

Arians and the Multiple Variants of Arianism

亞略派與不同派別的亞略異端

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摘要：被正統基督徒稱為「亞略派」的異端者們，他們並非所有人都抱持著同一套單一的信仰準則。本文旨在探討這個嚴重困擾早期教會的基督論異端，研究包括原初的亞略異端及其思想來源，以及後來興起的不相似派、相似派、實體相似派以及聖神受造派的學說。

關鍵詞：亞略派、不相似派、相似派、實體相似派、聖神受造派

Abstract: *Those whom orthodox Christians label as “Arians” do not hold a homogeneous set of beliefs. This essay explores classical Arianism and its sources, as well as the Anomoian, Homoian, Homoiousian and Pneumatomachian variants of this archetypal Christological heresy which plagued the early Church.*

Keywords: *Arians, Anomoians, Homoians, Homoiousians, Pneumatomachians*

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Arianism was by far the most important heresy the early Church had to deal with. Its central tenet places the Son of God at a level inferior to that of the Father. The Arian doctrine was unequivocally condemned by 318 council Fathers gathered at Nicaea in 325, and the council came to be known as the first ecumenical council of the Church. It is sometimes simplistically assumed that Arians were the followers of Arius. Besides, it is tempting to interpret the Arian controversy according to how later historians have put forth the problem. This essay sets out to explore what exactly is Arianism, what are its sources, and who the Arians are. To avoid a biased evaluation of the Arian heresy through the lens of the orthodox, it allows for first-hand Arian writings to speak for themselves whenever possible.

1. Arians and Arianism

Arianism surfaced in the year 318, when Arius (256-336) staged criticism against the Christology of his bishop, Alexander of Alexandria.¹ Arians were called Arians by their opponents. It is a label used by those whom we now deem as orthodox Christians to refer to adherents of this Christological heresy.

The Council of Nicaea (325) adopted the word “homoousios” in the creed it promulgated. Those who maintain that the Son is “of the same substance” (*homoousios*, ὁμοούσιος) with the Father are therefore referred to as Homoousians. However, this council failed to curtail Arianism once and for all. Like a virus, it evolved into variants

1 For events leading up to the Council of Nicaea, see Julia Cheung, “The Council of Nicaea and Subsequent Arian-Themed Councils up to 360 A.D.,” *Theology Annual* 39 (2018): 3-6.

and plagued the Church at least till the second ecumenical council held at Constantinople in 381.² These variants of Arianism have been categorised by their adversaries — orthodox Christians who hold the Nicene faith — as Homoians, Homoiousians, Pneumatomachians and Anomoians respectively.

Classic Arians are usually understood to include Arius himself and his immediate circle of supporters who denied the *homōousios* at the Council of Nicaea (325) and its aftermath. Anomoians claim that the Son is “unlike” (ἀνόμοιος) the Father. The Council of Sirmium (357) was their crowning moment. Homoians assert that the Son is “like” (ὅμοιος) the Father. Their greatest triumph was at the Council of Constantinople (360). Homoiousians believe that the Son is “of like substance” (ὁμοιοῦσιος) to the Father. They were associated particularly with the Council of Ancyra (358). Pneumatomachians (Πνευματομάχοι) deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit, though they admit that the Father and the Son are *homōousios*. They surfaced around 360s and were called Macedonians after 380.

There has been great confusion regarding the taxonomy of Arianism, as names labelling the various types of Arian parties “have been used inconsistently and to a great extent uncritically.”³ For instance, the heretics whom Augustine of Hippo identified as “Arians” in his writings did not actually refer to the classic

² For the struggle against Arianism between the first two ecumenical councils, see *Ibid.*, pp. 1-34 and Julia Cheung, “The Struggle against Arianism before and after the Council of Constantinople (381),” *Theology Annual* 40 (2019): 31-67.

³ Michael Slusser, “Traditional Views of Late Arianism,” in Michel R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams, ed., *Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 3.

Arians or Arius himself unless he specifically called upon his name. Augustine's Arians were in fact Latin Homoian Arians, whose theological convictions drew from certain distinctive principles of Arius on the one hand, but showed a belonging to their own brand of Arianism with their unique heritage and peculiarities on the other.⁴ Moreover, the Bishop of Hippo recognises that what he calls Macedonians are called Πνευματομάχοι by the Greeks and Semi-Arians by some others.⁵ Yet, the name "Semi-Arians" was actually coined by Epiphanius, the disciple of Athanasius, to refer to the Homoiousians.⁶ The lack of standard names for different Arian groups extends to modern times as well. For instance, Hanson prefers to call the Anomoians "Neo-Arians," as there were occasions on which this group rejected the view that the Son is categorically unlike the Father.⁷ But "neo-Arianism" is Homoianism for Gamble,⁸ while Heather referred to Homoianism as "semi-Arianism."⁹

4 Barnes points out that Augustine would unambiguously name Arius or Eunomius if he wanted specifically to refer to them, but he would mention a doctrine as "Arian" when he targeted the Homoians. Michel R. Barnes, "Anti-Arian Works," in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Alan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), p. 33.

5 Augustine of Hippo, *De haeresibus ad Quod uult deum* 52 (CCL 46: 323).

6 R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy, 318-381* (Grand Rapids, MI: T&T Clark, 2005), p. 660.

7 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 598. It appears that the Eunomians have been commonly called "neo-Arians" from the twentieth century onwards. Maurice Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy: Arianism through the Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 31.

8 Richard C. Gamble, *Augustinus Contra Maximinum: An Analysis of Augustine's Anti-Arian Writings* (Ann Arbor, MI: McNaughton & Gunn, 1985), pp. 240, 247, 257.

9 P. J. Heather, *Goths and Romans 332-489* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 182.

What makes the naming more confusing is that many of those whom the orthodox would consider as Arians denied themselves as such. It is much more difficult to find one in the fourth who would admit that he was an Arian than to locate those who would dissociate themselves from the person and teachings of the heresiarch Arius. At the Dedication Council of Antioch (341), the Eusebian bishops, who were perceived by the orthodox as Arian in doctrine, protested that they could not possibly be followers of Arius as they as bishops ranked higher than Arius, who was only a priest.¹⁰ When Auxentius of Milan was charged with being an Arian by Hilary of Poitiers, he declared that he neither knew the person nor doctrine of Arius.¹¹ At the Council of Aquileia (381), Palladius of Ratiaria protested against Ambrose's attempt to use the letter of Arius to Alexander to accuse him of its assertion that the Son of God was not eternal and responded that he had neither seen nor known Arius.¹² Secundianus of Singidunum likewise vowed total ignorance regarding the person and teaching of Arius.¹³ Arians thought of themselves as Christians rather than Arians. Palladius said that he and Secundianus had gone to the Council of Aquileia (381) as Christians to Christians.¹⁴ According to Sozomen, the common Arian Goths believed that there was nothing

10 “Ἡμεῖς οὔτε ἀκόλουθοι Ἀρείου γεγόναμεν· πῶς γὰρ ἐπίσκοποι ὄντες ἀκολουθοῦμεν πρεσβυτέρῳ.” Athanasius of Alexandria, *De synodis* 22.3 (SC 563: 248).

11 “numquam scivi Arium, non vidi oculis, non cognovi ejus doctrinam.” Hilary of Poitiers, *Contra Auxentium* 14 (PL 10: 617).

12 “Arrium nec uidi nec scio qui sit.” *Scholia Arriana* 303r.2 (SC 267: 226).

13 “Qui fuerit ignoro, quid dixerit nescio.” *Gesta Aquileia* 66 (SC 267: 376).

14 “Cristiani ad cristianos.” *Scholia Arriana* 302r.36 (SC 267: 224).

wrong in the doctrine of their spiritual leader Ulfila, whom we now consider as a Homoian Arian.¹⁵

The label “Arian” has thus been a misnomer. At the time when Christians were still searching for terminologies to explain the truth of the doctrine of God, it was the orthodox Christians who labelled these various groups of heretics as such, and they were in turn referred to as “heretics” by these groups. Rowan Williams comments that “‘Arianism’ as a coherent system, founded by a single great figure and sustained by his disciples, is a fantasy—more exactly, a fantasy based on the polemic of Nicene writers, above all Athanasius.”¹⁶

There is no simple way out of this problem. One must just acknowledge the reality that those who deny the true and full divinity of Christ have been called Arians and labelled as various types of Arians differently by different scholars throughout history. The names used for the different varieties of Arians in this paper are for purposes of easy identification, and are not meant to circumscribe their respective theologies into those fixed categories.

1.1 Sources of Arius

There is no consensus among scholars on the sources of Arius or why Arianism thrived for so long over such an extended geographical area. It is also difficult to trace his theological sources or to classify him

15 “πεπεισμένοι μηδὲν εἶναι φαῦλον τῶν παρ’ αὐτοῦ λεγομένων ἢ πραττομένων.” Sozomen, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.37.10 (SC 306: 450).

16 Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), p. 82.

as belonging to either the Antiochene or Alexandrian tradition. Kelly gives a good account of the problem. On the one hand, Arius' calling Eusebius of Nicomedia a "fellow-Lucianist" would align him with Lucian, who had supposedly founded a catechetical school in Antioch and had been a student of the Adoptionist Paul of Samosata. On the other hand, the Arians themselves claim to follow the Alexandrian tradition of bishops Dionysius and Alexander.¹⁷ Newman places Arius clearly in the Antiochene camp.¹⁸ Grillmeier, Kelly, and Rowan Williams instead put him in the Alexandrian category.¹⁹ In particular, Williams thinks that "Arius was a committed theological conservative; more specifically, a conservative *Alexandrian*,"²⁰ whose source was definitely not Lucian.²¹ Arius "became the centre of a controversy because of his fusion of conservative themes with a very un-conservative ontology, which isolated him not only from Alexander and Athanasius but also from

17 J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th ed. (London and New York: Continuum, 2009), p. 230.

18 R. Williams, *Arius*, p. 3. Cf. John Henry Newman, *The Arians of the Fourth Century* (London: J. G. & F. Rivington, 1833).

19 "Arianism... stands nearest in history to the Alexandrians." Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, *From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, 2nd ed., trans. John Bowden (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), p. 238. Kelly considers Arianism as "left-wing Alexandrianism" compared to the extreme Nicene theology of Eustathius of Antioch. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 281.

20 R. Williams, *Arius*, p. 175.

21 Williams thinks that Arius' *Thalia* "could hardly be described as a 'Lucianist' document." He also disagrees with the fifth-century Eunomian historian Philostorgius, who "sees in the Lucianists the ancestors of the Eunomians or 'neo-Arian' position which affirmed that God in his grace made himself entirely accessible to created minds." *Ibid.*, p. 63. Furthermore, Arius does not adhere to the Adoptionism of Paul of Samosata. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

his Lucianist allies and their successors.”²² Simonetti believes that it is through Lucian that Arius entered into the Alexandrian tradition, for at the second half of third century and beginning of the fourth century, there were in Antioch both the Origenian Alexandrian tradition taught by Lucian as well as the Asiatic tradition taught by Paul of Samosata.²³

Whether or not Arius had learned his Alexandrianism from Lucian, it is a fact that Arius has often been linked to Origen. “From very early on, there were those who saw Origen as the ultimate source of Arius’ heresy: ... perhaps the earliest such accusation comes from Marcellus of Ancyra.”²⁴ As for scholars in modern times, Kelly thinks that Arius exploits the subordinationism of Origen to its extreme even though he does not share Origen’s doctrine of eternal generation.²⁵ Origen is known to consider that only God the Father is God in a strict sense—the Son is a secondary God (δεύτερος θεός) since the Father begets him by an eternal act (ἀεὶ γεννᾷ αὐτόν).²⁶ Arius, too, is most known for thinking that the Son is less than the Father—a thought shared by later Arians including Homoians and Anomoians, and to some extent Homoiousians as well. For Ayres, Arius’ direct source was not Origen,

22 *Ibid.*, p. 232. Williams understands that Arius is conservative in theology but un-conservative in philosophy. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 233, 244.

23 Manilo Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo*, Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 11 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1975), p. 54.

24 R. Williams, *Arius*, p. 131.

25 Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 231. According to Origen, the pre-existed soul of Jesus was inseparably attached to the Logos like a lump of iron plunged into fire. *Ibid.*, 155. Eusebius of Caesarea, who admires Origen, interprets it to mean that the eternal Word takes the place of Christ’s human soul. *Ibid.*, p. 160. One objection of Augustine against the Arians is the lack of human soul in Christ.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 128. Origen notes that the Gospel of John calls the Son θεός and not ὁ θεός. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

but Origen still exerted his “piecemeal” influence on Arius since he was “the quintessential ‘Alexandrian’ thinker” of the third century.²⁷

Traditionally, Arianism has also been associated with Neo-Platonism. With Plotinus (205-270) as its representative figure, Neo-Platonism is a system of philosophy that puts great stress on the transcendence of God.²⁸ In Neo-Platonism, the One is the highest principle from which all are emanated, like the ray of light from the sun which does not diminish the sun. The second *hypostasis* is the Mind or Thought which is the casual principle, as in Plato’s demiurge. The third *hypostasis* is the Soul. The higher soul “is akin to Mind and transcends the material order,” the lower soul, or Nature (*φύσις*) “is the soul of the phenomenal world.”²⁹ Grillmeier believes that an identification of the One (*Hen*), the Mind (*Nous*) and the Soul (*Pneuma*) with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit “inevitably led to a denial of the transcendent-immanent character of this Christian triad, i.e. to Arianism.”³⁰ Williams, while acknowledging the heritage of Arius from Neo-Platonism, argues more specifically that Arius was

27 Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 28-29.

28 Neo-Platonism is to be distinguished from Middle Platonism. Middle Platonism merges together the concepts of Plato’s Good and Aristotle’s supreme Mind. Plato’s transcendent world of Forms is therefore Aristotle’s thought of God. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 20.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

30 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, p. 107. While admitting a connection between Arianism and Neo-Platonism, Grillmeier actually traces the possible lineage of Arianism back to the earliest days of Christianity. He thinks that the early Jewish-Christian “angel-christology,” which sees Christ as an angel sent by God, allows the possibility of understanding the Logos as angel *secundum naturam* rather than *secundum officium*. But this is a view that could lead to Arianism. *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 52-53.

“post-Plotinian.”³¹ In response to Stead’s criticism in 1997 of his claim regarding the influence of Neo-Platonism on Arius in his first edition of *Arius* (1987), Williams concedes in his second edition (2001) that he agrees with Stead that one need not see Porphyry, Plotinus’ disciple, as a source for what Arius could have taken from Clement of Alexandria.³² Already in the first edition Williams recognises that Arius uses the common apophatic tradition of Philo, Clement of Alexandria and heterodox Gnosticism as his point of departure.³³

In addition to being branded as Antiochene, Alexandrian, Origenian and post-Plotinian, scholars have also associated Arianism with paganism. Harnack “interprets Arian theology as a new form of Hellenism which employed biblical terminology solely as religious veneer in order to support its theoretical structure.”³⁴ Gwatkin considers Arianism a kind of pagan reaction against Christianity. “The appearance then of Arianism about the year 318 was no historical accident, but a direct result of earlier movements, and an inevitable reaction of heathen forms of thought against the definite establishment of the Christian view of God.”³⁵

31 R. Williams, *Arius*, p. 224.

32 *Ibid.*, pp. 262-263. Cf. C. Stead, “Was Arius a Neoplatonist?,” *Studia Patristica* 32 (1997) 39-52, in *Doctrine and Philosophy in Early Christianity: Arius, Athanasius, Augustine* (Aldershot, U.K. and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000), Chapter V; R. Williams, “Appendix I: Arius after 1987,” in *Arius*, pp. 247-267.

33 R. Williams, *Arius*, p. 131.

34 Daniel H. Williams, *Ambrose of Milan and the End of the Nicene-Arian Conflicts*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 4.

35 Henry Melvill Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism*, 2nd ed. (Reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), p. 16.

The many labels that have been given to Arius' theology show the impossibility to put Arianism into any pre-existing framework. The Arian heresy is its own category, and its source is surely multiple. Read in this light, Hanson seems to give the most balanced evaluation of Arius' sources. On the Arian connection with paganism, Hanson disproves of Gwatkin and Harnack's works over a century ago as "diatribes" which could be ignored. He also criticises Prestige for not showing adequate understanding of Arianism, and Boularand for assuming that Arianism has been "from the outset an easily recognised heresy in contrast to a known and universally recognised orthodoxy, which is far from being the case."³⁶ He believes that while "Arius probably inherited some acquaintance with his works or indirectly, he certainly did not adopt any large or significant part of Origen's theology."³⁷ Appraising the attribution of Arianism to Aristotle by Jerome, to Middle Platonism by Stead, the use of later Stoicism to show the Arian Christ as capable of moral progress and thus Arianism as a soteriology by Gregg and Groh, and the assertion that Arius has his own theory of participation by Rowan Williams,³⁸ Hanson concludes the following:

36 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 95. Cf. Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism*; H. M. Gwatkin, *The Arian Controversy* (London: Longmans, Green, 1889); Adolf von Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, I-III, 4th ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1909-1910); G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (Reprint, London: SPCK, 1964); Éphrem Boularand, *L'Hérésie d'Arius et la "foi" de Nicée* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1972).

37 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 70.

38 *Ibid.*, pp. 85-94. Cf. Jerome, *Altercatio luciferiani et orthodoxi* 11 (CCL 79B: 31-32); C. Stead, "The Platonism of Arius," *The Journal of Theological Studies* New Series 15, no. 1 (1964): 16-31; Robert C. Gregg and Dennis E. Groh, *Early Arianism: A View of Salvation* (London: SCM Press, 1981); R. Williams, "The logic of Arianism," *The Journal of Theological Studies* New Series 34, no. 1 (1983): 56-81.

We can... conclude with some confidence that he was eclectic in his philosophy. He fits neatly neither into a wholly Platonic nor into a wholly Aristotelian nor Stoic picture, though he certainly has traits taken from the first two at least. And one of his most startling doctrines, that of the creation of the Son out of non-existence, has no parallel in Greek philosophy at all. He was not without influence from Origen, but cannot seriously be called an Origenist.... He was in his way attempting to discover or construct a rational Christian doctrine of God, and for this his chief source was necessarily not the ideas of Plato or Aristotle or Zeno, but the Bible.³⁹

1.2 *Classic Arians and Arian Theology*

Besides the heresiarch Arius himself, scholars usually count Eusebius of Nicomedia, Eusebius of Caesarea and Asterius among other classic Arians. However, as the confidant of Constantine in the emperor's later years, Eusebius of Nicomedia was more a clergyman, or perhaps better said a statesman, than a theologian. Eusebius of Caesarea refused to anathematise Arian ideas and was condemned at the Council of Antioch (325) but rehabilitated himself with his subscription to the *homoousion* at the Council of Nicaea (325). He was not really an outright Arian, not only because his name was cleared at Nicaea, but also because only some of his views were similar to that of Arius while others were quite different. Asterius was a sophist who had studied under Lucian of Antioch. He "was regarded as a leading theologian" at the beginning of the Arian controversy, and he defended Arius with his *Syntagmation* before the Council of Nicaea.⁴⁰

39 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 98.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

1.2.1 Arius

Only a few of Arius' works have survived. They include a letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia (318), another letter to Alexander of Alexandria (320), the confession of faith of Arius and Euzoius (327) and Arius' *Thalia*. These works ought to be evaluated with caution, as they have all survived through the works of the orthodox.⁴¹

Arius' letters to Eusebius and Alexander offer good sketches of his Christological doctrine. Embedded in them are his sayings which would be anathematised in the Nicene Creed (325). The letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia was a response to the accusations charged against him by Alexander of Alexandria.⁴² Arius made several statements in this letter that would later count against him,⁴³

41 Arius' letter to Eusebius has survived in Epiphanius of Salamis' *Adversus haereses (Panarion)* 69.6 (PG 42: 209-212) and Theodoret of Cyrus' *Historia ecclesiastica* 1.5.1-4 (SC 501: 190-194). His letter to Alexander can be found in Athanasius' *De synodis* 16.2-5 (SC 563: 226-230) and Epiphanius' *Adversus haereses (Panarion)* 69.7-8 (PG 42: 213-216). The confession of faith of Arius and Euzoius is cited by Socrates in *Historia ecclesiastica* 1.26.2-5 (SC 477: 220-222) and by Sozomen in *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.27.6-10 (SC 306: 350-352). Arius' *Thalia* is in Athanasius' *De synodis* 15.3 (SC 563: 222-226) and *Orationes contra Arianos* 1.2.5-6 (AW 1/1.2: 113-115). Cf. Hanson, *The Search*, pp. 6-15.

42 Colm Lübhéid, *Eusebius of Caesarea and the Arian Crisis* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1981), pp. 21-22.

43 "That the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any way part of the unbegotten; nor from some lower essence (i.e. from matter); but that by his own (i.e. the Father's) will and counsel he has subsisted before time, and before ages as God full of grace and truth, only-begotten, unchangeable. And that he was not, before he was begotten, or created, or purposed, or established. For he was not unbegotten. We are persecuted because we say, 'the Son had

asserting that the Son is begotten by “the will and counsel” (θελήματι καὶ βουλή) of the Father; “he was not, before he was begotten” (πρὶν γεννηθῆ...οὐκ ἦν); he was “created” (κτισθῆ); and “he is from nothing” (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων), that is, *ex nihilo*. Among these claims, the Nicene Creed (325) would anathematise “before he was begotten he was not” (πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν), and “he is from nothing” under the statement “he came to be from things that were not” (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο). Arius’ assertion that the Son “is from nothing” (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων) would be anathematised even by Homoian Arians at the Council of Ariminum (359). Nautin considers this phrase an interpolation, but Luibhéid sees Simonetti’s argument for its authenticity a stronger case.⁴⁴

a beginning, but God is without beginning.’ This is really the cause of our persecution; and, likewise, because we say that he is from nothing. And this we say, because he is neither part of God, nor of any lower essence” / “Ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγέννητος οὐδὲ μέρος ἀγεννήτου κατ’ οὐδένα τρόπον, οὔτε ἐξ ὑποκειμένου τινός, ἀλλ’ ὅτι θελήματι καὶ βουλή ὑπέστη πρὸ χρόνων καὶ πρὸ αἰώνων πλήρης θεός, μονογενής, ἀναλλοίωτος· καὶ πρὶν γεννηθῆ ἦτοι κτισθῆ ἢ ὀρισθῆ ἢ θεμελιωθῆ, οὐκ ἦν· ἀγέννητος γὰρ οὐκ ἦν. Διωκόμεθα ὅτι εἶπαμεν· Ἀρχὴν ἔχει ὁ υἱός, ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἀναρχός ἐστιν.’ Διὰ τοῦτο διωκόμεθα, καὶ ὅτι εἶπαμεν ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐστίν· οὕτως δὲ εἶπαμεν, καθότι οὐδὲ μέρος θεοῦ ἐστιν οὐδὲ ἐξ ὑποκειμένου τινός.” Arius, “Letter to Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia,” in Theodoret of Cyrus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 1.5.3-4 (SC 501: 192, trans. NPNF altered, in J. Stevenson and W. H. C. Frend, ed., *A New Eusebius: Documents Illustrating the History of the Church to AD 337*, 3rd ed., Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013, p. 367).

⁴⁴ Cf. Pierre Nautin, “Deux interpolations orthodoxes dans une lettre d’Arius,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 67 (1949): 131-141; Luibhéid, *Eusebius of Caesarea*, pp. 20-22; Manilo Simonetti, “Su due presunte interpolazioni in una lettera di Ario,” in *Studi sull’Arianesimo* (Roma: Editrice Studium, 1965), pp. 88-109.

Arius wrote a letter to his bishop Alexander of Alexandria around 320.⁴⁵ This letter⁴⁶ was, according to Barnes, familiar to the West since

45 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, p. 225.

46 “We acknowledge One God, alone unbegotten, alone everlasting, alone unbegun, alone true, *alone having immortality*, alone wise, alone good, alone sovereign; judge, governor, and administrator of all, unalterable and unchangeable, just as good, God of Law and Prophets and New Testament; who begat an Only-begotten Son before eternal times, through whom he has made both the ages and the universe;... perfect creature of God, but not as one of the creatures; offspring, but not as one of things that have come into existence; nor as Valentinus pronounced that the offspring of the Father was an issue; nor as Manichaeus taught that the offspring was a portion of the Father, consubstantial (ὁμοούσιος); or as Sabellius, dividing the Monad, speaks of a Son-and-Father; nor as Hieracas, of one torch from another, or as a lamp divided into two.... Thus, there are three Subsistences (ὑποστάσεις). And God, being the cause of all things, is unbegun and altogether sole but the Son being begotten apart from time by the Father, and being created and found before ages, was not before his generation; but, being begotten apart from time before all things, alone was made to subsist by the Father. For he is not eternal or co-eternal or co-unoriginate with the Father, nor has he his being together with the Father, ... but God is before all things as being Monad and Beginning of all.... For [God his Origin] is above him, as being his God and before him....” / “Ὀίδαμεν ἓνα θεόν, μόνον ἀγέννητον, μόνον αἰδιον, μόνον ἀναρχον, μόνον ἀληθινόν, μόνον ἀθανασίαν ἔχοντα, μόνον σοφόν, μόνον ἀγαθόν, μόνον δυνάστην, πάντων κριτὴν, διοικητὴν, οἰκονόμον, ἄτρεπτον καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον, δίκαιον καὶ ἀγαθόν, νόμου καὶ προφητῶν καὶ καινῆς διαθήκης τούτων θεὸν γεννήσαντα υἱὸν μονογενῆ πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων, δι’ οὗ καὶ τοὺς αἰῶνας καὶ τὰ ὅλα πεποίηκε... κτίσμα τοῦ θεοῦ τέλειον, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὡς ἐν τῶν κτισμάτων-γέννημα, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὡς ἐν τῶν γεγεννημένων, οὐδ’ ὡς Οὐαλεντίνος προβολὴν τὸ γέννημα τοῦ πατρὸς ἐδογματίσεν, οὐδ’ ὡς μανιχαῖος μέρος ὁμοούσιον τοῦ πατρὸς τὸ γέννημα εἰσηγήσατο, οὐδ’ ὡς Σαβέλλιος τὴν μονάδα διατῶν ὑιοπάτορα εἶπεν, οὐδ’ ὡς Ἱερακας λύχνον ἀπὸ λύχνου ἢ ὡς λαμπάδα εἰς δύο.... Ὅστε τρεῖς εἰσιν ὑποστάσεις. Καὶ ὁ μὲν θεὸς αἴτιος τῶν πάντων τυγχάνων ἔστιν ἀναρχος μονώτατος, ὁ δὲ υἱὸς ἀχρόνως γεννηθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ πρὸ αἰώνων κτισθεὶς καὶ θεμελιωθεὶς οὐκ ἦν πρὸ τοῦ γεννηθῆναι, ἀλλὰ ἀχρόνως πρὸ πάντων γεννηθεὶς μόνος ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑπέστη. Οὐδὲ γάρ ἐστιν αἰδιος ἢ συναίδιος ἢ συναγέννητος τῷ πατρὶ, οὐδὲ ἅμα τῷ πατρὶ τὸ εἶναι ἔχει, ... ἀλλ’ ὡς μόνος καὶ ἀρχὴ πάντων, οὗτος ὁ θεὸς πρὸ πάντων ἐστί.... Ἄρχει γάρ αὐτοῦ ὡς θεὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ πρὸ αὐτοῦ ὄν....” Arius, “Letter to Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria,” in Athanasius of Alexandria, *De synodis* 16.2-5 (SC 563: 226-230, trans. NPNF altered, *A New Eusebius*, pp. 369-370).

the late 350s.⁴⁷ Many of Arius' assertions in this letter would define Arius as the heresiarch of the principal Christological heresy of the first few centuries. First, he speaks of the Son as "perfect creature of God, but not as one of the creatures" (κτίσμα τοῦ θεοῦ τέλειον, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡς ἓν τῶν κτισμάτων) and that he was "being created" (κτισθεὶς) by the Father before ages. In this letter to Alexander, Arius highlights that the Son, despite being created, is above the rest of creation, whereas in his letter to Eusebius, he merely states that the Son was "created" (κτισθῆναι).

Second, all attempts to count the Father and Son as consubstantial (ὁμοούσιον) threatens the oneness of God as Monad (μονάς) and risks making the Father compounded (σύνθετος), divisible (διαίρετος), alterable (τρέπτος) and material (σῶμα). These include Valentinus who says the Son is an issue or projection from the Father, Manichaeus (Mani) who teaches that the Son is a consubstantial portion (μέρος ὁμοούσιον) of the Father, Sabellius who divides the Monad, and Hieracas who sees the Son as torch from the torch of the Father. Arius' understanding of Manichaeus' notion that the Son is a consubstantial portion (μέρος ὁμοούσιον) of the Father is particularly worth mentioning. Its suggestion to Arius of a division of substance is, according to Kelly, an illustration that "the Arians clearly understood *homoousios*, in all good faith, in a material sense."⁴⁸ This material interpretation of the word *homoousios* explains why Arians were unable to accept this unscriptural word in the Nicene Creed.

⁴⁷ For instance, this letter is quoted by Hilary in *De trinitate*. Michel René Barnes, "Exegesis and Polemic in Augustine's *De Trinitate* I," *Augustinian Studies* 30, no. 1 (1999): 46. Cf. Hilary of Poitiers, *De trinitate* 4.12 (CCL 62: 112).

⁴⁸ Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, pp. 245-246 (quotation from p. 245).

Third, Arius states that the Son “was not before his generation” (οὐκ ἦν πρὸ τοῦ γεννηθῆναι), a notion that the Nicene Creed would anathematise under the formulation πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν, which more closely resembles Arius’ words in his letter to Eusebius. Arius specifies only in this letter to Alexander and not in the letter to Eusebius that the Son was “being begotten apart from time before all things” (ἀχρόνως πρὸ πάντων γεννηθεὶς). Simonetti explains that Arius views the Son, though generated before all times and apart from time (ἀχρόνως) since he was generated before the creation of the world, is not coeternal (συναῖδιος) with the Father given that he did not exist before he was generated.⁴⁹ The Nicene Creed would anathematise Arius for asserting that “there once was when he was not” (ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν).

Fourth, Arius calls the Father, who is “God before all things,” “ὁ θεὸς” rather than just “θεός.” This suggests that the Father “occupies a domain of utter transcendence, untouched and unassailed by any of the currents typical of creation.”⁵⁰ The Son, whom Arius believes to be a creature, is therefore not God in a real sense.

1.2.2 Eusebius of Caesarea

Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260-339) is also called Eusebius Pamphilus. He was a student of the presbyter Pamphilus, from whom he adopted his name “probably as an indication of his intellectual

⁴⁹ Simonetti, *La crisi ariana*, pp. 47-48.

⁵⁰ Luibhéid, *Eusebius of Caesarea*, p. 17.

debt to him.”⁵¹ He admired Origen, and would even acknowledge the Father and the Son as “two *ousiai*.”⁵² “His christology is developed in opposition to Paul of Samosata on the one hand and Marcellus of Ancyra on the other.”⁵³ He was “Arian” in the sense that he was one of the three bishops who refused to anathematise those who considered the Son as a creature at the Council of Antioch (325). But he did subscribe to the *homoousion* later at the Council of Nicaea (325). According to Grillmeier, Eusebius was actually a Homoiousian.⁵⁴

The theology of Eusebius is considered to be “from first to last, quite heavily marked by the *eikōn* theme.”⁵⁵ The Son is the image (εἰκὼν) of the Father (cf. Col 1:15) in a mysterious (ἀρρήτως) and incomprehensible (ἀνεπιλογίστως) way for us, in the sense that he is originated (ὑποστῆναι) from the uncreated nature (ἀγενήτου φύσεως) and inexpressible substance (ἀνεκφράστου οὐσίας) of the Father, as fragrance from myrrh (τῷ μύρῳ τὸ εὐώδες) (cf. Cant 1:2,

51 Andrew Carraker, “Eusebius of Caesarea,” in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Alan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), p. 339.

52 Mark Edwards, “The first Council of Nicaea,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 1, *Origins to Constantine*, ed. Margaret M. Mitchell and Frances M. Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 556.

53 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, p. 184. Paul of Samosata thinks that Christ is a mere man. The theology of Marcellus of Ancyra is essentially Sabellian, which considers the Son and the Father not only as consubstantial but identical.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 189. But as Arius’ contemporary, he should be distinguished from the members of the actual Homoiousian group led by Basil of Ancyra at the Council of Ancyra (358) several decades later.

55 R. Williams, *Arius*, p. 171.

Wis 7:25) and ray from light (τῷ φωτὶ τὴν ἀγίην) (cf. Heb 1:3).⁵⁶ Yet, Eusebius finds these two analogies far from perfect. Unlike the ray which coexists substantially with the light, the Son has in himself both substance and existence (ἑαυτὸν οὐσιώται τε καὶ ὑφέστηκεν). Nor is the Son like the fragrance which has no separate existence from the myrrh by passion (πάθος) or division (διαίρεσιν).⁵⁷ In both his *eikōn* theme and his considering the Son as a mere mediating instrument of the Father, Eusebius shows a clear tendency of subordinationism, which exposes him to the charge of Arianism.

Grillmeier argues that Eusebius “could not exercise any influence within theology proper, but was restricted to the realm of political theology” since his theology does not accord well with Nicaea or Sabellius, Marcellus, Origen and Arius.⁵⁸ Eusebius argues in *Praeparatio Evangelica* that the unity of the earthly monarchy of the Roman

56 “εἶη δ’ ἂν ταῦτη καὶ εἰκὼν θεοῦ, ἀρρήτως πάλιν καὶ ἀνεπιλογίστως ἡμῖν.” Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstratio evangelica* 5.1.21 (GCS 23.213); “τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς ἀγενήτου φύσεως καὶ τῆς ἀνεκφράστου οὐσίας ὥσπερ εὐωδίαν τινὰ καὶ φωτὸς ἀγίην τὸν υἱὸν ἐξ ἀπείρων αἰώνων μᾶλλον δὲ πρὸ πάντων αἰώνων ὑποστήναι, γενόμενόν τε συνείναι καὶ συγγεγόμενον ἀεὶ τῷ πατρὶ ὡς τῷ μύρῳ τὸ εὐώδες καὶ τῷ φωτὶ τὴν ἀγίην.” *Ibid.*, *Demonstratio evangelica* 5.1.18 (GCS 23.213). Luibhéid and Simonetti note that Eusebius understands the Son not only as the image of the Father but is in fact his “perfect image.” Cf. Luibhéid, *Eusebius of Caesarea*, p. 32; Simonetti, *La crisi ariana*, p. 63; Hanson, *The Search*, p. 51. Cf. “O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth” (Cant 1:2); “For she is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty” (Wis 7:25); “He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature” (Heb 1:3).

57 “ὁ δὲ γε τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος καθ’ ἑαυτὸν οὐσιώται τε καὶ ὑφέστηκεν.” Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstratio evangelica* 5.1.19 (GCS 23.213); “οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐξ οὐσίας τῆς ἀγενήτου κατὰ τι πάθος ἢ διαίρεσιν οὐσιωμένος.” *Ibid.*, *Demonstratio evangelica* 5.1.20 (GCS 23.213). Cf. Hanson, *The Search*, p. 51; Luibhéid, *Eusebius of Caesarea*, pp. 37-38; R. Williams, *Arius*, p. 172.

58 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, p. 177. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

empire is a representation of the unity of the heavenly monarchy of Christianity.⁵⁹ Grillmeier criticises Eusebius for limiting his horizon only to that of the Roman empire.

1.2.3 Arian Theology

According to Hanson, “it was a central part of Arian theology that *God suffered*”⁶⁰ whereas most scholars focus mainly on the creation of the Son *ex nihilo* and there was a time when the Son was not as the most important themes in classic Arian theology. The doctrine that God suffered involved for the Arians an acceptance that the Word had assumed a body without a soul (*soma apsychon*) on the one hand, and a denial that Christ was a mere man (*psilos anthropos*) on the other.⁶¹ The Arian rejection that Christ had a soul was almost certainly not discussed at the Council of Nicaea for it was an issue that “had not yet made itself felt.”⁶² Perhaps this explains why the *soma apsychon* is an often neglected Arian theme, as Nicaea and anti-Arianism have too often been considered as equivalent. Actually, the *soma apsychon*, which Epiphanius said Lucian had taught, has been “an invariable feature of Arian teaching after Arius.”⁶³

59 *Ibid.*, p. 251.

60 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 109.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 110. According to Athanasius, Arius sees the conferral of divine Sonship on Christ as a reward based on the merit of his earthly life foreseen by the Father when the Son was generated. Edwards, “The first Council of Nicaea,” p. 564.

62 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, p. 240.

63 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 83. This doctrine was held by Aetius, Eunomius, Eudoxius and Palladius. Michel Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident 335-430*, Patristica Sorbonensia 8, ed. H.-I. Marrou (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1967), p. 315.

According to Asterius, humanity could not be redeemed by a mere man, so it was not the mere man but God in his garment of flesh who suffered, was crucified and buried.⁶⁴ The Arian doctrine that God suffered follows from the rejection that Christ had a soul. For Christ's death to be salvific, more than just his flesh must have suffered. If Christ had no soul, then God must have suffered.

For the Arians, God suffered so that humankind could be saved. But the Son through whom God suffered is less than the Father, who is the one true God. A human being could claim his salvation through baptism; the Arian subordination of the Son to the Father would be reflected in the baptismal liturgy. In *Orationes contra Arianos*, Athanasius mentions that the Arians “do not baptize into Father and Son, but into Creator and creature, and into Maker and work” due to their rejection of the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father.⁶⁵

64 Hanson, *The Search*, pp. 38-40.

65 “And these too hazard the fulness of the mystery, I mean Baptism; for if the consecration is given to us into the Name of Father and Son, and they do not confess a true Father, because they deny what is from Him and like His Essence, and deny also the true Son, and name another of their own framing as created out of nothing, is not the rite administered by them altogether empty and unprofitable, making a show, but in reality being no help towards religion? For the Arians do not baptize into Father and Son, but into Creator and creature, and into Maker and work” / “οὗτοι δὲ κινδυνεύουσι λοιπὸν καὶ περὶ αὐτὸ τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ μυστηρίου· φημὶ δὴ τὸ βάπτισμα. εἰ γὰρ εἰς ὄνομα πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ δίδοται ἡ τελειωσις, οὐ λέγουσι δὲ πατέρα ἀληθινὸν διὰ τὸ ἀρνεῖσθαι τὸ ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁμοιον τῆς οὐσίας, ἀρνοῦνται δὲ καὶ τὸν ἀληθινὸν υἱὸν καὶ ἄλλον ἑαυτοῖς ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων κτιστὸν ἀναπλάττοντες ὀνομάζουσι, πῶς οὐ παντελῶς κενὸν καὶ ἄλυσιτελὲς τὸ παρ’ αὐτῶν διδόμενόν ἐστι προσποιήσιν μὲν ἔχον, τῇ δὲ ἀληθείᾳ μηδὲν ἔχον πρὸς εὐσέβειαν βοήθημα; οὐ γὰρ ‘εἰς πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν’ διδόασιν οἱ Ἀρειανοὶ, ἀλλ’ εἰς κτίστην καὶ κτίσμα, καὶ εἰς ποιητὴν καὶ ποιήμα.” Athanasius of Alexandria, *Orationes contra Arianos* 2.18.42 (AW 1/1.2: 219, trans. John Henry Newman and Archibald Robertson, NPNF II/4: 371). Cf. Meslin, *Les Ariens d’Occident*, p. 385, n. 19.

In the *De trinitate* supposedly written by Eusebius of Vercelli, the author charges the Arians with denying the unity of the Trinity in their baptism.⁶⁶ The radical Arians called Eunomians, according to their own historian Philostorgius, would even replace the baptismal rite of triple immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit with the one immersion into the death of our Lord.⁶⁷ It was only at the Visigothic Arian council at Toledo in 580 that a decision was made to receive Nicene converts to Arianism without rebaptism.⁶⁸

2. Anomoians

Aetius was the founder of this radical Arian faction. But his follower Eunomius of Cyzicus (330?-394) seems to have enjoyed greater fame so that both Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa targeted a substantive work specifically against him. Eunomius was so influential that many would refer to the Anomoians as Eunomians.

66 Eusebius of Vercelli, *De trinitate* 7.6, 7.10, 7.16-17 (CCL 9: 94-96). Cf. Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident*, pp. 381, 385.

67 "Now the Eunomians did not baptize with three immersions but with one, baptizing, so they said, into the Lord's death, which he underwent for us once, not twice or thrice" / "Εβάπτισον δὲ οἱ περὶ Εὐνόμιον οὐκ εἰς τρεῖς καταδύσεις, ἀλλ' εἰς μίαν, εἰς τὸν θάνατον, ὡς ἔφασκον, τοῦ κυρίου βαπτίζοντες, ὃν ἅπαξ μὲν ἀλλ' οὐχὶ δις ἢ τρις ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀνεδέξατο." Philostorgius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 10.4 (SC 564: 492, trans. Philip R. Amidon, *Church History*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007, p. 136). Cf. Simonetti, *La crisi ariana*, p. 503; Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident*, p. 386.

68 Ralph W. Mathisen, "Barbarian Bishops and the Churches 'in barbaricis gentibus' during Late Antiquity," *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies* 72, no. 3 (1997): 684.

The Anomoians are known for their extensive use of philosophical language. Nevertheless, this use of abstract language is possibly their Achilles' heel. For instance, Aetius in *Syntagmation* claims that "ingeneracy" is the substance or being of God. It does not represent any lack in God or condition of his being, or else it would mean that God was generate before he became ingenerate.⁶⁹ Wickham finds this system of Aetius self-contradictory. Since Aetius' Anomoian theology is based on amazement at the ingenerate and thus incomparable God, the very Anomoian obsession of attempting to use Aristotelian deductions to prove God's ingeneracy is by itself comparison.⁷⁰ Aetius' problem is that he begins from Is 53:8 on God's ingeneracy and incomparability and tries to prove it, thus leading to the contradiction.

Eunomius claims that different names point to different essences and these names are connected to realities.⁷¹ According to Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium*, the Eunomians claim that God's essence is ingenerateness or unbegottenness (ἀγεννησίαν),⁷² and Eunomius

69 L. R. Wickham, "Aetius and the Doctrine of Divine Ingeneracy," *Studia Patristica* 11 (1972): 260. The ingenerate essence cannot be divided, nor does it invite any participation, lest the concept of 'ingeneracy' itself be destroyed. The ingenerate could never be the subject of passive experiences, but the incarnated Son could. *Ibid.*, p. 261.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 263.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 261.

72 "That is why they say that the divine nature is nothing other than 'unbegottenness' itself, and naming it the 'supreme and highest' title they restrict the majesty of the Godhead to this word" / "καὶ διὰ τοῦτο λέγουσι μηδὲν ἕτερον εἶναι τὴν θεῖαν φύσιν πλὴν τὴν ἀγεννησίαν αὐτῆν, καὶ ταύτην κυριωτάτην καὶ ἀνωτάτω προσαγορεύοντες ἅπαν τὸ μεγαλεῖον τῆς θεότητος τῇ φωνῇ ταύτῃ ἐγκατακλείουσιν." Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* 2.62 (GNO 1: 244, trans. Stuart George Hall, in *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II: An English Version with Supporting Studies: Proceedings of the 10th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Olomouc, September 15-18, 2004)*, ed. Lenka Karfiková, Scot Douglass and Johannes Zachhuber, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007, p. 72). Cf. Hanson, *The Search*, p. 629; Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 249.

says that God's nature can be comprehended (καταληπτὴν) by human beings.⁷³ Eunomius also holds that God's activity results from his will and not his essence, distinguishing between God's essence and will—a distinction that is ironically consistent with the Cappadocian concept that God's *ousia* is not knowable, but God can be known through his *energia* which is his will (βούλησις).⁷⁴

According to Basil of Caesarea's *Adversus Eunomium*, Eunomius also asserts that the Son is a creature (ποίημα) of the unbegotten Father (ἀγεννήτου), and the Holy Spirit (Παράκλητον) is a creature of the only-begotten Son (Μονογενοῦς); the Holy Spirit is not only third in dignity (ἄξιώματι) and order (τάξει) but also third in nature (φύσει).⁷⁵

73 "He says: Otherwise it would be in vain that the Lord names himself 'Door,' since there would be no one going in to understand and contemplate the Father" / "ἢ μάτην ἂν ὁ κύριος ἑαυτὸν ὀνόμασεν θύραν, φησί, μηδενὸς ὄντος τοῦ διόντος πρὸς κατανόησιν καὶ θεωρίαν τοῦ πατρός." Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* 3.8.5 (GNO 2: 240, trans. Stuart G. Hall, in *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III: An English Translation with Commentary and Supporting Studies: Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Leuven, 14-17 September 2010)*, ed. Johan Leemans and Matthieu Cassin, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014, pp. 186-187); "So because the Lord is called Door, he says, it follows logically from this that the essential being of God is comprehensible" / "ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν θύρα, φησίν, ὀνομάσθη ὁ κύριος, ἐκ τούτου κατασκευάζεται τὸ καταληπτὴν εἶναι τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν οὐσίαν." *Ibid.*, *Contra Eunomium* 3.8.6 (GNO 2: 240, trans. Stuart G. Hall, p. 187). Cf. Hanson, *The Search*, p. 629. Gregory of Nyssa instead believes that God's essence cannot be known, and his operations may be known in some sense. Simonetti, *La crisi ariana*, p. 467.

74 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 627.

75 "τοῦ μὲν ἀγεννήτου τὸν Υἱὸν εὕρισκων ποίημα, τοῦ δὲ Μονογενοῦς τὸν Παράκλητον"; "περὶ τοῦ Παρακλήτου...παρ' ὧν τρίτον αὐτὸ ἄξιώματι καὶ τάξει μαθόντες, τρίτον εἶναι καὶ τῆ φύσει πεπιστευκάμεν." Basil of Caesarea, *Adversus Eunomium* 2.32 (SC 305: 132/133), 3.1 (SC 305: 144/145). Cf. Hanson, *The Search*, p. 745.

3. Homoians

It has already been stressed that the categorisation of Arians has been done by their orthodox opponents. Just as nobody would call himself an Arian, someone whom the orthodox labels as “Homoian” would not admit himself as such either. In fact, Daniel Williams claims that the word “Homoian” could neither “neatly circumscribe a single company of bishops as a uniform party who shared the same theological sympathies” nor legitimately describe any theological ideology before the Council of Ariminum (359).⁷⁶ For Simonetti, at the time of the Ariminum council, the Homoians had their stronghold almost exclusively at the episcopal level. They were thus able to draw supporters who were unwilling to adhere neither to Homoiousian nor Anomoian persuasions. This results in the Homoians being the only Arian group without a clear doctrine.⁷⁷

The noun-form “Arianism” was first used to refer to the Homoians.⁷⁸ Unlike the Anomoians, the Homoians were not keen about the use of philosophical speculations.⁷⁹ Instead, they were known for their literal interpretation of Scripture.⁸⁰ According to Hanson, their

76 Daniel H. Williams, “Another Exception to Later Fourth-Century ‘Arian’ Typologies: The Case of Germinius of Sirmium,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4, no. 3 (1996): 338.

77 In contrast, the radical doctrine of the Anomoians gained few supporters at the episcopal level. Manlio Simonetti, “Arianesimo latino,” *Studi Medievali Serie Terza* 8, no. 2 (1967): 681.

78 Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy*, p. 27.

79 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 568.

80 *Ibid.*, p. 559. For instance, they took Prov 8:22 to mean that the Son was literally created. They used Is 53:8 to thwart all speculation about the generation of the Son from the substance of the Father. *Ibid.*, p. 560.

“main pillar is the incomparability of God the Father, but not specially, as with the Eunomians, his ingenerateness.”⁸¹

Akakius and Eudoxius were two leading figures of eastern Homoianism. Akakius of Caesarea had his theological heritage from Eusebius of Caesarea. But Hanson sees him more as a political leader of the Homoians, who strove to please the emperor and preserve the unity of the church, rather than a theologian.⁸² Eudoxius was originally the bishop of Germanicia.⁸³ He later became the bishop of Antioch (357-359) and eventually the bishop of Constantinople (360-369).⁸⁴ According to Philostorgius, Eudoxius was initially sympathetic to the Anomoian position of Aetius and Eunomius, but began to distance himself from it when he realised its unpopularity.⁸⁵ He then became affiliated with Homoian Arianism.⁸⁶ He professes that “the Son became flesh, but not man, and assumed no human soul. Thus there are in Christ not two natures, but only one composite nature.”⁸⁷

81 *Ibid.*, p. 563.

82 *Ibid.*, p. 583.

83 *Ibid.*, p. 585.

84 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, p. 244. Hanson, however, has a different dating on Eudoxius' succession to the Antiochene see. “In 353, on the death of Leontius, he succeeded in having himself made bishop of Antioch.” Hanson, *The Search*, p. 586.

85 *Ibid.*, p. 587. Philostorgius also claims that it was Eudoxius who ordained Eunomius as deacon. *Ibid.*, p. 612.

86 *Ibid.*, p. 588. Eudoxius was known to have supported the mission of the Homoian Ulfila among the Goths. *Ibid.*, p. 584.

87 Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, p. 244.

Valens of Mursa, Ursacius of Singidunum and Germinius of Sirmium were the representative figures of the first generation of Latin Homoianism. Simonetti identifies the era of these three as the first phase of Latin Arianism.⁸⁸ Meslin admits that Valens, Ursacius and Germinius had to play their part in the clerical as well as political sphere of the Arian controversy, but he still credits them as faithful Christians in a conservative theological tradition, who sought constant recourse to Scripture and cautiously refuse all new doctrine.⁸⁹

Valens and Ursacius played key roles in the anti-Nicene councils between the Council of Tyre in 335 and their condemnation at the Council of Paris in 360/361. They were often depicted as opportunists who decided their stance according to the liking of the emperor.⁹⁰ Meslin instead argues that they had not become more Nicene when the tide turned against the favour of the Homoians.⁹¹ Wiles considers their theological approach, which uses scriptural exegesis rather than philosophical argument to show the radically subordinating status of the Son, “nearer to that of the older Western tradition than to that of Arius.”⁹² Valens disappeared from the theological scene in the 370s, and Ursacius died after 371.⁹³

88 Simonetti, “Arjanesimo latino,” p. 664.

89 Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident*, p. 434. They would, for instance, reject the unscriptural and new philosophical term *homoousios*.

90 For instance, Hanson calls Valens and Ursacius “two expert students of the imperial wind” for their dropping the charges against Athanasius at the Councils of Milan in 345 and 347. Hanson, *The Search*, p. 313.

91 Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident*, pp. 266-267.

92 Wiles calls the approach of Valens and Ursacius “the hallmark of western Arianism.” Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy*, p. 36.

93 Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident*, p. 84.

Germinius succeeded to the see of Sirmium to replace Photinus, who was deposed at the Council of Sirmium (351).⁹⁴ He considers the Holy Spirit as a creature and denies that he is God.⁹⁵ He was involved in the formulation of many non-Nicene creeds.⁹⁶ The Dated Creed (359), in particular, was written under his influence.⁹⁷ Suspected of having abandoned his Homoian stance, Valens and Ursacius held the Council of Singidunum (366) in the hope of securing a retraction from him but failed. Williams judges that Germinius did not suddenly change his theological stance in favour of the *homoousios* or *homoiousios*. Rather, the position of Germinius had always been “the reassertion of a theology which was no less anti-Nicene in its sentiments along the lines of Homoianism” inspired by the older heritage of Eusebius of Caesarea expressed in the creeds of the 330s and 340s.⁹⁸ Germinius had never shown approval of the Nicene creed nor tried to ally with the Homoiousians of Basil of Ancyra.⁹⁹ Rather, he might have signed

94 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 592.

95 Simonetti, “Arianesimo latino,” p. 680.

96 He was behind the moderate Sirmium Creed of 351, the Sirmium Creed of 357 called “the blasphemy” and the Dated Creed (359). He also signed the Niké-Ariminum Creed (359). D. Williams, “Another Exception,” pp. 341-345.

97 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 363.

98 D. Williams, “Another Exception,” p. 340.

99 *Ibid.*, p. 352. Examining a rescript of Germinius to eight Illyrian bishops, Williams judges that Germinius’ position always bears “all the earmarks” of the Dated Creed, which confesses that the Son is similar to the Father in all things. In fact, Germinius protested that it was Valens who had cunningly took out “in all things” in the Niké-Ariminum Creed, making Christ partly similar and partly dissimilar to the Father. *Ibid.*, p. 350. For a discussion of the post-Ariminum theology of Germinius, see *Ibid.*, pp. 346-351. Cf. Germinius of Sirmium, “Epistula Germinii ad Rufianum, Palladium et ceteros,” in Hilary of Poitiers, *Coll. antiariana* B.6 (CSEL 65.161-164).

the Ariminum Creed in 359 due to imperial pressure like other bishops, but this pressure was no more after Constantius died in 361.¹⁰⁰

Auxentius of Milan (355-374) was another important figure in Latin Homoianism. He succeeded the pro-Nicene Dionysius of Milan, who was deposed and exiled by the Council of Milan (355). Despite being condemned at the Council of Paris (360/361) along with Valens and Ursacius, he was able to stay in his see till his death.¹⁰¹ In 364, Hilary of Poitiers came to Milan on his own initiative with the purpose of expelling Auxentius from his post through the Council of Milan (364/365). This Hilary versus Auxentius “duel” at Milan in 364 would later be paralleled by the opposition between Ambrose and Palladius at the Council of Aquileia in 381, and the debate between Augustine and the Arian bishop Maximinus at Hippo in 427.

At the hearing, Auxentius claimed that he did not know, had never seen Arius and was ignorant of his doctrine when Hilary accused him of being an Arian.¹⁰² Auxentius proclaimed the Ariminum faith that Jesus is the true son of God, but Hilary took that to imply a denial that Jesus is true God and objected to this Homoian replacement of the Nicene Christ with a “new Christ.”¹⁰³ But Hilary failed to depose

100 D. Williams, “Another Exception,” p. 356. Williams believes that Germinius passed away sometime after 366. *Ibid.*, p. 351. Simonetti instead dates Germinius’ death at approximately 376. Simonetti, *La crisi ariana*, p. 438.

101 D. Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*, p. 76; Hanson, *The Search*, p. 597.

102 “numquam scivi Arium, non vidi oculis, non cognovi ejus doctrinam.” *Exemplum blasphemiae Auxentii*, in Hilary of Poitiers, *Contra Auxentium* 14 (PL 10: 617). Cf. Meslin, *Les Ariens d’Occident*, p. 292; Hanson, *The Search*, pp. 123-124.

103 Peter Iver Kaufman, “Diehard Homoians and the Election of Ambrose,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5, no. 3 (1997): 428.

Auxentius and could only resort to writing *Contra Auxentium*. Against Auxentius' assertion that the Ariminum Creed was Catholic faith founded upon Scripture and handed down by the apostles and that the Arians were the only ones who had faithfully kept this faith,¹⁰⁴ Hilary maintained that the peace of the Arians was only unity in impiety.¹⁰⁵ He labelled Auxentius as the Antichrist (*antichristum*) and the angel of Satan (*satanae angelo*).¹⁰⁶

The “duel” between Hilary and Auxentius at the Council of Milan (364/365) aimed to depose Auxentius but failed. The confrontation between Ambrose and Palladius at the Council of Aquileia (381) would aim to and succeed in condemning Palladius. Doctrinally, Maximinus would follow Auxentius' lineage in insisting on Ariminum being the legitimate Homoian authority. Williams believes that this adherence to the Ariminum Creed (359) as the *regula fidei* of the Homoian tradition was what helped Homoianism flourish. “The faith which they defended was, in their eyes, not Arian but the traditional faith of the apostolic Church.”¹⁰⁷

104 “Catholicam autem et Evangeliorum, quam tradiderunt Apostoli, hanc fideliter custodivimus.” *Exemplum blasphemiae Auxentii*, in Hilary of Poitiers, *Contra Auxentium* 15 (PL 10: 618). Cf. Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident*, p. 329; D. Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*, pp. 2-3.

105 “pace sua, id est, impietatis suae unitate.” Hilary of Poitiers, *Contra Auxentium* 1 (PL 10: 610). Cf. Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident*, p. 329, n. 21.

106 Hilary of Poitiers, *Contra Auxentium* 12 (PL 10: 616). Cf. Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident*, p. 294.

107 The assumption that Homoianism thrived because of circumstantial reasons, like increased Arian refugees in western cities as a result of the Gothic invasion, policies of emperors sympathetic to Homoianism, and dealings of the supposedly opportunistic bishops such as Valens and Ursacius were, to Williams, inadequate. D. Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*, p. 2.

Kaufman disagrees with the assertion of Williams in *Ambrose of Milan* that the Homoians in Milan were strong. He argues that the Homoians were incapable of securing a Homoian succession to Auxentius, so priests in Milan and bishops in neighbouring cities could not be mostly Homoians as Williams claims.¹⁰⁸ In the tumultuous aftermath of the Ariminum settlement, “religious politics probably were more disorderly than decisively Nicene or homoian.” Thus, one cannot say that the Homoians were religious “diehards,” any more than one may say that the Nicenes were “sly” in their tactics.¹⁰⁹ In response, Williams objected to Kaufman’s portrayal of “Auxentius as the consummate tactician and political manipulator” that it “so marginalized the bishop’s attested allegiance to the Homoian platform.”¹¹⁰ He believes that the Homoian were indeed religious “diehards.”¹¹¹ McLynn also disagrees with Kaufman’s claim about Auxentius’ political correctness in order to prevent a polarisation of the two sides in Milan. For the reality was that there indeed was a split in Milan with a separatist anti-Auxentius Nicene or Dionysian community from 355 to 374 during Auxentius’ episcopacy.¹¹²

108 Kaufman, “Diehard Homoians,” pp. 431, 435. It was Ambrose who succeeded to the see of Milan in 374.

109 *Ibid.*, p. 440.

110 Daniel H. Williams, “Politically Correct in Milan: A Reply to ‘Diehard Homoians and the Election of Ambrose,’” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5, no. 3 (1997): 443.

111 If they were lukewarm in their religious persuasions and were merely trying to be politically correct as Kaufman suggests, they would not have provoked so much confrontation with Ambrose within three years of his election. *Ibid.*, pp. 445-446.

112 Neil McLynn, “Diehards: A Response,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5, no. 3 (1997): 448.

4. Homoiousians

Homoiousians are also called Semi-Arians. Representative Homoiousians include George of Laodicea and Basil of Ancyra, who were supported by the bishops of Asia Minor.¹¹³ Their distinctive theology is the belief that the Father and the Son are similar according to *ousia* (ὁμοιος κατ' οὐσίαν).¹¹⁴ On the one hand, they adhere strictly to Scripture and thus refuse to accept the Nicene *homoousios*. On the other hand, they consider the traditional formulation of the Orientals insufficient in describing the unity of God.¹¹⁵ Faithful to the eastern tradition, the Semi-Arians use the distinction of the persons as the starting point of their theology. Since they strictly identify the notions of *hypostasis* and *ousia* and consider them both to indicate the specific subsistence of divine persons, it is impossible for them to accept the *homoousios*¹¹⁶ or even the less rigid position of Hilary.¹¹⁷

113 Manilo Simonetti, “Sulla dottrina dei Semiariani,” p. 160. Kelly considers Meletius of Antioch and Cyril of Jerusalem also adherents of the Homoiousian doctrine, as they hold a high doctrine of the Son but could not accept the unscriptural word *homoousios*. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 249. But Meletius and Cyril did not formally belong to this group, and the orthodox would not count them as Semi-Arian heretics (though the Paulinians would consider Meletius a schismatic in the Schism of Antioch).

114 Simonetti, “Sulla dottrina dei Semiariani,” in *Studi sull’Arianesimo* (Roma: Editrice Studium, 1965), pp. 177, 179.

115 *Ibid.*, p. 168. Basil of Ancyra labours to distinguish himself from the position of Sabellius. On the one hand, the Son has life just as the Father has (ἀσυνθέτως ὡς ὁ πατήρ). On the other hand, the Son who is not ἀγεννήτως is not to be identified with the Father. *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181.

116 *Ibid.*, p. 169. The Homoiousians think that if the Father and the Son share one *ousia*, either the Father and the Son are split into two parts, or one falls into the heresy of Sabellius and Marcellus. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

117 *Ibid.*, p. 184.

At the Council of Ancyra (358), the party led by Basil of Ancyra published its Homoiousian manifesto. It states that the Son is an *ousia* like the Father, and thus the Father and the Son cannot be considered as identity (ταυτότης). It also condemns those who consider the Son as *homoousios* with the Father. In 359, George of Laodicea drafted the Homoiousian memorandum, stating that the Father and the Son are two *hypostases*, with *hypostasis* meaning the subsistent characteristics of the persons, and in this sense the Father and the Son share a likeness in substance. The Son, being begotten by the Father, is spirit like the Father, and in a qualitative sense one and the same (τὸ αὐτό) as the Father. Kelly thinks that the viewpoint of this memorandum approximates that of Athanasius.¹¹⁸

5. Pneumatomachians

Pneumatomachians came to be known as Macedonians after 380. Many scholars, including Augustine, think that the Macedonians are named after a certain Macedonius. But this understanding seems to be incorrect. There was indeed a certain Macedonius of Constantinople, who had once belonged to the Homoiousian party of Basil of Ancyra and was deposed at the Council of Constantinople (360) together with Basil of Ancyra and died soon afterwards.¹¹⁹ However, “there is nothing to show that he had anything in fact to do with ‘Macedonianism.’”¹²⁰

According to Simonetti, the name Macedonians came instead from a group of Homoiousians of the neighbouring regions of Constantinople who gathered around Macedonia, thus called Macedonians. The Council

¹¹⁸ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 250, n. 3.

¹¹⁹ Hanson, *The Search*, p. 760.

¹²⁰ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 259.

of Rome (378) knew about these Macedonians, but distinguished them from the real Pneumatomachians and characterises them as Arians in fact if not in name. The leaders of the Macedonians were Eustathius of Sebaste and Eleusius of Cyzicus, who later became the leaders of the Pneumatomachians. Hence, from around 380 onwards, the name Macedonians refers specifically to the Pneumatomachians.¹²¹ Kelly points out that the Pneumatomachians were originally left-wing Homoiousians.¹²² Athanasius and the Cappadocians called them Pneumatomachians in a derogatory sense to mean that they were assailants of the Spirit.¹²³ The radicals of this group, led by Eustathius of Sebaste, eventually opted to deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁴ Baus deems that Eustathius had, in so doing, wrecked the possibility of union between the Homoiousians and the Catholics, thus causing great disappointment to Basil of Caesarea, who had “tried in every way to profit by the possibilities open to him and worked tirelessly for the strengthening of the Catholics and the union of all groups that acknowledge Nicaea.”¹²⁵ Had the attempt for reunion between

121 Simonetti, *La crisi ariana*, p. 365. Eustathius of Sebaste had played a significant role against the Anomoians. Both he and Eleusius of Cyzicus were leaders of the Homoiousian faction along with Basil of Ancyra. Karl Baus et al., *The Imperial Church from Constantine to the Early Middle Ages*, trans. Anselm Biggs, History of the Church 2, ed. Hubert Jedin and John Dolan (London: Burns & Oates, 1980), p. 63.

122 Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 259.

123 Hanson, *The Search*, p. 761.

124 Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 259-260. The background and heresy of Eustathius of Sebaste is mentioned in Basil of Caesarea, *ep.* 263.3.

125 Basil's frustration came also from the fact that he and Eustathius “had once been joined by a common enthusiasm for the ascetical and monastic ideal,” but now Eustathius charged Basil with Apollinarianism. Baus, *The Imperial Church*, p. 65. Basil expressed his disillusionment towards Eustathius, a previous partner on the road to salvation now charging him with blasphemy, in Basil of Caesarea, *ep.* 223.

Catholics and various Arian factions been successful, the history of Arianism might have been cut short, in the East at least; its spillover effect would also have weakened the influence of Latin and Gothic Homoianism in the West as well.

6. Conclusion

Such was the theological stage of Arianism in the fourth century. The Council of Nicaea (325) failed to put an end to Arianism. The Council of Constantinople (381) in the East did not uproot this heresy either, even though its canon 1 anathematised all variants of Arians except the Homoiousians. Nor did the subsequent Council of Aquileia (381) in the West, for the sieges of the Milan basilica by Homoians in the mid-380s show that Arianism was still in existence. It would not be until 589, when the Arian Visigothic King Reccared converted to Catholicism, that Arianism could be said as having been uprooted. Yet, has Arianism completely died out?¹²⁶ Whenever one is tempted to confess Christ as superhuman rather than perfectly human, and on every occasion one is reluctant to acknowledge that the absolutely transcendent God would personally come to dwell in a sinful world and be like us in every respect — with physical and emotional needs, would eat and sleep, cheer and weep — except sin, Arianism is in fact lurking around.

¹²⁶ Modern tendency of Arianism is discussed in Wiles' monograph *Archetypal Heresy: Arianism through the Centuries*. The subtitle of the work speaks for itself.