperscript{59} It is unlikely, though not completely implausible, that the details of what is widely considered to be the most important pontificate of the fifth century would have been quickly forgotten, and the copious collection of letters and sermons left by Leo – including his relatively numerous surviving anti-Manichean writings – would have been almost certainly available to the author of the \textit{Liber Pontificalis}. Indeed, Leo’s own \textit{vita} contains the interesting detail that he “despatched many letters on the faith, which are kept safe today in the archive.”\textsuperscript{60} Although the reference here is likely to Leo’s vast literary output about the Christological controversy, it certainly implies that the compiler of the LP was aware of or had access to other works as well, possibly including his anti-Manichean tractates and letters.

It is also worth noting the shift in emphasis from the time of Siricius and Anastasius I’s persecutions at the turn of the fourth century and those said to have been initiated by Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas. Siricius and Anastasius I focused on Manichean infiltration of the church itself – that is, they were combating the notion that orthodox Christianity and Manichaeism could somehow be understood as analogous and equally valid. Their primary concern was the free interaction between Christians and Manicheans, as well dealing with questionable (i.e. Manichean) members of the African clergy. There is no indication that these early Roman bishops organized or were able to execute an assault on the non-Catholic Manicheans of Rome or that they could or did order the destruction of their property. On the other hand, Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas are all said to have initiated zealous anti-Manichean campaigns waged outside the confines of the church in a fashion reminiscent of the persecutions initiated by Leo. Leo was the first Roman bishop to actively attack and burn Manichean scriptures – a policy which is also reported to have been a central element of the persecutions under Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas. One wonders if Leo’s persecutions served as an archetype – either for the later Roman bishops themselves or as a literary model for their biographer. Indeed, the LP emphasizes all three persecutions ended with the burning of heretical books – a powerful “idiom of authority” for those who employed it. Since the time of the Republic, Roman governments had used fire to publically destroy texts whose contents were

\textsuperscript{59} A point also noted by Duchesne in his notes on the vita of Mitiades, LP, 169, n. 3.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., Leo, §5. “Iterum multas epistulas fidei misit beatissimus Leo archiepiscopus quae Hodie reconditae archiuo tenentur.” Eng. trans. Davis, p. 39.
considered a threat to society.\textsuperscript{61} Thus, even the suggestion of book burning could, in the words of Daniel Sarefield, transmit a “forceful social and religious messages to victims, witnesses, and participants alike.”\textsuperscript{62}

It is intriguing that their biographies, written in the aftermath of a bitter schism fought to protect the memory of Chalcedon, deliberately echoes the actions of the Roman bishop most responsible for the Chalcedonian settlement itself. By associating Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas with the fight against heresy, the author of the \textit{Liber Pontificalis} was able to depict these popes as the consummate defenders of Chalcedonian orthodoxy – in opposition to both Manichaeism and Byzantine quasi-Eutychianism.

5. ‘Manichean’ as Polemical Epithet

The rhetorical use of Manichaeism and its persecution in the \textit{Liber Pontificalis} reflect a wider trend whereby heresies such as Manichaeism were increasingly becoming epithets rather than real, tangible threats in the eyes of many polemicists. This can be seen, for example, in a long letter written in 506 at the height of the Acacian Schism by Symmachus to Emperor Anastasius which seeks to justify Rome’s continuing refusal to accept the \textit{Henotikon}. In this letter, Symmachus makes an intriguing statement to the emperor: “You say that I am a Manichean; but can it be that I am a Eutychian or a defender of Eutychians, whose madness greatly surpasses the error of the Manicheans?”\textsuperscript{63} The implication of Symmachus’ statement is clear. Anastasius’ defense of Chalcedon’s opponents was akin to or even worse than Manichaeism. Here, Symmachus suggests that even if it was true that he was a Manichean, it would pale in comparison to the emperor’s support of what Symmachus considers the ‘Eutychian’ \textit{Henotikon}. The wording also implies that Anastasius had first called Symmachus a Manichean in a letter

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\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 159. On “idioms of authority,” see Van Dam, \textit{Leadership and Community}, 20-25.
\textsuperscript{63} \textit{ep. 10; JK 761 = "Ad augustae memoriae" (Thiel, pp. 700-708), §6. “Dicis esse me Manichaeum. Numquid ego Eutychianus sum vel Eutychianos defendo, quorum furor maxime Manichaeorum suffragatur errori?” “Maxime” here seems to have the force of “even” – the error of the Eutychians surpasses that even of the Manicheans. cf. Ibid., §14. “Non mirum, si catholieos sequuntur Manicheaorum patroni, quam falsitas non possit non persegu veraatem.”
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that is no longer extant, perhaps a dig at Symmachus’ acknowledged pagan roots that may have made him a vulnerable target for Anastasius’ epithet.\textsuperscript{64}

That both a Roman bishop and emperor could be in some sense Manichean in the sixth-century (or even accused of Manichaeism) at first seems surprising. But these accusations are symptomatic of a more general development. As we have noted in this dissertation, Leo had frequently compared Eutyches’ teachings to those of Mani, as well as other heresiarchs such as Valentinus and Marcion.\textsuperscript{65} The same process can be observed in Byzantine polemical texts in which Manichaeism, as well as other ancient heresies such as Marcionism and even Samaritanism – not to mention Judaism – were used in order to denigrate theological and even political enemies. For example, both pro- and anti-Chalcedonian polemicists in Constantinople frequently labelled each other ‘Manichean’ as part of the Christological controversy of the fifth and sixth centuries.\textsuperscript{66} We get some sense of the nature of this debate from the sixth-century historian Evagrius who tells us that “[Emperor] Anastasius had a general reputation [in Constantinople] for Manichean belief.”\textsuperscript{67} Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor reports that as part of the bitter conflict between Emperor Anastasius and the Chalcedonian Patriarch Macedonius II, Macedonius “plotted to make a rebellion against him [Anastasius] and was regularly calling him a heretic and a Manichean.”\textsuperscript{68} The much later eighth-century Byzantine chronicler Theophanes also claims that “The Manicheans and Arians were delighted with Anastasius, the Manicheans because the emperor’s mother was a zealous devotee of theirs, the Arians because his uncle Klearchos, the brother of his impious mother, shared their beliefs.”\textsuperscript{69} The chronicle of the mid-sixth century North African bishop and zealous supporter of the Three Chapters Victor Tonnennensis (extant from 444-566) claims that Anastasius’ mother was in fact Arian.\textsuperscript{70}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[64] He testifies to his pagan origins in his letter to the Emperor Anastasius, ibid., §6: “Roma mihi testis est et scrinia testimonium perhibent, utrum a fide catholica, quam in sede beati apostoli Petri, veniens ex paganitate suscepi, aliqua ex parte deviaverim.”
\item[65] See above, 111ff.
\item[70] Victor Tonnennensis, \textit{Chronica}, ed. Theodor Mommsen, MGH AA 11: Chronica Minora Saec. IV, V, VI, VII vol. 2 (Berlin), a. 491. “Zenon imperator Constantinopolis moritur anno vitae suae XLII Ariagne Augusta” [Ariadne,
\end{footnotes}
These kinds of accusations were not limited to the polemical texts of learned controversialists; they can also be detected in the public acclamations of the famously Chalcedonian Emperor Justin I (518-527). Days after Emperor Anastasius’ death in 518, a massive throng greeted the new emperor Justin and Patriarch John II of Cappadocia as they entered old Hagia Sophia, crying out,

…throw out Severus [of Antioch] the Manichean! Whoever does not say this is a Manichean himself! The bones of the Manicheans must be exhumed! Now proclaim the Holy Synod [Chalcedon]! Long live the emperor! Long live the patriarch, worth of the Trinity! The Holy Mary is the Mother of God [Theotokos]…The Holy Synod proclaimed it. Whoever does not say this is a Manichean himself. The faith of the Trinity prevails!

…Long live the emperor! Justin Augustus, you are triumphant! Now proclaim the Synod of Chalcedon! Justin reigns, of whom are you afraid? Throw out Severus the Manichean. Now proclaim the Synod of Chalcedon! Whoever does not anathematize Severus is a Manichaean himself. Anathema to Severus the Manichaean! Whoever does not say this is a Manichaean himself. Throw out Severus, throw out the new Judas.71

The next day, the crowd gathered once again. They now called out, “Anathema to Nestorians along with Eutyches! Throw out all the Manicheans…inscribe the four synods [Nicaea, Constantinople I, Ephesus I, and Chalcedon] in the diptychs; inscribe Leo the Bishop of Rome in the diptychs! The Holy Mary is the Mother of God. The Synod said so. Bring the diptychs to the pulpit! He who does not say this is a Manichean himself.” 72

Of all these accusations, that of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor seems most probable. In this case, Macedonius is reported to have accused the emperor of heresy and Manichaeism as part of a long-standing conflict between the two men. That Anastasius’ mother is variously claimed to have been an Arian and a Manichean indicates that at least among the Chalcedonian in the Eastern capital, there were serious questions regarding the emperor’s orthodoxy. ‘Arian’ and ‘Manichean’ here could be read simply as synonyms for ‘heretic.’ According to Grillmeier, the acclamation of Emperor Justin and the condemnation of Severus of Antioch as Manichean could

daughter of Emperor Leo I] Zenonis relictas Anastatiis silentiarii Illyriciun patre Dyrracheno matre Arriana, imperatorem designat.” 71 Victor was exiled by Justinian for his refusal to condemn the Three Chapters. He eventually returned to Constantinople in either 564 or 565, but was soon confined to a monastery where he died. His chronicle was written during his exile. For the details of his life, see Vasilev, Justin the First, 19-20.

71 The acclimations were noted down and mistakenly preserved as part of the Acts of the Fifth Ecumenical Council. Greek and Latin texts can be found in Mansi, vol. VIII, col. 157-166. A much better Greek edition can be found in (ACO III, pp. 71-76) Eng. trans. in Vasilev, Justin the First, 136-141.

72 Ibid., 141-142.
be attributable to Severus’ supposed denial of the Incarnation, an accusation that could also apply to Anastasius’ anti-Chalcedonianism.\textsuperscript{73}

Of course the use of Manichaeism as an epithet was not limited to the eastern half of the empire. As we noted in Chapter 5, Gelasius made a connection between what he sees as Eutychianism and Manichaeism in a letter of 493 written to the bishops of Dardania. The link is once again the supposed denial of the Incarnation by the opponents of Chalcedon. According to Gelasius, the Greeks, amongst whom all kinds of heresies flourish, have been debating the nature of the Incarnation for almost half a century since the Council of Chalcedon. The whole controversy can be traced back to Eutyches:

Eutyches, a certain presbyter from Constantinople, fell into blasphemies through which he taught that we ought to believe that there was only one nature or substance in the Lord Jesus Christ – that is, only the nature or substance of divinity. This claim [of Eutyches] completely destroyed [\textit{abolita}] the truth that Christ took up human flesh. Certainly, such an impious and wicked invention - a mixture of Marcionism and Manichaeism – without doubt destroys [invalidates?] the sacrament of our salvation.\textsuperscript{74}

In another letter to the bishops of Syria, Gelasius discusses a group of monks who, having accepted Chalcedon, “took up the right hand of communion from the Apostolic See and therefore denied that they were in communion with Eutychians or Manicheans.”\textsuperscript{75} In his long tractate on the two natures of Christ, he equates “Mani, Apollinaris, the Marcionites and plagues of this kind” as heresies which deny the truth of Christ’s body.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{73} Severus and other anti-Chalcedonians did not, of course, deny the Incarnation. Grillmeier, CICT 1, 2.1:319. On Severus in general, see Torrance, \textit{Christology after Chalcedon}, 3-7.

\textsuperscript{74} JK 623 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 7, pp. 335-337 = CA \textit{ep.} 79, pp. 218-223), §1.“Eutyches quondam presbytero Constantinopolitano in blasphemias proruente, per quas diceret, unam tantummodo, id est solam Divinitatis, naturam sive substantiam in Domino Jesu Christo credere nos debere, susceptae carnis ventate rorsus abolita. Quod utique impium pravumque commentum, Marcionistis Manichaeisque conjunctum, totum sine dubio salutis nostrae solveret sacramentum.”

\textsuperscript{75} JK 702 (Thiel \textit{ep.} 43, pp. 471-483), §2, cf. §3. “Quia igitur sacrorum monachorum egregius manipulus ad nos delatus commuminonis dextram ab apostolica cathedra accept, propertia quod communicare se cum Eutychianis sive Manichaeis negarunt, sed cunctis potius sacrorum canonum definitionibus consentiebarit, et damnatos quosvis haereticos repudiabat, et Calchedonensis sy-modi sanctique et apostolici Leonis papae per omnia confessionem tenebant.”

\textsuperscript{76} JK 670 = \textit{“de duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium”} (Thiel, \textit{tract.} III, pp. 530-557), §11. “Certe quum dicimus de uno eodemque Domino nostro, quid secundum Deum, quid secundum hominem dixerit fecerit, vel etiam si dicamus: hoc ut Deus homo dixit aut fecit, et hoc ut homo Deus dixit et fecit; quaero, utrum vel quum secundum hominem dicimus dictum factumque aliquid, vel Deus homo fecit aut dixit aliquid, utrumne in eo homo sit verus an falsus? Si falsus, Manichaeus, Apollinaris, Marcionistae atque hujusmodi pestes consequenter exsultant, quae in Christo Domino veritatem corporis abnegaverunt, aut putativum esse dixerunt, ut alias interim perniciosiores, quae hoc dogmate continentur, haereses nunc omittam.”
Symmachus too explicitly compares Manichaeism and Eutychianism in a letter of 512 written to the eastern bishops. “We avoid,” Symmachus states, “the sacrilegious error of Eutyches, agreeing with the Manichean wickedness.” Slightly later, Hormisdas claims that Eutyches’ denial of Christ’s human flesh and of his two natures in one person threatens to insinuate Manichean ideas into Christ’s church. Thus for Hormisdas, Eutyches is condemnable for the same reason as the Manicheans themselves. In another letter, Hormisdas describes his theological opponents as those “polluted by the contagion of Eutyches and Dioscorus of Alexandria, or rather by the wicked contagion of the Manicheans.” It seems clear that Manichean has become an rhetorical epithet. Once its theological content ceased to be relevant, the term and all it suggested could be applied indiscriminately to an increasing number of divergent theological opponents.

The use of the epithet ‘Manichean’ occurs in various other Late Antique sources as well, especially in the 530s as Justinian prepared his re-conquest of the former Western Empire. By this point, the hardening attitudes towards the religion of the Ostrogoths in Italy and the Vandals in Africa meant that Homoianism (increasingly described as ‘Arianism’) began to be seen as in some sense, Manichean. One such example can be seen in the writings of the Carthaginian priest, Victor of Vita. While the Vandals had plundered the former Roman province and even sacked Rome itself in 455 – an event far more devastating than Alaric’s sack of 410 – it was primarily the religious nature of the persecutions which drew Victor’s attention. Likely composed in 484, Victor’s *Historia Persecutionis* amounts to a catalogue of Catholic mistreatment at the hands of the bloody-minded Arian barbarians. There had been sporadic outbreaks of persecutions and violence under Geiseric (428-477) but conditions worsened dramatically under the rule of his

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78 Hormisdas, ep. 9 (Thiel, pp. 758-761), §2. “Eutyches, carnis negans veritatem et duas naturas in una persona non praedicans, ut Manichaem phantasiam ecclesiis Christi quemadmodum putavit insereret, simili ratione damnatur.”
79 Hormisdas ep. 32 (Thiel, pp. 806-807), §1. “…qui Eutychetis et Dioscori Alexandrini vel potius nefanda Manichaeorum contagione polluti.”
80 We have little evidence concerning Victor’s life and position within the African Church, though both Moorhead and Lancel suggest he was a priest and may have belonged to the clergy at Carthage when he wrote his history. Victor of Vita, *History of the Vandal Persecution*, trans. John Moorhead (Liverpool, 1992), xv., Victor of Vita, *Histoire de la Persâecution Vandale en Afrique (Historia Persecutionis)*, trans. Serge Lancel (Paris, 2002), 6.
successor Huneric (477-484) who “ordered that all the Catholics of his kingdom were to become Arians.” Indeed, compared to the rule of relatively tolerant King Theoderic in Italy, the Vandals must have appeared particularly malicious to Victor and his coreligionists.

While the Historia Persecutionis contains considerable historical material, the thrust of the work is not concerned with providing exact details of events as they actually transpired. Instead, Victor’s Historia, heavily influenced by earlier Christian hagiographical traditions, attempts to romanticize Catholic resistance to the barbarian, heretical oppressors. The orthodox are portrayed as a “chosen people standing firm, strengthening the walls of their hive with the wax of faith: the more they were afflicted, the stronger they grew.” It is not surprising that Victor would attack Arianism and defend his own faith; however, what is somewhat more puzzling is an extremely odd allusion to Manichaeism which occurs in the opening chapters of his second book. This reference can best be explained by the polemical and indeed hagiographical nature of the work itself.

Victor claims that King Huneric, responsible for instigating the worst of the anti-Catholic actions, initiated a purge of Manicheans within his kingdom at the beginning of his reign “with painstaking care” in order “to show that he was a man of religion.” Moreover, “he had many of these people burned, and he sold more of them for ships across the seas.” But, Huneric’s persecution had an unintended and embarrassing outcome for the barbarian king when he discovered that “nearly all the Manicheans were adherents of his religion, the Arian Heresy, especially its priests and deacons; so it was that, the greater his shame, the more he was kindled against them.”

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83 Shanzer states that Victor’s work “combines historical passages…with rhetorical outburst…with passages that would hardly raise an eyebrow, were they to be found in the miracle collections such as Gregory of Tours’ Martyrs or Confessors.” That Victor saw himself as a historian is undoubtedly true, however “virtually every hagiographer would have claimed to write history. Shanzer, Intentions and Audiences, 279, 288.

84 Victor of Victor of Vita, History, trans. Moorhead, 24. cf.Victor of Vita, Histoire de la Persécutio Vandale en Afrique (Historia Persecutionis), trans. Lancel, 121-122. Et, ut se religiosum ostenderet, statuit sollicitius requirendos hereticos Manicheos. Ex quibus multos incendit, plurimos autem distraxit nauibus transmarinis. quos peane omnes Manicheos suae religionis inuenit et praecipue presbyteros et diaconos Arrianae hereseos; unde magis erubescens amplius in illis exarit. Compare Moorhead’s slightly awkward adaptation with Lancel’s somewhat freer translation, which renders the above passage as “…Et, pour afficher son zèle religieux, il donna l’ordre de rechercher diligemment les hérétiques manichéens: il en fit périr sure le bûcher un grand nombre, et vendit comme esclave la plupart d’entre eux, embarquées sure les navires venus d’outre-mer… Victor’s account continues with an absolutely bizarre reference to an otherwise unknown monk named Clementianus who was found “to have a piece of
unknown monk named Clementianus who was found “to have a piece of writing on his thigh: ‘Mani, the disciple of Jesus Christ.’”\textsuperscript{85} Exactly how this tattoo was discovered is left up to the imagination of the reader.

Huneric may very well have initiated some form of anti-Manichean action, for the dualistic, Gnostic nature of the Manichean religion would have been equally anathema to the Vandals as it was to orthodox Catholics, although if he did, we have no evidence of this outside of Victor’s account. However, the notion that the hierarchy of the Vandal church was in fact dominated by crypto-Manicheans is, of course, extremely unlikely. Instead, it is best to read Victor’s account not as a factual representation of the ‘Manichean’ nature of what was from his perspective a barbarian and Arian church, but instead as another example of the evolution of a novel literary convention – one which can be placed within existing hagiographical traditions and which sought to attach to the Arian church in North Africa the entirety of Manichaeism’s perceived moral depravity, illegitimacy, corruption and theologically absurdity. For Victor, ‘Manichean’ is a synonym for immorality. Consider his account of Huneric’s purge: the Vandal king, seemingly acting as any good Christian would, initiated an attack on one of the religion’s greatest enemies. In this he can be compared to Leo and to the persecutions supposedly instigated by Gelasius, Symmachus and Hormisdas. However, while the LP uses the persecution of the morally bankrupt Manicheans as a literary theme in order to emphasize the orthodox and zealous nature of these Roman bishops, Victor, writing a little over a decade before the pontificate of Gelasius, inverts the trope: instead of successfully defending the faith against one of its most ancient and pernicious foes, Huneric’s persecution accidently revealed the surreptitious connection between Manicheans and the highest offices within Arian church! Thus the true nature of Arianism is unmasked, and the Arian heresy becomes intimately associated with all of Manichaeism’s moral and rational deficiencies.

Victor’s account of the Vandal persecutions was almost certainly read both in Rome and in Constantinople. Composed in Latin, the \textit{Historia Persecutionis} would have been easily accessible to many Italians, and interestingly, the text itself contains an appeal to Peter and Paul,

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writing on his thigh: ‘Mani, the disciple of Jesus Christ.’ (De quibus repertus est unus, nomine Celmentianus, monachus illorum, scriptum habens in femore: Manicheus discipulus Christi Iesu).
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both saints intimately connected to Rome. Courtois, Lancel and somewhat more cautiously, Moorhead suggest the *Historia* was actually composed as a plea for aid from the Byzantine government who still would have been familiar enough with the Latin language. As Lancel states, “Victor n’aurait poursuivi son récit qu’en affadissant un message destiné principalement à la Cour de Constantinople, comme beaucoup d’indice dans son texte le donnent clairment à entendre. Le narrateur insiste sure l’implication – et donc la responsabilité – de l’Empire d’Orient dans les malheureux événements dont souffre l’Afrique.” Indeed, Justinian’s eventual re-conquest of North Africa in AD 533 was, at least retrospectively, justified on religious grounds. In a law concerning the governance of the newly re-captured province of his empire, Justinian thanks God that He has “seen fit to avenge the wrongs of his church and pluck the people of might provinces from the yoke of servitude through me, the least of his servants.” Moreover, the Emperor, keen to be seen as the new defender of orthodoxy, issued a plethora of harsh anti-heretical legislation. Included in this was a law of 527 issued in the names of Justin and Justinian, which called for the death penalty for Manicheans:

> We call heretics other persons, just as the accursed Manicheans and those about like these; indeed, it is unnecessary that they even should be named or should appear anywhere at all or should defile what they have touched. But the Manicheans – as we have said – ought to be expelled and none ought to either to tolerate or to overlook their denomination. If needed a person diseased with atheism should dwell in the same place with others, but also a Manichean, wherever on earth appearing, ought to be subjected to punishments to the extreme degree…

Whether this piece of legislation was issued in response to an actual threat or simply amounts to a condemnation of an already defeated foe is ambiguous. It does seem clear that ‘Manichean’ as well as other ancient heresies such as Marcionism and even Samaritanism are gradually being used to more broadly designate any and all enemies of orthodoxy. Indeed, both Chalcedonians and their opponents routinely labeled each other as such. By the end of the sixth century, as Paret pithily states, “Les Monophysites accusent les Chalcédoniens de *Manichéisme* et de

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88 Codex 1.27.1, quoted in Moorhead, *Justinian*, 69. This text, issued in 534 and which includes a laundry list of Arian abuses, may very well be a summary of Victor’s narrative. See Victor of Vita, *History*, trans. Moorhead, xviii, n.27. Procopius also suggests in his *Wars* (3.10.1) that a vision of a martyred African bishop convinced Justinian to embark on his campaign of re-conquest.
89 Gardner and Lieu, eds., *Manichaean Texts*, 149.
Marcionisme; les adversaires…accusent de même les partisans du monophysisme.” The ancient heresies “n’est plus qu’un insulting sans cotenu religieux réel.”

This change can also be seen in another problematic account of Manicheans found in Agnellus of Ravenna’s Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravennatis (LPR), composed in the mid-ninth century. Agnellus’ account was likely modeled on the Roman Liber Pontificalis which by the Carolingian period had become “the basic formula for all future gesta episcoporum.” The Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravennatis was a deeply partisan, pro-Ravenna text composed as a counter-history to that championed by the later Roman Church and to champion lost Ravennese autocephaly. Agnellus’ primary concern was to emphasize his city’s antiquity, the apostolic nature of the founding of its church, and to justify its independence from Rome, although by the time Agnellus penned his account, Ravenna had long been a papal territory. Manicheans make one extremely odd appearance in Agnellus’s work, rearing their ugly heads during the episcopate of Maximian (546-557):

…the heresy of the Manicheans arose in the city of Ravenna, which the orthodox Christians overcame, they threw [them] out of the city, they

90 Paret, "Dometianus de Méliitène," 59-60. cf. Cameron, Circus Factions, 140-141. who states that Manichean, along with Jew and Samaritan are “frequently linked in Byzantine religious abuse.” The fact that ‘Samaritan’ is being used as an insult only serves to reinforce the fact that these terms, by the mid sixth century, were completely disconnected from their original meanings.


92 Pizarro, Writing Ravenna, 11.

93 While no scholarly consensus exists as to whether Agnellus in fact had access to and directly borrowed from the LP, the style and perhaps some of the content of the work does suggest at least a passing familiarity. It is certainly possible that, as Pizarro suggests, while “Agnellus stays close to the Roman formula” he may have “known and used [it] independently of the book. Agnellus does not seem aware that in order to give voice to the claims of Ravenna against Rome, he has had to borrow a Roman vehicle.” However, the fact that Agnellus employed a Roman literary convention – one which was in common use by a number of early medieval authors including Gregory of Tours’ Historia Francorum, Bede’s Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum, John the Deacon’s Gesta episcoporum Neapolitanorum and Paul the Deacon’s Gesta episcoporum Mettensium and Historia Romana, all of which are modeled on the Roman LP – may suggest Agnellus was familiar with the Roman work he was in some sense attempting to counter. It is hardly surprising that he does not in his text explicitly recognize the ‘Roman’ nature of his own, anti-Roman work. Ibid., 11-12.. On Paul the Deacon, Gregory of Tours and the Roman LP, see Walter Goffart, “Paul the Deacon’s Gesta Episcoporum Mettensium and the Early Design of Charlemagne’s Succession,” Traditio, 42 (1986), 65-66. On Bede’s use of the LP, see Goffart, Narrators, 244, 267,303. Paul the Deacon can be found in MGH: Script. Langobardorum, 398, eds. Bethmann and Waitz.

94 Pizarro, Writing Ravenna, 11.
stoned them in a place that is called Fossa Sconii, next to the river, and they died in their sins, and evil was cast out of Ravenna.\textsuperscript{95}

The use of a specific place name certainly lends a degree of veracity to the account. However, a revival of Manichaeism in Ravenna in the mid-sixth century seems highly unlikely – moreover, the Catholic bishops almost certainly had a huge number of actual Gothic, Arians to worry about. Why emphasize an encounter with a much less pervasive and threatening heresy? Like Victor, the polemical and hagiographical nature of Agnellus’ account helps to explain the sudden appearance of Manicheans.

Finally, Agnellus’s use of Manicheans – as well as the Roman LP and to a lesser extent the \textit{Historia Persecutionis} – can be usefully compared to Gregory of Tours’ representation of Arians in his \textit{Historia Francorum}. Gregory, like the LP, placed tremendous emphasis on the role of the bishop, in particular as defender of orthodoxy against the threat of heretics – in Gregory’s case, it was Arians rather than Manicheans.\textsuperscript{96} The emphasis on Arianism is somewhat curious as Arianism must have ceased to exist in Gaul as a serious religious and political threat by the time Gregory penned his \textit{Historiae}.\textsuperscript{97} Gregory himself notes that “the faith of the church is [now] not shaken by any danger; nor is a new heresy rising up” which would tend to confirm that Arianism was by no means a persistent concern for the Gallic church in the late sixth century.\textsuperscript{98}

\textsuperscript{95} Agnellus, \textit{LPR}, ed. Deliyannis, 193. “Post haec autem Manicheorum hereses exorta est in civitate Ravenna, quam orthodoxi christiani convincentes, eiecerunt extra civitatem, in loco qui dicitur Fossa Sconii iuxta fluvium lapidibus obruerunt, et mortui sunt in peccatis suis, et ablata sunt mala a Ravenna.”

\textsuperscript{96} On Gregory’s understanding of the role of the bishop and its importance, see Martin Heinzelmann, "Heresy in Books I and II of Gregory of Tours’ \textit{Historiae}," in \textit{After Rome’s Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History: Essays Presented to Walter Goffart}, ed. Alexander C. Murray (Toronto, 1998), 71-2 with notes.

\textsuperscript{97} To Gaul, we might also add Africa and perhaps Italy as Arian-free zones. Goffart, \textit{Narrators}, 213-214. Cf. Heinzelmann, \textit{Heresy}, 70. Heinzelmann notes Gregory’s stress on Clovis, now baptized as a Christian, in his role opposing heretics. Indeed, the prologue of book II emphasized Samuel and David’s fight against the “sacrilegious Phineas” (“Phineem sacrilegum”) and the “heretic Goliath,” (“Goliam alyphylum”) and the prologue of book III emphasized Clovis’ Catholicism in his victory over Alaric: “Hanc Chlodovechus rex confessus, ipsis hereticos adiuturium eius oppraesset regnumque suum per totas Gallias dilatavit; Alaricus hanc denegans, a regno et populo atque ab ipsa, quod magis est, vita multitut aeterna.” Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.} II, prologue, III, prologue, \textit{Hist.} IX 20. The statement “eclesiae fides periculo ullo non quatitur; heresis nova non surgit” appears in the context of a discussion between Gregory and Guntram, king of Burgundy in 558 in which they...
Nevertheless, for Gregory, Arius, the “undisputed prince of the heretics” became a theme who could stand in as “the archetype of modern heresies.”\textsuperscript{99} By cataloguing the various crimes of Arian rulers, Gregory at once highlighted the zealous nature of Frankish bishops in their longstanding battle against the recalcitrant heretics and reminded his “forgetful audience…that the Catholic Church of Gaul had been fiercely assailed by Arian attacks and had been saved by the pagan convert Clovis.”\textsuperscript{100} Arianism was not a real threat for Gregory – it was a motif used to blacken the names of kings and to highlight the piety of those bishops who stood against them.

Conclusion

As the bishops of Rome, emperors and barbarian successor states in Italy, Gaul and North Africa attempted to assert their authority after the collapse of Roman power in the West, theologians and polemicists began to evoke the memory of ancient heresies as a literary weapon. Whereas Gregory focused attention on Arianism, the compiler of the LP emphasized a battle against heretics who may not have actually existed in order to stress the importance of the bishops of Rome. When we consider Leo I’s seemingly successful persecution of the sect, the propagandistic nature of the \textit{Liber Pontificalis} and the proliferation of accusations of Manichaeism in both eastern and papal Christological polemic, the attacks against Manicheans initiated by Gelasius, but especially by Symmachus and Hormisdas, appear to be a literary motif utilized to emphasize the orthodox and zealous nature of these Roman bishops in opposition to those who favoured reconciliation with heretics of any variety. This is not to necessarily completely deny the possibility that that there was some limited form of anti-Manichean persecution that formed the basis of the LP’s claims, although there is no external evidence to support such a claim.

However, what is more significant is not the factuality of the persecutions themselves, but that the compiler of the \textit{Liber Pontificalis} chose to emphasize this Manichean encounter – real or imagined – as an essential element of these particular biographies. That Roman bishops described as fighting on behalf of orthodoxy against anti-Chalcedonians at home and in the east are claimed to have overcome an ancient enemy of the faith – one increasingly associated with discuss why church councils, governed by bishops, ought to continue to take place despite the fact that there were no immediate threats to the church such as heresy. Gregory had been sent to Guntram as an envoy for king Childebert.

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., III, prologue.; Heinzelmann, \textit{Heresy}, 73.
\textsuperscript{100} Goffart, \textit{Narrators}, 216.
Eutychianism – is more than mere coincidence. Here, heresy is being used as a foil by propagandists friendly to Symmachus, and by extension to the Leonine/Gelasian position, to bolster Symmachus’ position over and against those within the Roman Church who sought some compromise with the emperor over Christology.
Bibliography

Notes on Citation: the Letters of the Bishops of Rome

Because Leo’s letters are commonly cited according to their inumeration in the PL, I have given both the JK and PL numbers together with the edition from which they were actually taken. e.g. JK 420 = ep. 23 (ACO II.4, pp. 4-5). In the case of Gelasius, I have included only the JK number and edition. e.g. JK 664 (Thiel ep. 26, pp. 392-413 = CA ep. 95, pp. 369-398).

Primary Sources

(NB: for the letters and tractates of the bishops of Rome, see separate entry under ‘Letters and tractates of the Bishops of Rome,’ below)


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