

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Simon Magus

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SIMON MAGUS.—The name usually given for the sake of distinction to that Simon who is mentioned in only one place in the New Testament, but to whom, both in Patristic literature and in modern criticism, the part assigned is very considerable. There are some features in the story of the New Testament which excite our curiosity; the early Fathers have detailed accounts of his false teaching, and give him the doubtful honour of being the first of the heresiarchs, the source and spring of all later heresy; early Christian romance writers embellished his history with many wonderful details, and made him the antagonist of Simon Peter, both in verbal disputations and in the exhibition of magical arts; while a school of modern critics has found in his career and the stories concerning him the chief support for a far-reaching reconstruction of our conceptions of early Christianity. In order to obtain a sound basis for our investigations, it will be useful after examining the account in the New Testament to go carefully through the Patristic evidence in chronological order, and after that consider the fuller narratives of uncertain date contained in the Clementine literature and Apocryphal *Acts*. We shall thus be in a better position to estimate the force and value of modern criticism, and be able to offer a probable explanation of the various difficulties that the problem presents.

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1. SIMON IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In Acts 8:5–24, where the preaching of Philip in Samaria is described, we are told that 'there was a certain man called Simon, which beforetime in the city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one' (λέγων εἶναι τινα ἑαυτὸν μέγαν). All the people followed him, and described him as 'that power

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of God which is called great' (οὗτός ἐστιν ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη μεγάλη). When the rest of the city was converted, Simon also believed and was baptized, and continued with Philip, amazed at his miracles. When Peter and John came down, they laid hands on the converts, who received the Holy Ghost. Simon then offered Peter money, saying, 'Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.' Peter sternly rebuked him. 'Thy money perish with thee ... thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter ... thou art in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity.' Simon entreated him to pray the Lord that none of those things might come upon him.

It will be more convenient to postpone comments on this passage until we have collected further information on the subject.

2. PATRISTIC EVIDENCE

The earliest information outside the New Testament comes from *Justin Martyr*, c. 150 (*Apol.* i. 26, 56 [cf. *Eus. HE* ii. 13, 14]; *Dial.* 120). He tells us that Simon was a Samaritan, of the village of Gitta; he came to Rome in the time of Claudius Cæsar; by the power of the demons he worked miracles, and was honoured in Rome as a god, so that a statue was erected in his honour by order of the Senate and people, between the two bridges, bearing the inscription SIMONI DEO SANCTO. Almost all the Samaritans and a few of other nations honour him as the first god (πρῶτος θεός). He took about with him a woman called Helena, who had formerly been a prostitute, and whom he is said to have called the first conception (πρώτη ἔννοια) which came forth from him. He is described as God above 'all rule and authority and power.' We also gather that Justin looked upon him as the originator of heresy and the source whence all later heresies were derived.

As regards one part of this story an interesting discovery has been made. In the year 1574 there was dug up in the place indicated by Justin, namely, in the island of the Tiber, a marble fragment, apparently the base of a statue, with the inscription SEMONI SANCO DEO FIDIO. It is now generally agreed that Justin mistook a statue dedicated to a Sabine deity for one dedicated to Simon (*Gruter, Insc. Ant.* i. p. 95, n. 5), although whether the mistake was his own or was earlier than himself we cannot say. But nothing in this mistake need invalidate his testimony about Simon in Samaria. Justin himself was a

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Samaritan, he draws attention at least once (*Dial.* 120; cf. *Apol.* ii. 15) to the fact that he had spoken the truth to his own disadvantage. On the subject of the sect which called itself after the name of Simon he must be taken as first-hand evidence. And there are strong grounds for thinking that we have a fuller account which emanates from him. Accounts of Simon Magus are contained in the following heresiological works: Irenæus (i. xvi.), pseudo-Tertullian (i.), Hippolytus (*Refutation*, vi.), Philaster (29), Epiphanius (*Panarion*, 21). Of these, that in Hippolytus' *Refutatio* consists of two parts; that from § 7 to § 18, containing extract from a work called ἡ μεγάλη ἀπόφασις, 'the Great Revelation,' presents a different system from that found elsewhere, and will be noticed further on; that in § 19 and § 20 is derived from the same source from which the greater part of the matter in all the other heresiologists comes. It is now generally agreed, and probably on good grounds, that this common source was a treatise (σύνταγμα) on heresies written by Justin and referred to by himself (*Apol.* i. 26). The following is the account put together from these different sources:—

Simon was said to have taught that he was the highest God, the most elevated virtue (τὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα δύναμιν). He carried about with him Helena, who he said was the first conception of his mind, the mother of all, by whom he conceived in his mind to create the angels and archangels. She was also called Wisdom (σοφία), according to pseudo-Tertullian, and Holy Spirit and Prunicus (προϋνικός), according to Epiphanius. She, knowing her father's wish, leapt forth from him and created the angels and powers by whom this world and man were created. She was unable to return to her father because of the envy and desire of those whom she had created, and suffered contumely, and was compelled to assume human form. She passed through the centuries, as it were, from one vessel to another, transmigrating from one female form to another. She was the Helen about whom the Trojan war was fought; the wooden horse representing the ignorance of the nations. After that she passed from form to form, and lastly became a prostitute in a brothel at Tyre: she was the lost sheep. But since the rulers of the world ruled it ill, and in order to redeem her, the Supreme Power descended to the lower world. He passed through the regions ruled by the principalities and powers, in each region making himself like to those in it, and so among men he appeared as a man. He appeared among the Jews as the Son, in Samaria as the Father, in other nations as the Holy Spirit. In Judæa he had seemed to suffer, but had not. He allowed himself to be called by whatsoever names men liked. He thus succeeded in saving Helena, as she expected. He brought man to a knowledge of himself, and liberated the world and those who were his from the rule of those who had made the world. The

cf. Compare.

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Jewish prophecies, he said, were inspired by the angels who made the world. Therefore those who had hope in him and Helena need no longer care for them, but might freely do as they would, for men were saved according to his grace and not according to good works. There was no real difference between good and bad, they were merely accidental distinctions made by the creators of the world. The morality of the sect was, we are told, in accordance with these principles. Their priests (*mystici sacerdotes*) lived lascivious lives, used magic and incantations, made philtres, had familiar spirits, and had images of Simon and Helena made in the form of Zeus and Athena.

Hegesippus (c. 180), in a corrupt passage quoted by Eus. iv. 22, speaks of Simon, from whom came the Simonians; Cleobius, whence the Cleobians; and Dositheus, whence the Dositheans; and Gorthæus, whence the Gortheni; and Masbotheus, whence the Masbotheans—from these, he says, came the followers of Menander; and he then enumerates the later heretics. It would be interesting to know if this heretical genealogy is independent of Justin.

Tertullian (c. 200) does not seem to have any original information. He knows the story about the statue (*Apol.* 13). He gives a long account of Simon's system, derived apparently from Irenæus (*de Anima*, 34). He says that even in his own day the presumption of the sect of Simon is so great that they even presume to raise the souls of the prophets from the lower regions (*Ecce hodie eiusdem Simonis hæreticos tanta presumptio artis extollit, ut etiam prophetarum animas ab inferis movere se spondeant*).

Clement of Alexandria (c. 200) gives us little information about Simon. There is a chronological remark in *Strom.* vii. 17 which is quite inexplicable, and in *Strom.* ii. 11 he tells us that the followers of Simon wish to be made like the 'Standing One' whom they worship.

In *Hippolytus* (*Refutatio*, vi. 7–18) (c. 230 a.d.) extracts are given from a work which evidently described a somewhat different system, and was called 'the Great Revelation.'

The first principle, according to this, is called ἀπέραντος δύναμις, it is fire or silence; the fire is of two sorts, φανερόν and χρυπτόν, that which is hidden being the secret principle which causes that which is open. The world is derived from the unborn fire (γεννητὸς ἐξ ἀγεννήτου); first came six roots in pairs, male and

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female, viz. νοῦς and ἐπίνοια, φωνή and ὄνομα, λογισμός, and ἐνθύμησις. Corresponding to these are six visible or realized counterparts οὐρανός and γῆ, ἥλιος and σελήνη, ἀήρ and ὕδωρ. A large part of the work is devoted to proving the system by an allegorical use of the OT, but it is interesting to notice that there are elements derived from Aristotle, especially the distinction which runs through the whole of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια. Simon calls himself ὁ ἐστώς, ὁ στάς, ὁ στησόμενος, implying his pre-existence and his immortality. A short extract will be sufficient to show the character of the book: 'To you then I say what I say, and I write what I write. The writing is this. There are two offshoots of the complete Æons, having neither beginning nor end, from one root, which is the invisible, incomprehensible power silence, of which the one is manifested from above, which is the great power, the intellect of the universe, that administers all things, the male principle; but the other is from below, vast thought, the female principle, generative of all things. Whence corresponding to one another they form a pair (συζυγία), and they reveal the middle space as an atmosphere which cannot be comprehended, having neither beginning nor end. But in this is the father who hears and nourishes all things that have beginning and end. This is he who stood, who standeth, who will stand, being a bisexual power, the reflex of the pre-existent, unlimited power which hath neither beginning nor end, being in solitude; for from this the thought which pre-existed in solitude came forth and became twain.'

Besides the extracts from this book, Hippolytus also tells us (vi. 20) that Simon went as far as Rome, where he seduced many by his magical arts, but was opposed by Peter. This is the earliest reference to a contest with St. Peter at Rome, unless the notice in Philaster (see below) was derived from the earlier treatise of Hippolytus, in which case it would belong to the close of the 2nd cent. Hippolytus goes on to give an account of his death, different from any that we have in other sources. At the end of his life Simon stated that if he were buried alive he would rise on the third day. He ordered his disciples to dig a grave and to bury him. They did as they were ordered, 'but he remained away even to the present day. For he was not the Christ.'

Origen (c. 249 a.d.), in the *contra Celsum*, v. 62, tells us that Celsus, enumerating all the Christian heretics, speaks of Simonians who, worshipping Helena, or a teacher Helenus, are called Heleniani. Origen points out that Celsus has omitted to notice that the Simonians never confess Jesus as the Son of God, but say that Simon is the power of God. In vi. 11 Origen points out that Simon has no followers, and Dositheus not more than

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thirty. He adds that this is all the more marvellous, as Simon had taken away for his disciples the danger of death, saying that to sacrifice to idols was a matter of indifference. In the same work (i. 57) we are told that Simon has not thirty followers, or that that is an exaggerated number.

Commodian (c. 250), in *Carm. apol.* p. 613, speaking of beasts which have had the power of speech by the power of God, tells us of the dog which St. Peter made to speak to Simon. This story is found in the Apocryphal *Acts*.

The author of the treatise *de Rebaptismate*, ch. 16 (c. 260 a.d.), tells us of followers of Simon who make fire appear in the water when they baptize.

In the *Syriac Didascalia* (end of 3rd cent.), vi. 8 and 9 (Lagarde, Syriac text, and in Bunsen, *Analecta Antenicæna*, ii. p. 325), we have a reference to Simon and Cleobius and others of his followers, and an account of the final destruction of Simon in the contest with Peter at Rome. As this work is almost inaccessible, and its evidence is important, the following extracts are given in full:* —

Syriac, p. 100, l. 18 '(Concerning Simon the sorcerer). For the beginning of heresies was on this wise. Satan clothed himself with Simon, a man who was a sorcerer, and of old time was his servant. And when we, by the gift of the Lord our God, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, were doing powers of healing in Jerusalem, and by means of the laying on of hands, the communication of the Holy Spirit was given to those who presented themselves, then he brought to us much silver, and desired that, as he had deprived Adam of the knowledge of life by the eating of the tree, so also he might deprive us of the gift of God by the gift of silver, and might seize our understandings by the gift of riches, in order that we might give to him in exchange for silver the power of the Holy Spirit. And we were all troubled about this. Then Peter looked at Satan, who was dwelling in Simon, and said to him, "Thy silver shall go with thee to destruction, and thou shalt not have part in this matter."'

P. 101 '(Concerning false apostles). But when we divided to the twelve parts for all the world, and went forth among the Gentiles in all the world, to preach the word, then Satan wrought and disturbed the people to send after us false apostles for the refutation of the word. And he sent out from the people one whose name was

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* The writer is indebted for these extracts to the Rev. W.C. Allen of Exeter College, Oxford, who is engaged on a translation of the Syriac. The passage is also contained in the Latin Fragment, xxxii.

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Cleobius, and joined him to Simon, and also others after them. They of the house of Simon followed me, Peter, and came to corrupt the word. And when he was in Rome he disturbed the Church [much], and turned away many. And showed himself as though flying. And he laid hold of the Gentiles, terrifying them by the power of the working of his sorceries. And in one of the days I went and saw him flying in the air. Then I rose up and said, "By the power of the name of Jesus I cut away thy powers." And he fell, and the ankle of his foot was broken. And then many turned away from him. But others who were worthy of him clave to him. And thus first was established and became that heresy of his. And also by means of other false apostles,' etc.
(Brackets as in Syriac text).

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Arnobius (c. 310, *contra Gentes*, ii. 12) knows of the story of the contest of Simon and Peter at Rome. 'For they had seen,' he says, 'the chariot of Simon Magus and the four flaming horses scattered by the mouth of Peter, and disappearing at the name of Christ.' He had been hurled down, and his legs broken; then, taken to Brunda, worn out with tortures and with shame, he had again thrown himself down from a lofty summit.

Eusebius (c. AD 324, *HE* ii. 13. 14) gives an account of Simon drawn from Justin Martyr and Irenæus, and embellished with somewhat strong vituperative language. He then goes on to refer to a contest with Peter, first in Judæa, then in Rome.

'Forthwith,' he says, 'the above-mentioned impostor was smitten in the eyes of his mind by a Divine and wonderful light, and when first he had been convicted in Judæa by the Apostle Peter of the evil deeds he had committed, he departed in flight on a great journey over the sea from the East to the West, thinking in this way only he would be able to live as he wished.' He tells us that he came to Rome, was assisted there by the devil, obtained great influence, and was honoured by a statue. But during the reign of Claudius, Peter himself came there. 'And when the Divine word thus made its dwelling there, the power of Simon and the man himself were immediately quenched.'

Eusebius and the author of the *Syriac Didascalia* quoted above are the first writers who speak of both a contest in Judæa and also one in Rome; but there does not seem to be any reason for thinking that either of them had any other source for the former than the Acts of the Apostles. We do not know Eusebius' source for the overthrow of Simon by Peter, and his language is curiously ambiguous. Probably he is giving the common story, drawn

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from mere apocryphal writing, the worthlessness of which he knows quite well. This makes him avoid both a quotation and direct details.

Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 347, *Cat.* vi. 14, 15) gives an account based upon the Acts and Justin. He also gives an account of the destruction of Simon when he attempted to fly. It is interesting, as we shall see, to notice that he ascribes the final catastrophe to the joint agency of Peter and Paul, showing that he possessed a story which contained the names of them both.

The work *de excidio Hierosolym.* iii. 2 (a.d. 368), ascribed to Hegesippus, but probably by Ambrose, gives an account of a contest at Rome of Peter and Paul with Simon. It narrates a considerable number of incidents contained in the Latin *Acts*.

Philaster (c. 380 a.d.), in his account of heresies (*Hær.* xxix.), knows of the contest at Rome with Peter before Nero. He tells us that Simon fled from Jerusalem to escape Peter, and came to Rome, and then narrates the contest. If this came from his source, the early treatise of Hippolytus, it would throw the evidence for it into the 2nd cent.; but as it is absent in the parallel passage of Epiphanius, and as Hippolytus in his later treatise knows the story in another form, it is not probable that it did.

Jerome (in *Matt.* 24⁵) (387 a.d.) tells us that Simon said, 'Ego sum sermo Dei, ego sum speciosus, ego paracletus, ego omnipotens, ego omnia Dei.'

The *Apostolic Constitutions*, which date from Antioch about the year 400, give the legend of Simon Magus in what we may call its complete form (vi. 7–9)—

The source of all heresy is Simon of Gitta. First of all, the story in the Acts is given. Then comes an account of all the false teachers who went forth into the world. Then of the contest between Simon and Peter at Cæsarea, where the companions of Peter were Zacchæus the publican, and Barnabas, and Nicetas and Aquila, brothers of Clement, 'bishop and citizen of Rome, who had been the disciple of Paul and co-apostle and helper in the gospel.' They discoursed for three days concerning prophecy and the unity of the Godhead. Then Simon, being defeated, fled into Italy. Then comes an account of the contest at Rome of the same character as we shall come across shortly in the Apocryphal *Acts*.

This account is very much fuller than the narrative contained in the *Syriac Didascalia*, written probably rather more than a century earlier, and seems to imply a considerable

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growth of the legend. As will shortly be seen, it implies a knowledge of the Clementine literature in some form, and of the Apocryphal *Acts*.

In reviewing this catena of passages certain points become clear. During the 2nd cent. all the information, as far as we know, that existed about Simon, is derived from the Acts of the Apostles and the writings of Justin. There seems to be no knowledge of the contest with Peter at Rome, although Justin believed that Simon had visited Rome. In the 3rd cent. we begin to get an account of the contest with Peter, which we find in Hippolytus, Commodian, the authors of the *Syriac Didascalia*, and Aurelius. Eusebius and the *Didascalia* contain this legend, with an account of a contest in Palestine, but do not imply anything beyond the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles; Cyril's account seems of much the same character. It is not until we reach the close of the 4th cent. that we find in the *Apostolic Constitutions* what we may call the completed legend, combining the stories which, as we shall see, are derived from the Clementine literature with those derived from the Apocryphal *Acts* and the narrative in the Acts of the Apostles. The contrast between the earlier *Didascalia* and the later *Constitutions* is from this point of view most instructive. We are now in a position to study the fuller legends.

3. THE CLEMENTINE LITERATURE AND APOCRYPHAL ACTS

(A) *THE CLEMENTINE HOMILIES AND RECOGNITIONS*.—These are two forms of what appear to be an early Christian romance, containing the story of the wanderings of Clement in search of truth, the preaching and missionary journeys of Peter, his contest with Simon Magus, and the reunion of Clement with the lost members of his family—his father, mother, and two brothers. The *Recognitions* we possess only in a translation made by Rufinus about the year 400; the *Homilies* contain a somewhat different form of the same story in Greek. There are also a Syriac version and later epitomes which need not trouble us. Neither the *Recognitions* nor the *Homilies* contain the story in its original form, both presenting later features; and there is no accepted opinion concerning the date or the sources of the book. But the completed work must belong to a time when the controversy with Marcion's teaching and the preservation of the Divine $\mu\nu\nu\alpha\rho\chi\acute{\iota}\alpha$ were of interest in the Church, *i.e.* to the early part of the 3rd cent.; and some of the sources may be earlier. The earliest quotations come from Origen (*c.* 230). The work is clearly not orthodox in doctrine, but presents Ebionite features tinged with the Gnosticism it combats. We will give the account contained in the *Homilies*, stating at the conclusion the main differences in the narrative of the *Recognitions*.

The *Homilies* begin with an account of Clement, of his early religious impulses, of the desire that he had to hear of the new prophet, and of his meeting with Peter at

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Cæsarea in Palestine. He finds that Peter is, on the next day, to dispute with a certain Simon of Gitta (Bk. i.). The history of Simon is then related by Aquila and Nicetas, who had formerly been his pupils. His father's name was Antonius, his mother's, Rachel. He was a Samaritan of the village of Gitta or Githæ, six miles from Samaria. He was educated at Alexandria, and skilled in the wisdom of the Greeks and in magic. He wishes to be considered the highest virtue (ἀνωτάτη τις δύναμις), higher than the Creator of the world. He calls himself the Standing One (ὁ Ἴστῶς), as signifying that he will always be firmly established (ὡς δὴ στησόμενος αἰεί), and having no cause of corruption in him. The Creator of the world is not the highest God, nor will the dead be raised. He denies Jerusalem and substitutes Mt. Gerizim. He puts himself in the place of Christ. He perverts the Law by his own interpretation of it. He was the chief of the disciples of John the Hemerobaptist. As our Lord had 12 apostles symbolizing the 12 months of the year, so John had 30, of whom one was a woman named Helena, thus symbolizing the 29½ days in a month. The death of John occurred during the absence of Simon in Alexandria, and Dositheus succeeded to his place. Simon, on his return, desiring the headship, pretended to be a disciple, and then accused Dositheus of not delivering the teaching correctly. Dositheus then attempted to beat him with a rod, whereupon Simon became a cloud of smoke. Dositheus, knowing that he was not himself the 'Standing One,' said, 'If you are the Standing One, I will worship you.' Simon claims that he is, becomes head of the sect, and Dositheus shortly afterwards dies. Simon, taking Helena with him, goes about disturbing the people. Helena, he says, had come down from the highest heavens; was mistress (κυρία), the All-mother, and Wisdom (παμμήτορα οὐσίαν καὶ σοφίαν); for her sake the Greeks and barbarians fought, having formed an image of the truth, for she was really then with the highest God. To aid him in his magical arts, he had killed a boy, and separated the soul from his body, and made an image which he kept concealed in an inner room by which he divined. A description is given of his miracles. He made statues walk. He appears wrapped in fire without being burnt. He is able to fly, to make bread out of stones. He becomes a serpent or a goat. He shows two faces. He can open and shut doors. He makes vessels in his house which wait upon him, without its appearing how they are moved (Bk. ii.).

After some delay, during which Peter has explained the mystical meaning of Scripture, the disputes between him and Simon take place; Simon undertaking to prove from the Scriptures that there is more than one God, and that he whom Peter called God is not the highest God, for he is without foresight, imperfect, incomplete, and exposed to every form of human passion (iii. 38). The disputations last three days. On the fourth day it was found that Simon had fled by night to Tyre, and was there deceiving the people by his magic (iii. 58). Clement, Nicetas,

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and Aquila are sent on to Tyre, and Simon flees to Sidon, leaving some of his disciples (iv. 6), who, at Tyre, discuss with Clement the Greek fables concerning the gods (Bks. iv.–vi.). Peter comes to Tyre and Sidon, when Simon goes on to Berytus. Peter follows him, and after a slight altercation Simon goes to Tripolis. Peter again follows (Bk. vii.) him, and Simon flees into Syria.

At Tripolis Peter remains a long time. There Clement is baptized, and then they go on towards Antioch in Syria by Orthosia and Antaradus (viii.–xi.). Then comes the story of Clement's family (xii.–xv.), and they go on by Bataniæ, Paltus and Gabala to Laodicea. To Laodicea comes Simon from Antioch, and a long dispute takes place between him and Peter concerning the unity of the Godhead and the existence of evil (xvi.–xix.). Then Faustus, the newly-discovered father of Clement, goes to see Simon. Simon by his magical arts succeeds in making the face of Faustus like his own, and then departs to Antioch, where he accuses Peter of being a magician. Cornelius the centurion has been ordered by the emperor to arrest all magicians. It is for this reason that Simon has changed the face of Faustus, and he escapes to Judæa. Faustus then goes to Antioch, and uses the appearance which Simon has given him to destroy the latter's influence. The people think that he is Simon. In Simon's name he recants, confesses his deceit and impostures, and Peter is sent for to come to Antioch.

The main differences which concern us in the *Recognitions* are as follow: Nothing is said about Simon being a pupil of John. Helena is called Luna (σελήνη). Simon says that Rachel was not really his mother, but that he had previously been conceived by a virgin. The main difference in the book is one of order: instead of two disputes between Peter and Simon—one at Cæsarea, the other at Laodicea—we have one dispute at Cæsarea, and there most of the matters discussed in the *Homilies* at Laodicea are placed by this editor (ii. 19–72, iii. 12–48). Reference is made (iii. 63) to Simon having said that he would go to Rome, and that there he would be looked on as a god and honoured with statues, and in iii. 64 it is said that he had been there. The voyage along the Syrian coast-line is treated very shortly, in iv.–vi. we have discourses of Peter, in vii.–ix. the story of Clement. Then at the end of x. Simon comes on the stage again, we have the same story as at the close of the *Homilies*, only that the father of Clement is called, not Faustus but Faustinianus.

It will be noticed that this work seems to fall very easily into separate elements. Bks. i. and vii.–x. 51 are concerned with the story of Clement. Bks. ii. and iii. with the story of the contest of Simon and Peter. Bks. iv.–vi. with sermons of Peter. Bk. x. 52 ff. contains the concluding story concerning Simon, which hardly fits in with

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this version of the history. The journey along the Phoenician coast is very much attenuated, and there are suggestions that originally Simon went straight to Rome after the contest at Cæsarea.

(B) *THE LEGENDARY ACTS OF ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL.*—The story of Simon in these *Acts* differs from that in the Clementine literature. Both alike are concerned with contests between Simon Magus and Simon Peter; but while the latter place the scene of the contest in Syria, the *Acts* place it in Rome. The legends appear in two forms: the one is that contained in the *Actus Petri cum Simone*, a document of Gnostic origin, believed to have belonged to the collection known as Leucian; the other is the *Acts of Peter and Paul* (πράξεις τῶν ἀγίων ἀποστόλων Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου).

(1) According to the *Actus Petri cum Simone*, after St. Paul had left Rome, a stir arose in that city, about a man called Simon, who was at Aricia, who had worked many miracles, and said he was the great power (*magnam virtutem*) of God, and without God did nothing. He receives a summons: 'Thou art in Italy God, thou art the saviour of the Romans; hasten quickly to Rome.' He promises to come the next day at the seventh hour, flying through the air at the city gate. At the appointed time smoke is seen approaching, and suddenly Simon appears in the midst. The brethren are in a state of great consternation because Paul is away, and they are left without any to comfort them, and the greater number fall away. Meanwhile the twelve years of Peter's sojourn in Jerusalem are fulfilled, and Christ bids him go to Rome, for Simon, whom he had driven out of Judæa, had anticipated him there. We may pass over the account of Peter's voyage and arrival in Rome. He finds Simon living in the house of Marcellus, a Roman senator of great philanthropy, whom he had perverted by his magic. When Peter hears of the manner in which Marcellus has been deceived, he begins an attack on Simon, describing him as a 'ravening wolf, stealing the sheep which are not his.' It was he who inspired Judas to betray Christ, and hardened the heart of Herod and Caiaphas. He then goes to the house of Simon. Being refused admittance, he looses a dog and bids him carry a message. The dog goes in, raises his forefeet, and in a loud voice bids Simon come forth Marcellus at once recognises his sin, and, going out, falls at Peter's feet and asks pardon. He explains how he had been persuaded to erect a statue SIMONI IVVENI DEO: 'To Simon, the youthful god.' Further conversations of Simon and of Peter with the dog follow; then it, having fulfilled its mission, dies. Peter then turns a dead sardine into a live fish, and Marcellus, overpowered by these miracles, with the help of his servant turns Simon out of his house. Simon then goes to Peter's home. Peter sends him a message by means of an infant seven months old, who speaks and bids him leave Rome, and keep silence until the following Sabbath.

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Peter then narrates the story of how he had rescued a woman named Eubola from Simon in Palestine. Further miracles and discourses of Peter are narrated, and the night before the contest is spent in prayer and fasting. On the day of the contest all Rome comes together, the senators, the prefect, and the officers. First comes a verbal disputation, and in the speech of Peter we notice apparently a Gnostic tendency. The contest begins by Simon making a young man die by his word. An interruption occurs. A woman rushes in saying that her son is dead, and some young men are sent to fetch him. Peter then raises the young man whom Simon had put to death, a favourite of the emperor, and the son of the widow who had been brought to him. Again, the mother of a certain senator, Nicostrates, asks Peter to heal her son. The dead body is brought. Peter challenges Simon to raise it. Simon makes it seem to move, but Peter really raises it. All the people then follow Peter.

Simon still tries to deceive the people by pretended miracles, but Peter exposes him. As no one believes him, he explains that he is going to God: 'Men of Rome, do you think that Peter has shown himself stronger than me, and has overcome me? And do you follow him? You are deceived. To-morrow, leaving you impious and godless men, I will fly to God, whose power I am, having been weakened. If, then, you have fallen, I am he that standeth (ὁ Ἐστῶς), and I go to the Father, and will say to him, "Me, the Standing One, thy son, they wished to overthrow; but having refused to agree with them, I have come to myself." ' The people come together to see him fly. He appears flying over Rome. Peter prays, and he falls down, having his leg broken in three places. The people stone him, and all follow Peter. Simon is taken to Aricia, and then to Terracina, where he dies.

(2) The *Acta Petri et Pauli* occur in two forms, the *Μαρτύριον τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου* and the *πράξεις τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου*, but the variations between them do not affect the story of Simon. The main point of difference between this story and that which we have just narrated is that St. Paul is here made the companion of St. Peter instead of being represented as having left Rome.

Owing to the success of the preaching of Peter and Paul, the Jews and priests stir up Simon against Peter. Simon is summoned before Nero, and by his miracles convinces Nero of the truth of his claims to be Son of God, and Nero orders Peter and Paul to be brought before him. The contest is first one of words, in which St. Peter quotes a letter of Pontius Pilate about our Lord, then it passes into miracles. Each challenges the other to say what is in their thoughts. Peter blesses and breaks a loaf of bread, and has it prepared to give to the dogs which Simon sends against him to devour him, thus disclosing that he knew what was in Simon's thoughts.

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Simon then demands that a lofty tower should be erected. Nero remembers how once Simon had appeared to raise himself from the dead after he had been killed three days, and still expects his victory. This Simon had done by making the executioner who had been sent to execute him cut off the head of a ram instead of his own. At this point there is inserted a conversation between Nero and Paul, and then a dispute on the subject of circumcision. Then comes the final test. While Paul prays, it is the part of Peter to oppose Simon. Simon starts flying. Peter then says, 'I adjure you, angels of Satan, who bear him to the air to deceive the hearts of the unbelievers, by God the creator of all, and Jesus Christ, whom on this day He raised from the dead, from this hour no longer bear him, but let him go.' He then falls and dies. Nero puts Peter and Paul in prison, but keeps the body of Simon to see if it will rise on the third day.

It will be noticed in this narrative that the part played by St. Paul is clearly subordinate. His name and his action might really be omitted without serious injury to the narrative. This suggests that very probably the story in its original form came from a source similar to the *Actus Petri cum Simons*, in which St. Paul is entirely absent.

4. MODERN CRITICAL VIEWS

We have now gone sufficiently minutely through all the various vicissitudes which the legends about Simon Magus experienced during the early centuries, and can pass to some equally curious developments of modern criticism.

There is no doubt that the Clementine literature is to some extent Ebionite in character, and might naturally contain anti-Pauline teaching. Starting from this point of view, Baur discovered certain passages in which Simon represented, or seemed to represent, St. Paul. He then propounded the view that Simon the Samaritan was not a historical character, but a term of reproach invented for the Apostle Paul. The contest between Simon Peter and Simon Magus really represented the original conflict of Peter and Paul. Wherever Simon Magus occurs we should read Paul. At first it was clearly understood who this person designated as Simon the Samaritan really was, but as the two parties more and more came together the original meaning was forgotten, and hence we find, even in a book like the Acts of the Apostles, written in a conciliatory interest, fragments of the old contest still embedded. But we have to recognize that the whole of our accepted history of early Christianity is really a conventional ecclesiastical legend, and the real history of the period must be disentangled from the Clementine literature. It is marvellous with what ingenuity the parallel was worked out when once the idea was started. Simon called himself the great power of God. Paul claims that he lived by the power of God (2 Co 12:9;

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13:4). When Simon offers money to buy the power of conferring the gift of the Holy Ghost, this is an allusion to Paul, who by his contributions for the poor saints at Jerusalem was attempting to obtain the apostleship. Peter telling Simon that he has neither part nor lot in this matter, is really Peter telling Paul that he has not the κληρος τῆς ἀποστολῆς.

Lipsius, who had worked out this theory in the most ingenious manner, did so mainly in connexion with his researches into the early history of the story of St. Peter's martyrdom at Rome. The original idea of Peter having visited Rome was Ebionite. 'The tradition of Peter's presence in Rome, which, unhistorical as it is, can only be explained by an anti-Pauline interest, is most universally connected in the most ancient records with his relation to Simon' (Zeller, *Acts of the Apostles*, i. p. 267, Eng. tr.). Rome must be claimed for true Christianity and the Jewish prince of the apostles, so a story was invented describing the manner in which Peter had visited Rome and there won a great victory over the false apostle, the Samaritan, *i.e.* Paul. Ultimately, the Roman Church realized how important for their prestige was the visit of Peter to Rome and his martyrdom there, and they adopted this legend in a Catholic sense, Peter and Paul being represented as the first founders of the Roman Church. The difficulty about this theory is that in the documents which we possess the Catholic theory is really the oldest, and therefore it is necessary to invent an early Ebionite *Acts of Peter* which contain the Ebionite form of the legend. This, according to Lipsius, was the common source of the Simon legend and the Apocryphal *Acts*, and he devoted great ingenuity to reconstructing it in accordance with his theory. But in his later works Lipsius has given up much of his former theory, although he still holds to the existence of early Ebionite *Acts of Peter*.

This theory of the identity of Simon Magus and the Apostle Paul is gradually ceasing to be held, and many scholars summarily dismiss it; it is, however, we notice, still accepted by Schmiedel (*Encyc. Bibl.* i. p. 913), and will, no doubt, be fully worked out by him. At first sight, from the point of view of common-sense, it seems absurd, and as a matter of fact it has very little evidence in its favour. The evidence that there seemed to be arose from a certain method of looking at facts owing to preconceived ideas. Without going into the question more thoroughly than space permits, we may touch upon the following points:—

- (i.) It is very doubtful whether the Simon of the Clementines conceals the Apostle Paul.
- (ii.) There is little or no evidence for early Ebionite *Acts of Peter*.

Eng. English.

tr. translate or translation.

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(iii.) The evidence for the Catholic history of the visit of Peter to Rome is earlier and better than that for his visit to Rome to combat Simon Magus. That is a later story (not appearing until the 3rd cent.), arising from the combination of two or three stories.

(iv.) The catena of Patristic evidence given above suggests a quite different account of the growth of the legend.

(i.) *How far does the Simon of the Clementines conceal the Apostle Paul?*—It is quite natural that the writer of the Clementines, who was probably an Ebionite by extraction, should be anti-Pauline, and any teaching that he would consider erroneous he would put into the mouth of Simon. But how far does the masque of Simon really conceal Paul?

(a) In *Hom.* xvii. 12–19 Simon defends the thesis that the belief obtained by visions is more certain than that from personal intercourse. Peter maintains that the personal knowledge that he possesses is more trustworthy. This may very naturally be referred to the claim of St. Paul, that he was an apostle because he had seen the Lord in a vision; nor are there wanting verbal parallels. Peter says (ch. 19): εἰ κατεγνωσμένον με λέγεις, cf. Gal 2:11; so again, εἰ δὲ ὑπ' ἐκείνου μιᾶς ὥρας ὀφθεις καὶ μαθητευθεις ἀπόστολος ἐγένου, and we know that St. Paul claimed to have visions (2 Co 12:1). This explanation is quite possible; but has not the whole passage probably very much more meaning when applied to the claims made by heretics to have a special revelation superior to the Church revelation?

(b) In *Hom.* ii. 17 Simon is said to be ὁ πρὸ ἐμοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη πρῶτος ἐλθὼν. He preaches the false doctrine, the coming of which must precede the true which Peter taught. Is not this Paul going among the heathen and teaching them falsely, to be followed by Peter, who teaches them what is true? So again *Hom.* iii. 59 Peter says that when he wished to teach the heathen the belief in one God, Simon went further, and taught them to believe in many. In vii. 4–8 Peter tells the people of Tyre that they have been deceived by his forerunner Simon. The second instance clearly takes away from the force of the first, because the false teacher is made to teach the belief in more than one God, and is clearly the first disseminator of Marcionism.

(c) In *Hom.* xviii. 6–10 we have a condemnation of indiscriminate teaching. This is Peter condemning Paul; but really it will have equal meaning if we suppose it introduced to explain why this special doctrine of the Clementines has only been known to a few.

cf. Compare.

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(d) In *Recog.* iii. 49 Simon is called a *vas electionis ... maligno*, a chosen vessel for evil, cf. Ac 9:15; and in *Recog.* ii. 18 he is said to be *malignus transformans se in splendorem lucis*, cf. 2 Co 11:14. But nothing can be drawn from the last sentence, and the first does not mean much. Why, if Paul is called a *chosen vessel* in a good sense, should not Simon be called a *chosen vessel for evil*?

(e) Something more may be said for the expression in the letter of Peter prefixed to the book in which he speaks of ἐχθροῦ ἀνθρώπου ἄνομόν τινα καὶ φλυαρώδη ... προσηκόμενοι διδασκαλίαν.—Here Paul may well be referred to as ‘the enemy’ whose doctrine was lawless; but why should not the enemy be simply Simon, who was by tradition the source of all false teaching? Lawlessness does not mean breaking the law, but teaching immorality.

(f) The most significant passage is *Recog.* i. 70 (a curious episode peculiar to the *Recognitions*), James by his preaching has very nearly persuaded the high priest and all the people to be baptized when ‘homo inimicus’ appears and bids them not to be deceived by a magician, and attacks them. He was clearly intended to be Saul (in his unconverted days), *but he is specially distinguished from Simon*, who is introduced as someone different in the next chapter but one. Paul is quite clearly not Simon here.

It seems very doubtful, indeed, whether Simon is ever intended to represent Paul, nor is there any Pauline teaching put into Simon’s mouth. The above passages, which are all the more important quoted, are hardly sufficient to establish the theory that Simon is Paul. The author or compiler of the Clementines really starts from the belief that the Simon of the Acts, whom Peter combated, was the source of all heresy, and so he makes his favourite apostle travel from place to place combating in the person of Simon the false Marcionite teaching of which he was believed to be the originator. This will explain the whole situation, and is much less far-fetched than the explanation which finds St. Paul every where.

(ii.) But without forcing this too far, and admitting that the writer may possibly have been intending somewhat delicately to attack Pauline teaching, there is a further question: *Is there any evidence for early Ebionite Acts which contained a narrative of Peter and Simon (concealing Paul)?*

The theory of Lipsius formerly was that there was an original Ebionite *Acts* which was the common source of both the Roman legend and the Clementines. He found an external

cf. Compare.

cf. Compare.

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support for this statement in the passage given above from the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which he boldly said belonged to the earlier portion of that work. This is an admirable illustration of the danger of such statements, and how very untrustworthy are the attempts of any critic, however able, to guess at the original portions of a work. Some years before Lipsius wrote thus, Lagarde had already published his Greek version of the *Didascalia*, the earlier form of the *Constitutions*, and disproved the whole theory. There is no external evidence for the existence of early Ebionite *Acts* as the source of the whole story, and Lipsius has given up the theory in this form, but he still believes in early Ebionite *Acts*. As a matter of fact, there seems very little evidence for their existence. He finds Ebionite tendencies in some passages of the *Acts of Peter and Paul*, but the controversy there is not with Jewish Christianity, but with Judaism—and Simon Magus is the champion of Judaism. That is the position that he occupied in the *Leucian Acts*, and the passages suggest much more a Leucian than an Ebionite origin. It is even more difficult to speak of the sources of the *Clementines*, but it is very doubtful if it is necessary to assume an Ebionite *Acts* which contained an account of Simon. The contest between Simon and Peter along the Syrian coast is almost absent from the *Recognitions*, perhaps the earlier form. With the exception of the concluding incident, which was clearly not part of the original work, the portion concerning Simon resolves itself into the account of his career, which is obviously based largely on Justin, and the disputes with Peter at Cæsarea, in which Simon is made the protagonist of Marcionism. The latter would probably be the direct work of the author, and does not demand a source. On no subject connected with the *Clementines* is it possible to speak with certainty; but this much seems clear, that there is no evidence of Ebionite *Acts*, and no need to suppose that they existed. They are merely a hypothesis, invented to support preconceived views.

(iii.) If we examine the chronological order of the development of the legend, the *Catholic account of the first work of Peter and Paul at Rome is older than the story of Simon and Peter*. Both Dionysius of Corinth and Irenæus know the story of their visit, and both ascribe to them the foundation of the Roman Church. There is no certain trace of the story concerning the contest of Simon and Peter at Rome before the 3rd cent., although as a matter of fact it probably existed in the *Leucian Acts* not later than the close of the 2nd century. Chronologically, the Catholic story caused the legend, not *vice versa*.

(iv.) The same is true of the whole growth of the story. We first of all trace the various elements of it as existing in different sources and varying forms. The more complicated and fuller stories are the result of later growth, and not the original source. The simple narrative of the *Acts* is the earliest, not the latest account. This will come out more clearly in what follows.

5. THE GROWTH OF THE LEGEND

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We are now in a position to sketch tentatively the growth of the whole legend. Our primary authorities must be the Acts and Justin Martyr, because they are chronologically the earlier, and because the acceptance of them explains the rest. Justin Martyr, who lived in Samaria less than 100 years after the time of Simon, was writing about something that he would know. Whether the fully developed system as described by Justin comes directly from the founder of the heresy or was the product of a later member of the school, may of course still be doubted, but the system harmonizes with what we read in the Acts; nor are there any *a priori* reasons for doubting the story about Simon and the woman he chose to call Helena. The later account of the system which we find in Hippolytus was probably the production of some member of the sect; but it is on the same lines as the older work, and we must remember that the essence of Gnosticism was not orthodoxy but speculation. Different members of the school of Basilides produced very different systems, and in the same way some members of the school of Simon produced the later development described above. The main source of the Clementine literature was directly or indirectly Justin, possibly also Hegesippus, and some of the personal details of his life and connexion with Dositheus may be authentic.

We now pass to the Roman visit. Are there any grounds for thinking that this really took place? Probably not. Of what happened in Samaria, Justin is a first-hand authority; on matters in Rome he would be ignorant and misinformed. He saw the statue, and jumped to the conclusion that Simon, of whom he had known so much, was here represented. It may be noticed that Justin gives no authority for the Roman visit except the statue. In another direction Justin is responsible for the Simon legend, namely, by making him the source and originator of heresy. How far there is an actual historical basis for the idea that Gnosticism was directly or indirectly derived from him may be doubtful. His system exhibits all the elements which go to make up Gnosticism; especially we may notice that there we first find the idea that the highest God was not the creator of the world; but then such tendencies and ideas were in the air. The same influences of dualism and syncretism which worked in his case would work in others. But, anyhow, Simon was the one clear instance of a heretic mentioned in the New Testament. It was natural, therefore, to represent him as the typical arch-heretic, the originator of heresy, and the place which Justin assigned to him at the head of his heretical genealogy was one in which his position was uncontested.

Next comes the Roman contest with Peter. The materials out of which this was constructed were (1) the contest of Peter and Simon in the Acts; (2) the Roman tradition that the Church was founded by Peter; (3) the story of the Simon statue; (4) a story contained in Suetonius (*Nero*, 12). At games initiated by Nero, some one, personating Icarus, attempted to fly, and the emperor was sprinkled with blood when he fell. The story of Simon's flight towards heaven was probably invented at Rome before the close

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of the 2nd cent., not later at any rate than the beginning of the 3rd. Whether the author of the Leucian *Acts of Peter*—a Gnostic—was the first originator or not we cannot say; very probably he was, as he seems to have helped to give Simon Magus a prominent place. According to Photius (*Cod.* cxiv.) that work taught that the God of the Jews was evil, whose minister Simon was. This would make it very natural that the author we call Leucius should have invented the episode; and the date which we assign later than Justin, but not later than the end of the 2nd cent., harmonizes with other indications. This story, like many other Leucian inventions, was attractive to the orthodox, and therefore we find it here worked up in a comparatively speaking orthodox dress. Paul was introduced as a companion of Peter, not because there had been anything anti-Pauline in the original story, but because the combined activity of Peter and Paul became a favourite subject of legend. For an Ebionite form of this legend there appears to be no evidence. There remains a certain chronological confusion to discuss. According to Justin, it was in the reign of Claudius that Simon came to Rome. The origin of this date was probably the date on the statue which he saw. The earlier form of the story, then, would bring Peter to Rome in the days of Claudius; and in the *Actus Petri cum Simone* nothing is said about Nero. But the martyrdom of Peter was by tradition under Nero, so that at a later date the legend was changed to Nero's time. Eusebius, however, had before him the earlier account. He brings Simon to Rome under Claudius, and Peter immediately after him. Is not this probably the origin of the 25 years' episcopate of Peter at Rome?

The origin, then, of the Roman legend was probably the Leucian *Acts*. These are represented for us mainly by the *Actus Petri cum Simone*, the Leucian affinities of which have been shown by James (*Apocrypha Anecdota*, ii. p. xxiv); the *πράξεις Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου* are an orthodox recasting of the story, with the exaggerated miraculous tendency omitted.

A separate line on which the legend developed is represented by the Clementine literature. A combination of arguments would incline us to put its date at the beginning of the 3rd cent. and its origin in Syria. The sources out of which it was composed must be very doubtful, as we have little to go on, but the story is obviously made up of different elements. There is a story of Clement and his relations; there is a story of a dispute with Apion, which sometimes seems to have been put into the mouth of Peter, but in our texts is put into the mouth of Clement. There are certain *κηρύγματα* or *Preachings of Peter*, and there is an account of the travels of Peter. But how much of this was derived from earlier sources and how much was the work of the compiler of the legend we have no means of determining. The story of the travels of Peter contained, obviously, an account of his journey from Cæsarea to Antioch, of the Churches that he founded during that journey, and the bishops and presbyters that he instituted. This is preserved in both our texts; but was the dispute with Simon Magus part of the original document? It is usually supposed

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that it must have been; but in the *Recognitions*, which is generally considered the older form of the story, the part of Simon is confined to Cæsarea, and is an episode by itself. Again, does the author know of the Roman contest? The references to Rome occur mainly in the *Recognitions*, and may have been introduced to adapt the story to a Roman audience. It is quite possible that the introduction of Simon Magus is due to the compiler of the work, and that his only historical source of knowledge about Simon was Justin Martyr and, possibly, Hegesippus.

But if his sources are doubtful, his purpose is more clear. He is an Ebionite Christian by extraction, who has been influenced by the speculative ideas which we associate with Gnosticism, and he writes to reconcile the conflicting claims of Judaism and Christianity. His main tenet is the Divine unity, and therefore he combats the polytheism of the heathen, the dualism of Marcion, and Trinitarianism (if we may use the term). This last feature gives us his date, the period of the Monarchian controversy early in the 3rd cent.; and for this date there is also external evidence. Within the limits of a common Monotheism he hopes to find room for both Jews and Christians, and his references to the establishment of bishops and presbyters by Peter show that he wishes to adopt the existing ecclesiastical organization. There is a certain amount of art in his choice of characters. The defender of polytheism is Apion, perhaps the traditional opponent of Judaism; the attack is put into the mouth of Clement, as obviously more fitted for such work than Peter. The one heretic of the apostolic age, Simon, who was the traditional source of all heresy, is made the exponent of all false Christian teaching, and his natural combatant is Peter. Paul is never mentioned by name, but anything like an overt attack on him would have been quite beside his purpose. There are no doctrines which were ascribed to Paul attacked in the person of Simon. Simon is not Paul, nor intended by the author to be Paul. He was obviously a writer with considerable powers of invention; he had a certain amount of history or legend or tradition, but he may very likely be himself responsible for most of the personal episodes he describes, and for the use he has made of Simon. There is no evidence, at any rate, for any Ebionite *Acts* which he is supposed to have used, nor any need to imagine them. One more feature must be referred to. Simon is with him the magician as well as the false teacher, and a great deal is said about the magical element, which requires all Peter's miraculous powers to dispel. The whole of this side of the legend appears absurdly puerile to a modern reader. But we are apt to forget that all the tricks Simon claimed to perform were believed in at the time, and that those who claimed to perform magical rites were among the most determined opponents of Christianity. Magic was a real danger, and a very subtle form of false teaching. It was the true spiritual force of Christianity which overcame it; but numerous writers always ascribed this triumph to the exhibition of vulgar miraculous power.

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It is maintained that this reconstruction of the history of the Simon legend represents a much more probable and consistent account of the origin of the story than the distorted and complicated theories which have appeared since the time of Baur, and have rested chiefly on unproved hypotheses of sources and fanciful reconstructions of the early historical period.*

6. THE AFFINITIES OF SIMON'S SYSTEM

The historical nucleus of the legend is, as we have seen, the narrative in the Acts, part of the story in Justin, the system as described by him belonging either to Simon himself or an earlier follower, and perhaps some incidents recorded by the Clementines. When we accept this as original, the affinities of the system suggested by Baur and his followers become a legitimate explanation. Samaria was a country in which a sort of bastard Judaism came in contact with the old Syrian and Phœnician religions and the newer Hellenic paganism. All these different elements are present in Simon's system. That the relation of himself and Helena is a reminiscence of the Syrian male and female deity is equally natural, whether Helena be a real person (as is probable) or only the personification of an idea. The fact that in one account—that of the *Recognitions*—she is called *Luna* (a translation of *σελήνη*), makes the parallel to the Sun and Moon worship, the Baal and Astarte, more close. Simon represents an almost pre-Christian Gnosticism, and it is significant that only here do we find this very repulsive dualistic element. Simon represents the impostor of the period, whose claims are even more improbable than those of Apollonius of Tyana or Alexander of Abonoteichus. His mind is a medley of Hellenism, Judaism, and Orientalism; out of this he forms a system, in which he himself occupies the first position. The influence of Christianity and then the opposition to it give a certain vitality and force to the ideas he suggests, and in other hands they become fertile and prolific. Later Gnostics were more definitely Christian. The founders of the sects never claimed Divine honours for themselves. They discarded more extravagant features. But they shared with Simon the fundamental doctrine that the Creator of the world was an inferior and, perhaps, a malevolent deity.*

* It may be objected that nothing has been said about the Simon of Cyprus mentioned in Jos. *Ant.* xx. vii. 4. In the opinion of the present writer the two Simons have nothing to do with one another, and the resemblance of names counts for nothing. There are said to be twenty-four Simons in the Index to Josephus.

* The criticisms of Renan (ii. 154) are interesting and worth quoting. 'Simon de Getton fut le chef d'un mouvement religieux, parallèle à celui du Christianisme. qu'on peut regarder comme une sorte de contrefaçon Samaritaine de l'œuvre de Jésus ... (*ib.* 269). Hélène, signifiant par là qu'elle était l'objet de l'universelle pursuits, la cause éternelle de dispute entre les hommes, celle qui se venge de ses ennemis en les rendant aveugles: thème bizarre qui mal compris ou travesti à dessein, donna lieu chez les pères de l'église aux contes les plus banals.'

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7. SIMON MAGUS AND SIMONY

In another direction the name of Simon has become used universally for the sin of attempting to purchase spiritual gifts or spiritual preferment for money. Both sorts were included under the sin of Simon. The earliest example seems to be from the *Apostolical Canons*, where it is said: 'If any bishop, presbyter, or deacon obtain this dignity for money, both he that is ordained and the ordainer shall be deposed, and also cut off from all communion, as Simon Magus was by Peter.' And the instance is often quoted in later canons. The use of the term appears to have arisen through the Canon Law.

8. SIMON MAGUS AND THE FAUST LEGEND

There are some curious coincidences, if they are nothing more, between the legend of Simon and the story of Faust. The hero of that legend is supposed to have been a certain Dr. Faust, of Knittlingen, who died in 1540. The legend appears first in a written form in 1587, and was obviously the result of a fertile imagination. It is quite possible that in building up the story reminiscences direct or indirect of the legend of Simon Magus may have come in. The following are points of resemblance: (1) firstly and most clearly the introduction of Helena in both; (2) the name Faustus; (3) the *homunculus*; (4) in Simon Magus himself we may have a suggestion of Mephistopheles. This connexion may be due to direct literary influence, or we may have here two different versions of a theme which has been common at various times, the contest between Religion and Magic—a contest which we have to believe is far older and more universal than was once thought.

LITERATURE

(1) On Simon Magus generally. The two most complete expositions of the two opposing points of view are by Möller in Herzog, *RE*² xiv. s.v., and by Lipsius in Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexicon*, v. 301–321. For older works see Mosheim, *Inst. hist. eccl.* i. 389. There are accounts in all the works on heresies in the Early Church, of which the most useful is that of Hilgenfeld, *die Ketzergeschichte des Urchristenthums*, pp. 163 and 453. The most complete account in English is that by Salmon in *Dict. Chr. Biog.* iv. 681. Other treatises referred to are Simson, 'Leben und Lehre Simon des Magiers,' in *Z. f. hist. Theol.* 1841, iii. 39; Baur, *Das Manichäische Religionssystem*, Tübingen, 1831, 467, *Die Christliche Gnosis*, Tübingen, 1835, p. 300 ff.

(2) On Simon and Paul see Baur, 'Die Christuspartie in Korinth,' in *Tübinger Zeitschrift*, 1831–34, p. 116 ff. , *Paulus* (1845), p. 85 ff. , 218 ff. [² pp. 97 ff. , 246 ff.], *Das Christenthum der drei ersten Jahrhunderte*,² p. 85 ff. ; Hilgenfeld, *Die Clementinischen Recognitionen und Homilien* (1848), p. 317 ff. , 'Der Magier Simon,' in *ZFWTh*, 1868, p. 357 ff. ; Zeller,

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Apostelgeschichte, 158 ff. (i. p. 250, Eng. tr.); Volkmar, 'über den Simon Magus der Apostelgeschichte,' in *Theol. Jahrbücher*, 1856, p. 279 ff.

(3) The Apocryphal Acts may be read in Lipsius, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*, which supersedes all previous editions. Lipsius' criticism will be found in *Die Quellen der römischen Petrus-Sage kritisch untersucht*, Kiel, 1872, and in *Die Apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und Apostellegenden*, ii. 1, Braunschweig, 1887. In the latter volume he very much modifies his earlier conclusions.

(4) On the Clementines may be mentioned Schliemann, *Die Clementinen*, Hamburg, 1844; Uhlhorn, *Die Homilien und Recognitionen des Clemens Romanus*, Göttingen, 1854; Hilgenfeld, *Die Clementinischen Recognitionen und Homilien*, Jena, 1848, and in *Theol. Jahrbücher*, 1854, 1868; Lehmann, *Die Clementinischen Schriften*; Lipsius in *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung*, 1869, pp. 477–482; and, in English, Salmon's art. in the *Dict. Chr. Biog.*

(5) On Simon and the Faust legend see Zahn, *Cyprian von Antiochien und die deutsche Faustsage*, Erlangen, 1882; and Kuno Fischer, *Die Faustsage*.

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Eng. English.

tr. translate or translation.

¹ Headlam, A. C. (1911–1912). "Simon Magus." In J. Hastings, J. A. Selbie, A. B. Davidson, S. R. Driver, & H. B. Swete (Eds.), *A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing with Its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology* (Vol. 4, pp. 520–527). Charles Scribner's Sons; T. & T. Clark. Public Domain.

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