

The Mask of Compilation: Authorial Interventions in Anonymous Cyzicenus

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THE ANONYMOUS AUTHOR of a fifth-century A.D. *Ecclesiastical History*, often called “Gelasius of Cyzicus” or “Pseudo-Gelasius,” describes his treatise as a curated selection of passages from old, reliable sources that faithfully recorded the activities leading up to, occurring during, and resulting from the Council of Nicaea (proem 24).¹ Indeed, a reader of this work will find that large portions consist of quotations from Eusebius of Caesarea, Theodoret of Cyrrihus, and the reconstructed history generally attributed to Gelasius of Caesarea, woven together by brief interludes in the author’s own voice. At times, the quotations are inexpertly truncated, resulting in dangling conditionals and unfinished thoughts. The total effect of the composition has led one scholar to characterize it as “an uncritical pastiche of materials.”² Although the anonymous author from Cyzicus (hereafter Cyzicenus) is assuredly not the most careful of scholars, the simplistic appearance of an unoriginal copyist is an adopted persona, designed to convince the reader of the authenticity of his documentary

¹ The most recent critical edition is G. C. Hansen, *Anonyme Kirchengeschichte* (Berlin 2002). Hansen, *Anonymus von Cyzicus, Historia Ecclesiastica Kirchengeschichte* (Turnhout 2008), provides a German translation with commentary. M. Wallraff, J. Stutz, and N. Marinides, *Gelasius of Caesarea Ecclesiastical History: The Extant Fragments* (Berlin 2018), frequently discusses Cyzicenus’ text as it pertains to reconstructing Gelasius of Caesarea’s lost *Ecclesiastical History*.

² W. Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (Houndmills 2007) 166.

evidence and to disguise his own authorial activity. So convincing is his self-effacement that scholars have been eager to attribute even unique documents from the history to authors both known and unknown. G. C. Hansen, in his translation and commentary, attributes nearly every passage of unidentified origin to Philip of Side, a historian whose works are preserved only in small fragments and were heavily criticized by Socrates Scholasticus and Photius.³ This effort is motivated, at least in part, by the view that Cyzicenus' work is "eine ganz und gar unselbständige, meist wörtlich aus den Vorlagen abgeschriebene ... Spielart der Gattung Kirchengeschichte."⁴

But comparison between the quotations that fill Cyzicenus' work and the independent textual traditions for the authors quoted reveals discrepancies that recur in persistent patterns across his sources. These textual variants, justified to the reader through a pair of corrective texts of dubious origin, sanitize controversial aspects of his sources' historical narratives and alter their fundamental outlook. Caution is warranted before accepting his unique sources as either true to their original form or even as excerpts at all, especially when the fundamental argument of his history rests heavily on the central Dispute with Phaedo (2.14–24), found nowhere else.

1. *The persona of a compiler*

In an autobiographical proem Anonymous Cyzicenus establishes both his credentials as an expert on the history of the Council of Nicaea and his faithfulness to the orthodox accounts that preceded him. He claims that his motivation for writing arose from his own confrontations with supporters of the monk Eutyches, condemned as a heretic by the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451 (proem 9–11).⁵ These heretics, he says, were em-

³ See especially Hansen, *Anonymus von Cyzicus* 27–44.

⁴ Hansen, *Anonymus von Cyzicus* 14.

⁵ Eutyches was an archimandrite at Constantinople whose opposition to

powered by Basiliscus, whose revolt opposing the legitimacy of the Eastern Roman emperor Zeno lasted across 475–476.⁶ This account then must have been composed some 150 years after the Council of Nicaea, from which no detailed record of the proceedings survived. Nonetheless, the author depicts himself as the sole source truly to understand the teachings and orthodoxy promulgated by the council, while his enemies were guilty of “using their tongue to utter things worse than the blasphemies of Arius against what had been defined there and hurling curses against those who thought thus” (proem 11).⁷

The foundation upon which the author builds his reputation for truth is a mysterious book, discovered in his father’s attic some years prior, that related “all these things that were said and done in this virtuous and holy council and were enacted long ago ... on pages that contained them all in unbroken sequence” (proem 2). He attributes the production of the book to Dalmatius, bishop of the city of Cyzicus during the Council of Ephesus in 431.⁸ This book, however, was evidently un-

the teachings of Nestorius led to his depiction as a radical preaching the mixture and confusion of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus. R. Price and M. Gaddis, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* (Liverpool 2005), present translations and commentary on the documents of the synods at which Eutyches’ beliefs were on trial: two synods at Constantinople (448 and 449) that condemned him, the Second Council of Ephesus (449), a.k.a. the “Robber Council,” that exonerated him, and the Council of Chalcedon (451) that once again condemned him.

⁶ For Basiliscus and his rebellion see *PLRE* II 212–214, Basiliscus 2.

⁷ Translations from Shedd, Tandy, and Schott (forthcoming).

⁸ Little else is known of Dalmatius beyond his station as bishop of Cyzicus and his signing the condemnations against Nestorius at the Council of Ephesus. G. Loeschke and M. Heinemann, *Gelasius Kirchengeschichte* (Leipzig 1918) xxix, in the critical edition that preceded Hansen’s, posit that the unattested documents in Cyzicenus derived from true *acta*, to which Dalmatius had access as a participant in the proceedings at Ephesus. The *acta* from the Council of Ephesus itself, however, show no knowledge of these documents, or of Nicaean *acta* more generally.

available even to Cyzicenus when he wrote his extant account of Nicaea. He tells the reader that he had made detailed notes of the contents as a younger man (proem 3), and later, when he decided to contest the Eutychians, had engaged in research into the council. Despite reviewing several other authors, Cyzicenus says he “did not find the sequence of the whole arrangement to be in accordance with that holy book” (proem 23). He therefore decided to compile a text that would render the narrative in a manner “proper to the truth, following the book that [he] had read previously” (proem 24).

We are therefore dealing with an author who rests his authority fully on the validity of his sources.⁹ He effaces his own activity as the writer, yet acknowledges that his narrative will look different from those otherwise available to his readers. The true existence of a book in his father’s attic is doubtful at best, considering that full accounts of the proceedings at Nicaea—the *acta*—were evidently unavailable to attendees of the later councils.¹⁰ Dalmatius, to whom Cyzicenus attributes the book, is not otherwise associated with such a collection. Cyzicenus may instead be employing Dalmatius as a stand-in for the orthodox tradition. As the records of the Council of Ephesus were integral to the proceedings at the Council of Chalcedon, Cyzicenus’ framing topic, so we are presented with an account of Nicaea supposedly compiled by an attendee at the council that ratified Nicaea’s primacy.¹¹ The fact that even Cyzicenus

⁹ In addition to the discussion of Cyzicenus’ sources in Hansen, *Anonymus von Cyzicus* 16–44, see P. van Nuffelen, “True to their Words. Theodore Lector and his Predecessors,” in R. Kosinski et al. (eds.), *Studies in Theodore Anagnostes* (Turnhout 2021) 30–32.

¹⁰ For discussions on the lack of official proceedings from Nicaea see especially M. S. Smith, “The Council of Nicaea and Its Early Reception,” in *The Idea of Nicaea in the Early Church Councils, AD 431–451* (Oxford 2018) 7–34, and T. Graumann, *The Acts of Early Church Councils: Production and Character* (Oxford 2021).

¹¹ Critically, the seventh canon of the Council of Ephesus specified that

claims not to have access to this unique source when composing his treatise calls into question the reality of its existence.

Cyzicenus' list of named sources later in the proem casts further doubt on his claim to present only the verified truth of previous authorities. Eusebius of Caesarea and Theodoret's works are well preserved and match the passages that Cyzicenus attributes to them in most details. The source that he names as "Rufinus, or rather Gelasius" (1.8.1) corresponds to a historical work often attributed to Gelasius of Caesarea on the combined testimony of Cyzicenus and Photius.¹² This work, from which several later histories drew selections, can only be reconstructed on the basis of passages of text shared across those sources.¹³ These similarities confirm that Cyzicenus did, indeed, draw several passages from the lost history, and his handling of them can be considered by comparing other versions of the same narrative material. His most highly regarded source after the book from his father's attic, however, is a mysterious figure named John. This John, he says, "was a presbyter of old and especially skilled in writing, who wrote in very ancient quaternions, though not a full account" (proem 21). By highlighting the age of both the author and his codex, Cyzicenus implies the fragility of the text, once again naming a source to which the reader cannot expect ever to gain access. As with the attic book, Cyzicenus is our only extant source to list this John as an authority on the Council of Nicaea.

Thus, the two sources to which Cyzicenus attributes the greatest authority—and therefore, by implication, the two sources that give his text authority over other available ac-

there could be no statement of faith written to supplant or rival that composed at the Council of Nicaea.

¹² Photius *Bibl. cod.* 89 (67a–b).

¹³ This reconstruction appears in Wallraff et al., *Gelasius*; however, for critiques on the methodology see P. van Nuffelen's review in *JEH* 70 (2019) 148–149. See also below.

counts—are depicted as beyond the reach of any other reader, either by rarity or by age. Nor does Cyzicenus cite either source directly in the remaining text of the *Ecclesiastical History*, although for other, known authors he often does provide brief citations. These mysterious texts serve only as guarantors to the history's accuracy. They prime the reader from the beginning to expect variations from what they would find in other accounts, while denying the reader the ability to cross-examine the sources. They become part of the author's persona as a mere compiler, the antidote to the deficiencies of his sources that obviates any need for personal, authorial activity. In short, they help to disguise his work as “an uncritical pastiche of materials.” Examining the patterns of corrections to the independent traditions of these authors' texts shows, on the other hand, a consistent editorializing influence, whose emendations cannot easily be resolved by appeal to an unknown intermediary source or variant textual tradition. This force is more plausibly identified as the voice of Cyzicenus himself, engaging in authorial activity despite his claims to the contrary.¹⁴

2. *Methodology*

In a compilation such as Cyzicenus', it is necessary to consider how to separate the intentional interventions of the compilers from variants imported from their copies of the source texts. As with florilegia, any attempt to ‘correct’ the text or compare it to extant textual traditions for the authors it quotes risks misidentifying variant traditions as purposeful alterations. In the case of Cyzicenus, separating the compiler from his source has additional complexities, as he often quotes the lost *Ecclesiastical History* attributed to Gelasius of Caesarea, for which Cyzicenus' text is one of few independent witnesses.

¹⁴ A. Szopa, “Textual Analysis of the *Epitome* of Theodore Anagnostes' Church History – a Few Remarks,” in *Studies in Theodore Anagnostes* 39–62, similarly investigates the working methods of nominally derivative authors.

That text continued the work of Eusebius, and its testimony may have influenced Cyzicenus' reception of Eusebius' text in turn. M. Wallraff et al. have partially reconstructed this text on the evidence of Cyzicenus and a large collection of other sources whose narratives clearly draw from the same source material.¹⁵ Where Cyzicenus differs in phrasing and content from these other sources, there always remains the possibility that the difference arose from manuscript variants, or that Cyzicenus himself stayed more faithful to the text before him. Thus, the possibility of innocent variation must be addressed even before we consider whether the book from the attic and John the Presbyter's work ever truly existed.

To this end, the following major criteria will be applied to discussions of Cyzicenus' authorial activities: (1) Claims will be founded on persistent patterns throughout the text; (2) these patterns must appear across several sources.

The first criterion helps to ensure that any claims of authorial intervention do not rely on single points of data possibly due to individual errors by Cyzicenus or his texts—or even by later scribes and editors. The second minimizes the danger of attributing a previous source's interventions to Cyzicenus. For this function, the excerpts from Theodoret are of particular importance. Theodoret's *Ecclesiastical History* was written ca. 444–449, long after Gelasius of Caesarea's history, as well as a decade or two after the council of Ephesus.¹⁶ It would therefore have been written after the book from Cyzicenus' attic or John the Presbyter's "very ancient quaternions." If these alleged intermediary sources were used to emend Theodoret's later narrative, the alterations they inspired would logically appear at the factual or narrative level, rather than in slight adjustments to the otherwise verbatim quotations. That such

¹⁵ Wallraff et al., *Gelasius*, passim.

¹⁶ On the uncertain dating see B. Croke, "Dating Theodoret's *Church History* and *Commentary on the Psalms*," *Byzantion* 54 (1984) 59–74.

adjustments of vocabulary and phrasing nevertheless appear in the quotations of Theodoret and match patterns of variants in the quotations from Eusebius and the Gelasian history confirms Cyzicenus' independent influence on the text.

G. C. Hansen has postulated an intermediary source between Theodoret and Cyzicenus in the lost history of Philip of Side.¹⁷ To Philip, he plausibly attributes both major documents such as Constantine's speech to the assembled bishops (2.7) and smaller pieces of unique, unattributed narrative (e.g. 1.11.19–21). In attempting to attribute to Philip some of the conflicts found between Cyzicenus and Theodoret, however, Hansen must create a convoluted chronology, according to which Philip's work is well-enough known for Socrates to remark on it around 439, yet still in progress and responsive to Theodoret's *Ecclesiastical History* a decade later.¹⁸ Although not impossible, such a conjecture is only necessary to strip Cyzicenus of authorial independence. Yet, Cyzicenus did work directly from Theodoret's text and openly announces certain significant departures from it, as we shall see. It does not seem necessary, then, to seek an external source for the pervasive discrepancies between Cyzicenus and his source texts.

3. *The most God-loving Constantine*

A simple but illustrative example of minor, but motivated, editing can be found by examining how Cyzicenus charac-

¹⁷ First articulated in G. C. Hansen, "Eine fingierte Ansprache Konstantins auf dem Konzil von Nikaia," *ZAC* 2 (1998) 173–198; further developed in *Anonyme Kirchengeschichte* xlv–liv. M. Wallraff, in his review of the latter, *Gnomon* 78 (2006) 19, also notes the chronological issue. Further issues with reconstructing the works of Philip of Side have been raised in K. Heyden, "Die Christliche Geschichte des Philippos von Side, mit eine kommentierten Katalog der Fragmente," in M. Wallraff (ed.), *Julius Africanus und die christliche Weltchronistik* (Berlin 2006) 209–243, who includes Hansen's conjectures among fragments of questionable attribution.

¹⁸ Hansen, *ZAC* 2 (1998) 193, proposes this chronology in brief.

terizes his main protagonist, the emperor Constantine I. Far more than telling just the story of the Council of Nicaea, the history relates Constantine's career from the moment when Diocletian and Maximian abdicated in 305 to nearly the end of his life.¹⁹ This focus on the totality of Constantine's career and relationship with the church has led at least one scholar to characterize the work as a "life" of Constantine.²⁰ Comparing Cyzicenus' treatment of Constantine to that of his sources shows that small but persistent alterations refocus and homogenize the differing characterizations of Constantine found in the source passages.

For Cyzicenus, Constantine stands as a champion of Nicene orthodoxy, unwavering in his faith, sustained by God, and never inclining toward the Arian faction unless guilelessly and momentarily trusting in their true conversion. One of the repeated, deferential epithets employed for Constantine is *theophilēs*, God-loving. A review of the instances where this epithet appears shows that it is idiomatic to Cyzicenus' vocabulary, independent of the sources for his passages. Forms of *theophilēs* appear fifty-two times throughout the history, often in the superlative, of which forty-six describe Constantine, four describe his family members, one (in a letter of Constantine) describes the bishops at the Council of Nicaea, and one is employed during a dialogue between the Nicene fathers and an

¹⁹ The church histories that Cyzicenus employed for his narrative did not agree on the placement of significant events in relation to the life and death of Constantine—most notably disagreeing on whether Arius died during his reign or that of his son, Constantius II. The *pinakes* to Cyzicenus' text, and Photius' testimony (cod. 88), suggest that he followed Socrates, placing the death of Arius during Constantine's reign and ending the narrative with Constantine's own death. That material has not survived.

²⁰ P. Nautin, "Gélase de Cyzique," *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* XX (Paris 1983) 301, "On ne connaît de lui qu'un ouvrage, qui nous est parvenu mutilé de la fin sous le titre de *Syntagma du saint concile de Nicée*, mais qui est en réalité une Vie de Constantin."

Arian philosopher to describe the philosopher after his conversion to orthodoxy. Primarily, *theophilēs* functions as an epithet for Constantine, reminding the reader of his close connection with God.

Most instances of *theophilēs* appear to have been added by the author, whether in his own introductory and transitional material or in pre-existing passages:

Originating source for <i>theophilēs</i>	Type of passage	Occurrences
Cyzicenus, unparalled passages	First-person authorial passages ²¹	10
	Unparalleled transitional materials ²²	4
		14
Cyzicenus, modified quotations	Modified quotation from extant works ²³	3
	Variant in quotation from the Gelasian <i>HE</i> ²⁴	19
		22
Fourth-century texts	Quotations from extant works ²⁵	12
Unknown	Diverse ²⁶	4

Fourteen instances occur in passages written in the author's own voice or in transitional materials presumed to have been

²¹ Proem 1, proem 26, 1.10.6, 1.11.32, 2.29.4, 2.32.21, 3.1.3, 3.1.5, 3.7.14, 3.10.26.

²² 2.25.2, 2.29.3, 3.13.7, 3.17.39.

²³ 1.1.4 (cf. Eus. *HE* 9.9.1), 2.8.7 (cf. Thdt. *HE* 1.11.6), and 3.4.8 (cf. Thdt. *HE* 1.16.6).

²⁴ 1.3.3, 1.8.1, 1.11.17, 2.25.4, 2.27.12, 2.33.5, 2.37.11, 3.7.5, 3.7.7, 3.9.1, 3.10.19, 3.10.23, 3.12.2, 3.12.6, 3.12.10, 3.13.15, 3.13.18, 3.13.21, 3.18.19.

²⁵ 1.11.5, 1.11.6, 1.11.9, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.34.3, 2.34.3, 2.35.2, 2.35.7, 2.35.14, 2.35.17, 3.13.5, 3.15.9.

²⁶ 1.11.20, 1.12.1, 2.23.11, 3.15.9. Cf. n.34 below.

written by him. Authorial passages include the proems in Books 1 and 3 as well as transitional passages where the author announces shifts in the narrative or comments on the events in the first person. The four presumed authorial passages either offer a synopsis of identifiable passages from the source materials to transition between longer quotations or contain no identifiable quotations and precede a section of first-person narrative. These fourteen cases show Cyzicenus' own idiomatic method of describing Constantine.

Twelve instances are confirmed in manuscript witnesses to the source texts. Of these, nine can be attributed to Eusebius of Caesarea himself: either his *Ecclesiastical History* (5) or his letter concerning the Council of Nicaea, as attested by Athanasius, Socrates, and Theodoret (4).²⁷ Two are found in the conciliar letter on Meletius, attested by the same three sources,²⁸ and one appears in a document preserved by the history attributed to Gelasius of Caesarea, as confirmed by agreement between Cyzicenus and Socrates.²⁹ These quotations include the only instances in the entire work where *theophilēs* is applied to Constantine's children, both in Eusebius. *Theophilēs* thus appears to be part of the idiom for describing members of the imperial family for Eusebius and for his contemporaries from the time of the council itself.

This leaves twenty-two passages where the author evidently added the epithet into his source material. In three cases, one in a passage from Eusebius' history and two in passages from Theodoret,³⁰ surviving manuscript witnesses to these texts do not include the term. In the remaining nineteen, all derived from the Gelasian history, Cyzicenus alone attests its presence,

²⁷ 2.35; Ath. *De decr.* 33, Socr. 1.8.35–54, Thdt. 1.12.

²⁸ 2.34; Ath. *De decr.* 36, Socr. 1.91–14, Thdt. 1.9.2–13.

²⁹ 3.13.5; Socr. 1.14.6.

³⁰ Cf. n.23 above.

even where multiple other witnesses to the passage exist. Because the only two passages of the lost history externally confirmed to employ *theophilēs* are the quotations of documents from the Council of Nicaea mentioned above, it does not appear that the epithet was part of Gelasian idiomatic vocabulary. Otherwise, it is hard to understand why Cyzicenus alone would have preserved nineteen instances of *theophilēs* while all other witnesses to the lost history elected to omit them—including Cyzicenus' closest contemporary, Theodoret.³¹ Indeed, in the surviving fragments from the Gelasian history beyond those attested in Cyzicenus, *theophilēs* appears only once, outside the characteristic attributive position found in Cyzicenus, describing Constantius I. In the several passages that discuss Constantine's virtues and relationship with both God and the Christian population, *theophilēs* is never attested.³²

The almost reflexive addition of the epithet *theophilēs* to Constantine in Cyzicenus' history pervades his various sources. It appears even in passages derived from Theodoret, whom he claims to be his most recent source. Although largely an honorific, the term carries polemical intent from its first appearance in the proem. There, Cyzicenus—in his own voice—contrasts the “God-loving and pious emperor Constantine” with the “God-battling Arius.”³³ By incorporating this term into the texts of Eusebius, Theodoret, and “Rufinus/Gelasius” the author provides Constantine with a unifying characteristic

³¹ Cyz. 2.37.11, cf. Thdt 1.10.2 (also Eus. *Vit. Const.* 3.17.2, Opitz 26); Cyz. 3.7.5, cf. Gelasius F15a, Thdt. 1.18.4; Cyz. 3.10.19, cf. Gelasius F16b, Thdt. 1.24.11; Cyz. 3.12.6 and 3.12.10, cf. Gelasius F17a, Thdt. 2.3.2.

³² The example concerning Constantius (F4a): ἦν γὰρ πρὸς τῷ θεοφιλεῖ καὶ χρηστὸς ἀνὴρ. For Constantine's devotion and virtues without using *theophilēs*: F4b, F4c, F13b, F22a (fragment designations follow Wallraff et al., *Gelasius*).

³³ Proem 1: τοῦ θεοφιλοῦς καὶ εὐσεβοῦς βασιλέως Κωνσταντίνου ... τοῦ θεομάχου Ἀρείου.

and keeps his presentation consistent throughout the various quotations. This effort makes clear that Cyzicenus does not passively quote but exerts a moderating influence with a view toward the unity of his work.³⁴

4. *Constantine and the bishops*

When compared to the extant source materials, Cyzicenus' Constantine is likewise marked by a unique reverence for the bishops as servants of God. At the beginning of his narrative on the events of the council itself, three separate digressions reinforce the high esteem in which Constantine held the bishops. The first digression appears after Constantine orders that formal complaints among and against the bishops be burned, a story that Cyzicenus duplicates when combining two different narrative traditions.³⁵ Rufinus (10.2) and Socrates (1.8.18–19), presumably following Gelasius of Caesarea, both include the episode at the beginning of the council, while Theodoret (1.11.4–5) appends it as a coda to the proceedings.³⁶ Cyzicenus, whose account in other respects closely resembles Rufinus' own, concludes his first version of the story with the unique statement, "So great was the reverence of the Emperor toward the priests of God, which I wish everyone with sense would

³⁴ Without external testimony, it is impossible to say whether the term is interpolated or original in four other passages allegedly derived from previous texts. 1.11.20 is vaguely attributed to "the rest, who agree with the truth as told by Eusebius Pamphili" (οἱ δὲ λοιποί, ὅσοι τῆς Εὐσεβίου τοῦ Παμφίλου ἀληθείας συνήγοροι), which Hansen (*ZAC* 2 [1998] 193–198) conjectures to be a corruption for Philip of Side (ὁ δὲ Φίλιππος ὁ ...). The instance at 1.12.1 may stem from the same source. The instance at 2.23.11 comes during the uniquely attested Dispute with Phaedo. The one at 3.15.9 may derive from the Gelasian history, but the parallel section in the *Life of Athanasius* (*BHG* 185) stops before the relevant sentence.

³⁵ Hansen, *Anonymus von Cyzicus* 12, cites this doublet as evidence of Cyzicenus' uncritical dependence on his sources.

³⁶ Gelasius F12b (Wallraff et al., *Gelasius* 78–81).

admire” (2.8.4).³⁷ The addition of a similar comment after the duplicate tale otherwise closely derived from Theodoret suggests that this sentiment was Cyzicenus’ own, rather than a *sententia* from the Gelasian history, with no parallel in Socrates or Rufinus. In this second digression, after describing the emperor’s commands to hide the vices of bishops from the eyes of the faithful, Cyzicenus writes, “So great was the God-loving and admirable sagacity of the Emperor” (2.8.7).³⁸ Thus, Cyzicenus doubles both the story and the anomalous *sententia*, which he marks the second time with his keyword *theophilēs*.

This *sententia* appears to derive from the Gelasian history, but not from the story of the petition burning. After an encounter between Constantine and the bishop Paphnutius, narrated next in the sequence of events, Cyzicenus concludes the story, “So great a faith (πίστις) resided in the pious emperor toward holy men” (2.9.2). Parallels between Cyzicenus and the texts of Rufinus (10.4), Socrates (1.11.2), and an anonymous hagiographic *Life of Saints Metrophanes and Alexander* (*BHG* 1279, 14.9) confirm that the story of Constantine and Paphnutius was in the lost history.³⁹ The other two Greek sources, however, both conclude with the simpler statement, “such reverence (εὐλάβεια) resided in the emperor Constantine,”⁴⁰ while Rufinus omits such a conclusion entirely. The differences between these statements are small, but telling. To begin, Cyzicenus’ phrasing turns Constantine’s reverence into *pistis*: faith, or perhaps trust, a loaded term in the immediate prelude to the

³⁷ τοσαύτη ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως πρὸς τοὺς ἱερεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ εὐλάβεια, ἣν θαυμάσειαν ἅπαντες οἱ εὖ φρονούντες.

³⁸ τοσαύτη ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως θεοφιλῆς καὶ ἀξιόγαστος σύνεσις.

³⁹ Gelasius F12e. The *Life of Metrophanes and Alexander* is an anonymous text of the mid-seventh to mid-ninth century that preserves many passages from the lost Gelasian history. On the nature of the text and its independence from Cyzicenus see Wallraff et al., *Gelasius* xlv–l, lvii–lxi.

⁴⁰ τοσαύτη προσῆν τῷ βασιλεῖ Κωνσταντίνῳ εὐλάβεια.

creation of the Nicene statement of faith, also called a *pistis*. Second, it specifies that this *pistis* is directed at the bishops, whereas Socrates and the hagiographer leave open whether Constantine's reverence was directed toward the bishops or to God.

Constantine's piety toward the bishops becomes a motivating factor in his relationship with the Arian faction after the council of Nicaea, at least according to Cyzicenus. Upon the death of Constantine's half-sister, Constantia, the emperor took an Arian presbyter into his confidence, which Socrates, the anonymous hagiography, and Theodoret also report. It was this presbyter who encouraged the rehabilitation of Arius and the restoration of his primary supporters, Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea.⁴¹ Theodoret puts these events not in the reign of Constantine but in that of his son Constantius, and casts the emperor's acquiescence as a sign of his weakness (*HE* 2.2). Socrates steps out of his narrative into a first-person digression that evaluates the emperor's motive; but unlike Cyzicenus, who focuses on the bishops, Socrates expresses amazement at the "dedication that the emperor had to the fear of God" (*HE* 1.25.9).⁴² As further proof, he adduces the letter that Constantine wrote to Arius, where the emperor implies that he had earlier initiated several communications devoted to correcting Arius' impious tendencies. The *Life of Metrophanes and Alexander* proceeds directly from this letter to Arius' receipt thereof (*BHG* 1279, 322a). It otherwise follows Socrates' language verbatim, showing that Socrates' evaluation of the emperor's motives is truly personal, and not borrowed from his source.

⁴¹ Theodoret (*HE* 2.2–3) places the activity of these Arians under Constantius II. Cyzicenus (3.12–13), Socrates (*HE* 1.14, 1.25–27), and *BHG* 1279 all place these events in the reign of Constantine himself, suggesting that the Gelasian history followed that sequence of events.

⁴² θαυμάσαι δέ μοι ἔπεισι ... τὸν ζῆλον, ὃν εἶχεν ὁ βασιλεὺς περὶ τὴν θεοσέβειαν.

Cyzicenus alone justifies Constantine's trust in, and support for, the Arian party as a sign of his unique reverence for ecclesiastical authorities. At the request of his dying sister, Constantia, Constantine accepted the Arian presbyter into his confidence, as recounted by several ecclesiastical historians.⁴³ Although Cyzicenus follows the Gelasian source for much of the narrative, his details differ from other sources dependent on it. Socrates' *Ecclesiastical History* and the *Life of Metrophanes and Alexander* agree that the presbyter himself lobbied on Arius' behalf, without direct support.⁴⁴ Cyzicenus relates a double layer of petitioning in his narrative: first, the presbyter on behalf of the pro-Arian bishops Eusebius and Theognis, and then the bishops on behalf of Arius himself. With the two petitions come two responses from Constantine which echo the same phrase. After the presbyter first approaches Constantine, Cyzicenus writes, "But what was said by the presbyter concerning Arius appeared outlandish to the emperor" (3.13.12).⁴⁵ This same phrase appears in Socrates and the *Life of Metrophanes and Alexander*.⁴⁶ Then, when the bishops state their case, Cyzicenus notes, "These statements clearly seemed faithless to the emperor" (3.13.15), the word *apistos* continuing the theme of faith and trust.⁴⁷ With this echo of the first reaction, Cyzicenus returns to the narrative as confirmed by other post-Gelasian sources.

Although Constantine's skepticism was part of the Gelasian story, only Cyzicenus elaborates on the considerations that overcame his hesitation. He does so first when explaining the

⁴³ Gelasius F17a–b. See Wallraff et al., *Gelasius* 160–169.

⁴⁴ Wallraff et al., *Gelasius* 165 n.3.

⁴⁵ τῶ δὲ βασιλεῖ ξένα κατεφαίνετο τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἀρείου παρὰ τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου λεγόμενα.

⁴⁶ Socr. *HE* 25.6; *BHG* 1279, 321b.

⁴⁷ ἄπιστα καταφαίνεται ταῦτα τῶ βασιλεῖ.

reason why Constantine would restore Eusebius and Theognis after their refusal to sign on to the creed composed at Nicaea and their alleged involvement in Licinius' war with Constantine (3.13.10):

But since the emperor had an innate nobility of character and great reverence for those who were priests and possessed the forgiving heart of a great emperor, just like the prophet David, and did not harbor the memory of the plots dared against him by Eusebius in the time of the impious Licinius, he received them graciously and reverently as priests of God, and esteemed them worthy of as much honor and welcome as possible, and bade them to come to him more often.

Reverence for the ecclesiastical office becomes the motivation for restoring pro-Arian bishops. This same reverence is then the explanation for the emperor's decision to listen to the pleas of Eusebius and the presbyter to restore Arius (3.13.15):

These statements clearly seemed untrustworthy to the emperor, but succumbing to the God-loving mercy present within him and to his zeal concerning the unanimity of the churches, trusting them as priests (ὡς ἱερεῦσιν πιστεύσας), he said the following to them...

Although the reasoning is unique to Cyzicenus, the following response returns to text shared by other sources.⁴⁸

Cyzicenus' desire to provide a positive explanation for Constantine's leniency may be provoked by the alternative sequence of events which he would have read in Theodoret. Theodoret asserts that it was not Constantine who fell prey to the presbyter's Arian ideas, but his son Constantius II, and that this happened not out of any particular reverence, but because Constantius himself was "very fickle-minded" (τὴν κουφοτάτην ... γνώμην, *HE* 2.4.1). Of the post-Gelasian sources, Cyzicenus alone provides an explicit motivation for Constantine, and one that, consistent with Cyzicenus' characterization of the em-

⁴⁸ Soc. 1.25.6; *BHG* 1279, 22.15–17.

peror throughout the text, justifies the emperor's seemingly poor judgment through an appeal to his great piety.

5. *The rehabilitation of Eusebius of Caesarea*

The consistency imposed on depictions of Constantine in the *Ecclesiastical History* is matched by a similar effort to polish the image of another of Cyzicenus' historical heroes: Eusebius of Caesarea. The first book is constructed around excerpts from Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, and it is Eusebius who, he claims, "kept to the unswerving highway of truth, from the advent of the Lord until the times of Constantine the Great" (proem 23). It is therefore no small discomfort for Cyzicenus that his most respected historical source was not only accused of sympathizing with the Arian faction but was even implicated in plots against Athanasius, whom later generations considered the greatest champion of the Nicene faith.⁴⁹ Whereas in the case of Constantine variations between Cyzicenus and his sources mostly recharacterized or reframed the emperor's motives, in the case of Eusebius he engaged in open, willful revision of his predecessors' accounts.

Eusebius of Caesarea appears to have been, if not truly an Arian in theology, at least sympathetic to the cause and ideas of Arius. At a synod held in Antioch in 325 and overseen by such

⁴⁹ Recent assessments of Eusebius' theology differentiate his views from both Arius' and Athanasius', although granting that he became politically aligned with Arius. See C. Beeley, *The Unity of Christ: Continuity and Conflict in Patristic Tradition* (New Haven 2012) 55–97, which gives a detailed analysis of Eusebius' theological ideas and their relationship to both Arian and Nicene theology; I. Ramelli, "Origen's Anti-Subordinationism and its Heritage in the Nicene and Cappadocian Line," *VigChr* 65 (2011) 21–49; D. Singh, "Eusebius as Political Theologian: The Legend Continues," *HThR* 108 (2015) 129–154. On the political dimensions of the controversy see especially O. Irshai, "Fourth Century Christian Palestinian Politics: A Glimpse at Eusebius of Caesarea's Local Political Career and its Nachleben in Christian Memory," in S. Inowlocki et al. (eds.), *Reconsidering Eusebius: Collected Papers on Literary, Historical, and Theological Issues* (Leiden 2011) 25–38.

Nicene notables as Hosius of Cordoba and Eustathius of Antioch, Eusebius was judged to hold Arian beliefs and other bishops were warned not to continue holding fellowship with him.⁵⁰ Similarly condemned were Narcissus of Neronia and Theodotus of Laodicea, both of whom Cyzicenus includes in his lists of Arian partisans (2.7.42, 3.16.15, 3.17.31). Arius counted Eusebius among his supporters in a letter defending his theology,⁵¹ and Eusebius himself might have accused Alexander of Alexandria of misrepresenting Arius' theological arguments.⁵²

Eusebius' tolerance—or support—of Arius led to disagreements with pro-Nicene theologians, particularly Eustathius of Antioch and Athanasius of Alexandria. Eustathius had been installed as a bishop shortly before the Council of Nicaea and staunchly defended its decisions. Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis (after being restored thanks to the Arian presbyter) then conspired to unseat Eustathius and install a pro-Arian bishop in his place.⁵³ The charges brought against Eustathius are uncertain. Socrates (1.24) states that he was charged with

⁵⁰ H.-G. Opitz, *Dokumente zur Geschichte des Arianischen Streites* (Berlin 1934–1935), Urkunde 18. On the Council of Antioch see F. L. Cross, “The Council of Antioch in 325 A.D.,” *Church Quarterly Review* 128 (1939) 49–76; H. Chadwick, “Ossius of Cordova and the Presidency of the Council of Antioch,” *JThS* N.S. 9 (1958) 292–304.

⁵¹ Opitz, *Dokumente*, Urk. 1, preserved in Theodoret *HE* 1.5.

⁵² Opitz, *Dokumente*, Urk. 7. This document is first attested in the acts of the Second Council of Nicaea in 787. As other documents purporting to preserve earlier conciliar acts were invented to support arguments in the later councils, the lateness of this testimony may caution against accepting its authenticity. On the invention of conciliar documents see R. MacMullen, *Voting about God in Early Church Councils* (New Haven 2006) 104–106.

⁵³ On the deposition of Eustathius and its surrounding politics see F. Cavallera, *Le schisme d'Antioche* (Paris 1905) 33–49. The uncertain dating is discussed most recently in R. W. Burgess, “The Date of the Deposition of Eustathius of Antioch,” *JThS* N.S. 51 (2000) 150–160.

Sabellianism, Sozomen (2.19) that he discredited the priesthood, Athanasius (*Hist.Ar.* 4) that he had insulted the emperor's mother.

Cyzicenus makes no mention of these traditions, following instead Theodoret's tale of a woman who falsely claimed that Eustathius was her child's father (*HE* 1.21–22; *Cyz.* 3.16.8–20).⁵⁴ But Cyzicenus faults Theodoret's account in an authorial aside (3.16.10):

And they arrived and reached Antioch, adopting a façade of amity, just as Theodoret says—although Theodoret left out the vast majority of the events that occurred, because he had planned to write his history using as few as possible. But since we have read writers who preceded him, who depict everything accurately, in order, and sequentially, let me incorporate that sequence.

Cyzicenus' emphasis on the age and completeness of these correctives to Theodoret echoes his description of the book in his father's attic, including in the selection of verb—ἐντυχὼν (proem 3)/ἐντυχόντες (3.16.10)—employed for reading.⁵⁵ After Cyzicenus thus cues the reader to expect major correctives to Theodoret's tale, only one correction of substance in fact appears.⁵⁶ When listing the Arian partisans that Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis rallied against Eustathius, Cyzicenus

⁵⁴ An assessment of the reliability of our sources for the deposition of Eustathius can be found in H. Chadwick, "The Fall of Eustathius of Antioch," *JThS* 49 (1948) 27–35.

⁵⁵ Cyzicenus uses ἐντυχάνω elsewhere only for readers who "chance upon" his own work (proem 24, 2.37.29, 3.15.15, 3.15.23).

⁵⁶ Although there are numerous differences between Cyzicenus' text and Theodoret's, all except the defense of Eusebius and relocation of the council are matters of recharacterization rather than substance. He reiterates that the bishops' conversion was feigned (ἐπιπλάστων, 3.16.11), describes Eustathius' piety as "toward Christ" (11), and casts the plot against Eustathius as a drama (12, 16). Other small clarifications are added throughout. Minor variations in tone are pervasive in Cyzicenus' quoted texts.

vehemently opposes the inclusion of Eusebius of Caesarea among that number (3.16.12–14):

They reached the holy sites of Jerusalem and found there certain men who agreed with them ... but not Eusebius of Palestinian Caesarea, the way Theodoret seemingly slanders the man, writing falsely about him, whom all our holy fathers recall was eminent in the orthodox faith and whose successes in labors and contests in the council in Nicaea on behalf of the holy and *homoousios* Trinity they all sing. Just as they memorialize also ... all the others who contested in that hallowed and holy council on behalf of the apostolic doctrines, in this way they also memorialize the admirable Eusebius Pamphili, bishop of Caesarea Palaestina.

Despite Cyzicenus' protestations, Theodoret was correct. In an encyclical from the Council of Serdica in 343, preserved in Greek by Athanasius and in Latin by Hilary of Poitiers, who each attended the council, the assembled bishops indicate that Eusebius himself oversaw the synod that deposed Eustathius.⁵⁷

Eusebius appears to have been complicit also in the pro-Arian bishops' attempts to unseat Athanasius of Alexandria. During the back-and-forth theological disagreements and excommunications that characterized the decades after Nicaea, Constantine agreed to put Athanasius on trial on accusations of stirring discontent and potential treason. According to Sozomen (2.25.1) and Theodoret (1.28.2), this trial was to take place in Caesarea Palaestina. Cyzicenus' account again follows Theodoret, and once more removes Eusebius from the action, replacing Theodoret's "Caesarea of Palestine" with "Antioch of Syria" in a passage otherwise copied verbatim.⁵⁸ This time

⁵⁷ Athanasius *Apol. contr. Ar.* 43–50; Hilary of Poitiers *Collectanea Antiariana Parisina* 2.1–2. Eusebius himself may allude to his disagreement with Eustathius in *Vit. Const.* 3.59–62.

⁵⁸ Thdt. *HE* 1.28.2: ἐν Καισαρεία τῆς Παλαιστίνης ... ἔνθα πλείους ἦσαν οἱ δυσμενεῖς; Cyz. 3.16.27: ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τῆς Συρίας ... ἔνθα πλείους ἦσαν οἱ δυσμενεῖς.

Cyzicenus has some support from other sources, as Socrates reports that the inquisition was to take place in Antioch under the supervision of Dalmatius, Constantine's nephew (1.27.20). Because Socrates also drew upon the lost history attributed to Gelasius, it is possible that Cyzicenus made this modification to Theodoret's text on the basis of conflicting evidence—especially since no synod ultimately took place at either Caesarea or Antioch, but rather in Tyre in 335. His selection principle, however, appears to be driven more by personal belief about Eusebius' innocence than by historical evidence. Athanasius includes in his *Apology against the Arians* (8) a letter from the bishops of Egypt that lists Eusebius among his opponents at Tyre and accuses him of sacrificing to the Roman idols. Although the latter claim is reported even there as hearsay, the former confirms Eusebius' involvement with the proceedings against him.⁵⁹ Theodoret's claim (*HE* 1.28.2) that Athanasius had "many enemies" in Caesarea was not unfounded.

The way in which Cyzicenus rehabilitates Eusebius shows that, to him, revising his sources to be "proper to the truth" (proem 24) does not exclude historical revision when these salvage the orthodoxy of his champions and sources. He adduces his alleged corrective texts for the first time only to alter an otherwise verbatim passage of Theodoret and introduce a historical inconsistency that shifts responsibility for anti-Nicene activities away from Eusebius. Despite his self-presentation as a humble compiler, Cyzicenus applies his own understanding of the historical details to correct received narratives both about Eusebius and about Constantine.

⁵⁹ T. D. Barnes, "Eusebius of Caesarea," *The Expository Times* 121 (2009) 1–14, suggests that Eusebius was part of the delegation that traveled from Tyre to Constantinople to make the case against Athanasius before Constantine. The evidence preserved by Athanasius (*Apol. cont. Ar.* 9) leaves room for this possibility but does not confirm it, focusing on Eusebius of Nicomedia as the "Arian" ringleader.

6. *Chalcedonian Christology in an account of Nicaea*

As Cyzicenus' quotations are emended to recharacterize historical figures, so too he appears to emend their theology, even at places where such alterations do not alter the fundamental orthodoxy of the original texts. His concern, as made evident by the patterns of alterations that persist across his sources, is to emphasize the divinity and Godhead of Jesus—an agenda germane to the Nicene debates—as well as his true incarnation and experience of suffering in the flesh, a reflection of Cyzicenus' pro-Chalcedonian agenda.

The definition promulgated by the Council of Chalcedon adds two main clauses as clarifications to the Nicene Creed.⁶⁰ The first adds to the original statement that Jesus was “enfleshed” the specification that he was enfleshed “from the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin.” This phrasing identifies the two natures of Christ, both divine and human. Secondly, the definition rewords the general statement that Christ “suffered” to state that Christ “was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate.” The bishops, in a further explanation of these changes, declare that the additions are meant to combat those who denied Mary the title “Theotokos,” mother of God, which had been the central debate at the Council of Ephesus.⁶¹ They also purposed to refute those “mindlessly inventing that there is one nature of flesh and Godhead, and through confusion fantasizing that the divine nature of the Only-begotten is passible.” In short, the Chalcedonian Definition proclaims both the divine nature of

⁶⁰ The following translations from the Chalcedonian Definition come from Price and Gaddis, *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* 202–205.

⁶¹ The Council of Ephesus in 431 ruled against Nestorius, whom opponents accused of splitting Christ the Son in two when he expressed hesitation over the term *Theotokos*, suggesting instead *Christotokos* “mother of Christ.” For a recent examination of Nestorius and his beliefs see R. M. Adams, “Nestorius and Nestorianism,” *The Monist* 104 (2021) 366–375.

Christ present even at his birth and the human nature of Christ truly suffering at his death.

Cyzicenus' alterations that emphasize the divinity of Jesus surface first during Book 1, in a quotation from Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*. After Constantine's victory over Maxentius, Eusebius states that Constantine sang praises "to God, the ruler of all and cause of his victory" (*HE* 9.9.8). In Cyzicenus, however, the passage continues, "and his Only-Begotten Son, Jesus Christ" (1.7.5). Again, where Eusebius reports that after the death of Licinius the eastern Christian churches honored "God the King" (*HE* 10.9.7), Cyzicenus' quotation adds, "and his veritable Son, Christ" (2.1.5).

This emphasis on the coequality of Jesus as God is, by itself, suitable to a treatise on the Council of Nicaea, deciding as it did on the nature of the relationship between Father and Son, and could conceivably originate from an intermediary source. But Cyzicenus' additions do not stop there. In another passage, he presents a portion of Eusebius' text both abridged and embellished (1.10.8–9, underscored passages not in Eusebius):

For all these reasons, let us not cease from singing the praise of the God of the universe and his Only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who with the Father is the cause of all good things for us, who is the one who initiates us into the divine knowledge of him, the teacher of piety toward him, the destroyer of impious men, the tyrant-slayer, life's right guide, the Savior of those who despair; let us all praise Jesus with one mouth and with one heart, because indeed he alone, being as he is (the one and only All-good Son)⁶² of the All-good Father, by the philanthropic will of the Father, of himself, and of the Holy Spirit, taking forethought for our salvation when we were abiding down here in corruption, right well put on our nature, just as a most noble physician who by taking on our sufferings and bearing our ail-

⁶² This phrase has been supplied from the text of Eusebius where Hansen prints a possible lacuna in the manuscripts of Cyzicenus.

ments both then and forever brought to effect salvation and life for humankind.

ἐφ' οἷς ἅπασιν ἀνυμνοῦντες μὴ διαλείψωμεν τὸν τῶν ὅλων θεόν, καὶ τὸν τούτου μονογενῆ υἱὸν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν, τὸν σὺν τῷ πατρὶ πάντων ἡμῖν τῶν ἀγαθῶν αἴτιον, τὸν τῆς θεογνωσίας αὐτοῦ εἰσηγητὴν ἡμῶν, τὸν τῆς εἰς αὐτὸν εὐσεβείας διδάσκαλον, τὸν τῶν ἀσεβῶν ὀλετήρα, τὸν τυραννοκτόνον, τὸν τοῦ βίου διορθωτὴν, τὸν τῶν ἀπεγνωσμένων σωτήρα Ἰησοῦν ἐν ἐνὶ στόματι καὶ μιᾷ καρδίᾳ πάντες δοξάζωμεν, ὅτι δὴ μόνος, οἷα παναγάθου πατρὸς (...) βουλῆ τῆς πατρικῆς καὶ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος φιλανθρωπίας τῶν κάτω που κειμένων ἐν φθορᾷ τὴν σωτηρίαν ἡμῶν προμηθούμενος, εὖ μάλα τὴν ἡμετέραν ὑποδὺς φύσιν, καθάπερ τις ἄριστος ἰατρός τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν ἀναλαβὼν καὶ τὰς νόσους φέρων, καὶ τότε καὶ αἰεὶ σωτηρίαν καὶ ζωὴν τῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων κατειργάσατο γένει.⁶³

In addition to showing several of the minor modifications typical of Cyzicenus' text, including limiting general terms such as "divine knowledge" and "piety" by specifying their orientation toward God and emphasizing the co-equality of the Son as God, the statement develops areas where Eusebius' original did not measure up to the theological developments of the intervening century-and-a-half. The threefold, but unified, economy of the incarnation draws on post-Nicene debates over the role of the Holy Spirit in addition to the Nicene arguments

⁶³ Cf. Eus. *HE* 10.4.10–11 (ed. G. Bardy): καὶ τὸν μὲν τῶν ὅλων πατέρα τούτοις ἀνευφημοῦντες μὴ ποτε διαλείπομεν· τὸν δὲ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἡμῖν δεύτερον αἴτιον τὸν τῆς θεογνωσίας εἰσηγητὴν, τὸν τῆς ἀληθοῦς εὐσεβείας διδάσκαλον, τὸν τῶν ἀσεβῶν ὀλετήρα, τὸν τυραννοκτόνον, τὸν τοῦ βίου διορθωτὴν, τὸν ἡμῶν τῶν ἀπεγνωσμένων σωτήρα Ἰησοῦν ἀνὰ στόμα φέροντες γεραίρωμεν, ὅτι δὴ μόνος, οἷα παναγάθου πατρὸς μονώτατος ὑπάρχων πανάγαθος παῖς, γνώμη τῆς πατρικῆς φιλανθρωπίας τῶν ἐν φθορᾷ κάτω που κειμένων ἡμῶν εὖ μάλα προθύμως ὑποδὺς τὴν φύσιν, οἷα τις ἰατρῶν ἄριστος τῆς τῶν καμνόντων ἕνεκεν σωτηρίας ὄρη μὲν δεινά, θιγγάνει δ' ἀηδέων ἐπ' ἄλλοτρήσι τε ζυμφορήσιν ἰδίας καρποῦται λύπας, οὐ νοσοῦντας αὐτὸ μόνον οὐδ' ἔλκεσι δεινοῖς καὶ σεσηπόσιν ἤδη τραύμασιν πιεζομένους, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν νεκροῖς κειμένους ἡμᾶς ἔξ αὐτῶν μυχῶν τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ ἑαυτῷ διεσώσατο.

that the Son also willed the incarnation, in unity with the Father.⁶⁴

The reinterpretation of Eusebius' metaphor of the physician also shows the influence of Chalcedonian theology on Cyzicenus' version. In the *Ecclesiastical History* Eusebius likens the Son to an inspecting physician "who for the sake of saving them that are ill examines their sufferings, handles their foul sores, and reaps pain for himself from the miseries of another" (10.4.11, transl. McGiffert). The text in Cyzicenus calls to mind instead the fifth-century debates over the passible nature of Christ, implying that it was by taking on human nature and thereby human sufferings that the salvation of the incarnation was accomplished.⁶⁵ In part, the divergence from Eusebius' text can be explained as a closer adherence to the text of Matthew 8:17, itself a Greek rendering of Isaiah 53:4. Nevertheless, the impulse to emend Eusebius' paraphrase and quote the scripture independently highlights a concern with the true human suffering of Jesus. This tenet was central to the school of Christology most often associated with the church in and around Antioch, against which Eutyches had responded by emphasizing the divinity of Christ.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ For the history of the term *oikonomia* and its significance in the debates over the nature of God and divine will see G. Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government* (Stanford 2011) 53–67; S. Capener, "Being and Acting: Agamben, Athanasius, and the Trinitarian Economy," *Heythrop Journal* 57 (2016) 950–963. The united will of the three Persons is a central issue of Basil of Caesarea's *On the Holy Spirit* 16.37–40.

⁶⁵ A brief, helpful analysis of the fundamental issues concerning the incarnation in the fifth century can be found in H. Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy," *JThS* N.S. 2 (1951) 145–164; more recently, Beeley, *The Unity of Christ* 256–284.

⁶⁶ The notion of an 'Antiochene School' of theology was put forth by J. H. Newman, *The Arians of the Fourth Century* (London 1833), although it has since been subjected to useful critique that dissociates the theological

Cyzicenus himself emphasizes the Son's human suffering, made possible by the human nature of Christ, in opposition to Eutyches' theology. In the proem, after he avers that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit authorized the decisions at Nicaea, he raises the topic of the Son's will for the divine economy and the promise of salvation through his incarnation (proem 14–15):

And, after his divinely-planned incarnate advent, the truly “great mystery of piety,” just as it is written, “that he was revealed in the flesh” and “was seen by the angels”⁶⁷ ... he fulfilled all things according to his divine plan: the voluntary suffering on our behalf, and the burial, and the resurrection by submitting in that holy and blameless flesh of his, through which he rendered our kind immortal, and by ascending into heaven he confirmed through himself the divine and venerable definition of this holy and blameless faith.

Then, taking on the voice of Christ himself through a *proso-popoeia*, Cyzicenus adds (17):

For even if I have assumed your flesh, animate and rational, from the revered and holy Virgin Mary because of my love for humankind, even so the assumption of the flesh did not make any addition to the Trinity of the Father and Myself and the Holy Spirit, rather the Trinity remains a trinity.

εἰ γὰρ καὶ διὰ φιλανθρωπίαν τὴν ὑμῶν σάρκα ἔμψυχον καὶ ἔννοον ἐκ τῆς πανσέμου καὶ ἁγίας παρθένου Μαρίας προσείληφα, ἀλλ' ἡ τῆς σαρκὸς πρόσληψις προσθήκην τῇ τοῦ

doctrine from the geographical region. A. M. Schor, *Theodoret's People: Social Networks and Religious Conflicts in Late Roman Syria* (Berkeley 2001), offers a full investigation of the 'Antiochene School' of theology as a social network, as much as an alliance of theologians. M. Edwards, "One Nature of the Word Enfleshed," *HThR* 108 (2015) 289–306, critiques the Alexandrian vs. Antiochene model and reviews the debates of Chalcedon in light of Cyril of Alexandria's writings.

⁶⁷ 1 Timothy 3:16.

πατὴρ καὶ ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος τριάδι οὐκ ἐποίησεν,
ἀλλὰ μένει ἡ τριάς τριάς.

In the context of the debates with Eutyches, who was represented as saying that Jesus was not consubstantial with humankind other than with Mary,⁶⁸ the emphasis on the flesh as being animate and rational contrasts with the notion that Jesus was solely of divine nature, and therefore entirely beyond the limitations of the human body and mind. The variances in the passages from Eusebius fit a post-Chalcedonian context and suit Cyzicenus' self-professed agenda and theology.

This same theology underpins several unique phrases that appear in the story of a simple, old, unlearned man who refutes an Arian philosopher at Nicaea (2.13.1–13). This story originated in the Gelasian *Ecclesiastical History* (F12d), as shown by its inclusion in both Rufinus' Latin *Ecclesiastical History* (10.3) and the Greek *Life of Metrophanes and Alexander* (BHG 1279, 12.13–13.28). Although Rufinus and the anonymous life share many details also present in this narrative, Cyzicenus' version is more elaborate, more dramatic in its characterizations, and more theologically explicit. Where other versions present the Arian philosopher as clever, in Cyzicenus he seems clever only to himself;⁶⁹ where others grant that he was able to answer the arguments brought up against him, in Cyzicenus he struggles (ἐβιάζετο) to do the same—yet the rest of these sentences agree nearly verbatim with the Greek hagiography.⁷⁰ More sub-

⁶⁸ See Price and Gaddis, *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* 241–249.

⁶⁹ 2.13.4 ῥῶστα πᾶσι τοῖς ἐπαγομένοις ἀντῶ ὡς ᾔετο προσφερόμενος. Gelasius F12d (cf. BHG 1279, 12.19, and Georgius Monachus 505.25–26): πᾶσι τοῖς ἐπαγομένοις ῥῶστα προσεφέρετο; Rufinus 10.3: *nec tamen ullo genere philosophus concludi a quoquam poterat aut constringi*. On the relationship between the text of Georgius Monachus, Gelasius of Caesarea, and Anonymous Cyzicenus, see Wallraff et al., *Gelasius* lxxiii–lxxviii.

⁷⁰ 2.13.4 ἐπιλύειν τε ἐβιάζετο τὰ κινούμενα. Cf. BHG 1279, 12.19–20, and Georgius Monachus 505.26–27: ἐπιλύων τὰ κινούμενα.

stantive are the variations that appear in the description of the unlearned Christian's rebuttal. Rufinus and *BHG* 1279 both report that the man knew nothing "except Jesus Christ and him crucified," echoing I Corinthians 2:2, to which the narrative in Cyzicenus appends the key Christological phrase "in the flesh, according to the scriptures" (2.13.7). Then, in the beliefs to which the philosopher is compelled to profess, Cyzicenus' text includes additional emphasis on the true embodiment and human nature of Christ, as shown by the underscored phrases (2.13.10):

We, knowing that this word is the son of God, philosopher, worship him, believing that, in order to ransom us, he has been made flesh (σεσαρκῶσθαι) and been born and been made man (ἐνηνθροπηκέναι) from the virgin, and, through the suffering of his flesh upon the cross (τοῦ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ πάθους τοῦ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ) and his death, he freed us from eternal condemnation, and through his resurrection he, the eternal one, gave us life.⁷¹

Similar variants appear in another statement of belief professed by Macarius of Jerusalem when assisting Constantine's mother, Helena, to identify the true cross of Christ. The event is narrated in several post-Gelasian Greek texts, but the prayer is found in full only in Rufinus' Latin history.⁷² Comparing the text of Rufinus' prayer to that found in Cyzicenus, we see again an emphasis on the bodily nature of Christ in the latter with the inclusion of the word *σαρκί* (in the flesh) at the mention of the crucifixion, for which Rufinus' Latin contains no parallel. Cyzicenus uniquely emphasizes the physical form

⁷¹ Cyz. διὰ τοῦ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ πάθους τοῦ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ καὶ τοῦ θανάτου ἐλευθερωκέναι αὐτὸν ἡμᾶς; *BHG* 1279, 13.8–9, and Georgius Monachus 506.21–22: διὰ σταυροῦ καὶ θανάτου αὐτὸν [ἡμᾶς (*BHG* 1279) | τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων (G.Mon.)] ἠλευθερωκέναι; Rufinus 10.3: *per passionem mortis a perpetua nos morte liberavit*. See also Sozomen *HE* 1.18.

⁷² Rufinus *HE* 10.7. The other major witnesses to the event, Socrates (*HE* 1.17.5–6), Sozomen (*HE* 2.1.7), and Theodoret (*HE* 1.18.4), omit the prayer.

of Jesus in the description of Helena's hunt for "the nails by which the lord's body (τὸ κυριακὸν σῶμα) was nailed to the wood of the cross" (3.7.8).

The first-person interludes suggest that the emphasis on Christ's suffering in the flesh originated with Cyzicenus and not an intermediary source. In the authorial transition between the stories of Helena in the Holy Land and the Christianizing missions that occurred under Constantine, Cyzicenus begins (3.8.1):

But I shall turn my account once more to the godly zeal of the Christ-bearing emperor Constantine, the son of that woman, who so surpassed the zeal of his father and mother for the salvation of Christ that he, trusting the symbol of the saving cross of our master Christ's suffering according to the flesh (κατὰ σάρκα), which his mother had brought to him...

The emphasis on Christ's suffering flesh, found throughout the text from Cyzicenus' proem through to this late, authorial interlude, refutes the Eutychian position that emphasized the divine nature of Christ to the near exclusion of the human. Although the accusations that Eutyches promoted a fully theopaschite Christology may not have been truly representative of Eutyches' beliefs, Cyzicenus' text consistently promotes a dual understanding of the nature of Christ, both as God and as an embodied man whose flesh was capable of suffering—even when surviving copies of his source texts do not. Alone of the authors who depended upon the history attributed to Gelasius of Caesarea, Cyzicenus presents conveniently pro-Chalcedonian language about Christ's crucifixion, extending also to his quotations of Eusebius of Caesarea. He himself acknowledges only two possible corrective texts to these sources, those of John the Presbyter and his father's attic book, neither of which he expects his reader to have access to, and neither of which are attested by any other source. In his effort to prove that Nicaea prefigured Chalcedon, it seems most likely that Cyzicenus simply made his sources say so.

7. *Conclusions*

The discrepancies between Cyzicenus' texts as quoted in his *Ecclesiastical History* and the textual traditions for those sources that survive independently of Cyzicenus show consistent differences in characterization, historical narrative, and theology. Although Cyzicenus' authorial agency has been doubted, the regularity of these changes and their consistency with his self-avowed program render more likely the possibility that many of the variances originated with him, and intentionally so. In the world of Cyzicenus' text, the emperor Constantine is never anything other than pious and deferential to ecclesiastical authority, Eusebius of Caesarea is a champion of orthodox faith, and the texts of Cyzicenus' predecessors justify a Chalcedonian reading of past theology and ecclesiastical affairs.

We should therefore approach the unattributed documents contained in the text with special caution. Four major portions of the text have no tradition outside of Cyzicenus' compendium. These are Constantine's purported speech to the council (2.7.1–41); Hosius of Cordoba's declaration of faith (2.12.1–7); the Dispute with Phaedo (2.14–24); and the *Diatyposeis* (2.31). In many ways, these are the very proof texts that support Cyzicenus' emendation agenda elsewhere. The speech attributed to Constantine displays the emperor's deference to ecclesiastical authorities on matters of faith. Hosius of Cordoba's statement of faith pushes the doctrine of the Trinity to a fuller presentation of the Holy Spirit than the original Nicene Creed and contains a unique expression of the Son's relationship to the Father paralleled in Greek literature only by other passages of Cyzicenus' text.⁷³ The Dispute with Phaedo folds Eusebius of

⁷³ The unique expression states that they are of the same "substance" (τῷ αὐτοῦ ὑπόστασις). This phrase, not found in Cyzicenus' contemporaries, appears in a heavily condensed and reworked quotation from Eusebius (1.10.4), Hosius of Cordoba's statement of faith (2.12.4), and the Dispute with Phaedo (2.21.17).

Caesarea comfortably into the orthodox fathers and extends Nicene reasoning past Trinitarian issues and into the question of the incarnation of the Son.

Cyzicenus' willingness to make theologically motivated alterations to the text of his sources must be considered when evaluating these central documents. Even if some or all do in fact derive from a pre-existing source, the textual variations seen elsewhere in Cyzicenus must be kept in mind when attempting to situate the texts into their historical and theological contexts. And if, as I myself suspect, at least some of these sources originated in the pen of our anonymous Cyzicene, his mask of simple transcription, already cracked by comparison to his source texts, falls completely away.⁷⁴

December, 2022

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⁷⁴ This article owes much to the insights and input of Jeremy Schott and Sean Tandy, provided over the course of our forthcoming translation of the text of Anonymous Cyzicenus, as well as the gracious anonymous reviewers and *GRBS* editors. The research was undertaken while a faculty member at Hendrix College, initially submitted while at Hamilton College, and rendered into its final form while serving as the Society for Classical Studies fellow to the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.