

Gutachter dieses Bandes:
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PREFACE

Eusebius of Caesarea is generally—and rightly—considered the father of church history. As is well known, he has fathered many children, both late antique and modern. Church history as a literary genre and as an academic discipline has had many adepts in the centuries that have since elapsed. It is less well known that the first in this long series was Gelasius, a successor of Eusebius both in his episcopal see and in his literary endeavors. Approximately two generations after his illustrious forerunner, Gelasius wrote “the history of the things that happened after Eusebius and of the things that Eusebius did not record” (F1b).

If Gelasius' *Church History* is little known, this is certainly not due to its contents being irrelevant. On the contrary, many narratives have become part of the collective memory of Christianity (and beyond). The beginnings of the church in Ethiopia or in Georgia are well-known “founding myths” in their respective local traditions up to this day, and they form part of the historical heritage of Christianity worldwide. Even more prominently, the finding of the True Cross in Jerusalem by Constantine's mother Helen is one of the most famous and widespread tales of late antiquity. Although shrouded in legend, this episode has had an enormous impact in subsequent centuries, not least in the realms of spirituality and iconography. Yet, few people are aware that the earliest written attestation of these three narratives goes back to Gelasius of Caesarea (F16a,b, F15, respectively). The same applies to the first historiographical account of an event of such primordial importance as the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325 (F11–F14, considering Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* panegyric, not historiography).

The main reason why Gelasius' *Church History* is so unfamiliar is surely the fact that it did not survive in its entirety. This is an unfortunate, but not an unusual fate; many literary works of antiquity have come down to us only in fragments. In the case of Gelasius, relatively large parts of his work can be reconstructed, although very few direct quotations are attributed to him by name. This situation may also explain why the extant material has never been gathered in a critical edition, although it has been the object of scholarly debate for over a hundred years.

It is an honor that our edition is appearing in the old and distinguished series of the “Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller” (GCS). The series was originally intended for the Christian writers of the first three centuries alone, but already in April 1902 the commission decided to include the church historians after Eusebius as well. In a sense, the present edition is the last tessera in the rich

mosaic of late antique ecclesiastical historiography.¹ Thanks are due to Christoph Marksches, the main editor of the series today. He accepted the edition for GCS and accompanied the progress of the work with precious advice. The other referee for the series was Jürgen Hammerstaedt. His generous help and philological expertise were particularly appreciated. Already at an early stage, in November 2014, he invited the Gelasius team to Cologne for a very intensive weekend of discussion on methodology and textual criticism. Space does not permit the acknowledgement of all the other members of the Cologne seminar here, but we would at least like to thank Markus Stein and Gregor Staab. Other contexts in which we could discuss our work include the seminar for church history and the “Arbeitskreis Spätantike”, both at the University of Basel, as well as the “Groupe Suisse des Études Patristiques” in Fribourg. In the final phase, our Basel colleague Hans-Peter Mathys helped with advice on Syriac. Special thanks are due to Roderick Saxey and Jasper Donelan, who proof-read the English portions of the edition, and to Annina Völlmy Kudrjajtsev, who worked indefatigably on the indexes.

The project at the University of Basel would not have been possible without the generous funding of the Swiss National Science Foundation (2013–16). It ought to be pointed out that the allocation of roles appearing in the frontispiece was not as clear cut as it may seem. Although Jonathan Stutz was more engaged on the editorial side, and Nicholas Marinides had the main responsibility for the translations (as well as the editing of the dogmatic fragments), all relevant details were discussed together. The result is a piece of teamwork in the best sense of the word. All three team members are jointly responsible for the merits and faults of the final product.

Modern research on Gelasius begun about a century ago (Glas 1914). Approximately halfway between then and today, Friedhelm Winkelmann made a decisive contribution to the debate (1966a and 1966b). Although we did not always share his views, the edition would not have been possible without his careful preliminary work. As the coordinator of the present edition, I want to conclude with a personal word of thanks. Friedhelm Winkelmann first initiated me into the *arcana* of the study of historiography 25 years ago. I hope that I have repaid, in a small way, this debt of gratitude by contributing, with my co-editors, to giving the work of Gelasius the visibility and interest it deserves.

Basel/München, October 2017

Martin Wallraff

1 The data of the GCS editions of Eusebius, Philostorgius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, Theodorus Lector and Anonymus Cyzicenus can be found in our bibliography. For the early history of the series (including the decision mentioned above) cf. the *Protokollbuch*, ed. by Rebenich 2000, esp. 124.

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