The Competing Philosophical Frameworks Apparent in the Neo-Arian Thoughts of the Late Fourth Century C.E.: A Case Study

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In this article I would like to articulate the role of Stoic philosophy as a possible underlying philosophical framework that supported the so called 'Neo-Arian' theology[1] represented by Aetius and Eunomius, the fourth century protagonists of the Arian movement. This movement can be thought of as a result of self-reassessment and regrouping of Arianism in the second half of the fourth century C.E. This time was marked by the Trinitarian debate reaching the state of philosophical subtlety as a number of great rhetoricians joined the controversy. As of today we know a lot about the historical course of events of the controversy and of its major protagonists. However, the very nature of their reasoning is still unclear due to the general lack of knowledge about the competing philosophical paradigms of the time. That is why it is no surprise that contemporary scholarship is quite uncertain about the philosophical roots of the controversy and about the nature of reasoning used during the clash between two competing views on the inner life of the trinity and the relationship between its hypostases. To overcome such uncertainty an appeal is made to the arguments made by the adversaries of Aetius and Eunomius and to the classifications that come out of their circles. Thus many scholars out of anxiety naturally retire to the safe resort of the ancients to make sense of a highly eclectic philosophical theology of Neo-Arians.

The popular textbook evaluation of the movement attributes the philosophical roots of Neo-Arianism to Aristotelian philosophy. Some highly respected monographs follow the same line of evaluation.[2] Though this attribution is not completely invalid, it is quite clear as of today that it is outdated and needs scholarly re-assessment. Among the reasons for such a state of affairs are the following: a complete reliance on certain arguments made by the Cappadocian Fathers (namely, Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa) and the church historians of the time (Socrates) who classified Neo-Arians as Aristotelians

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1   This term coined in the twentieth century is in a sense artificial and introduced for the purposes of creating a new taxonomy capable of distinguishing various doctrinal differences that classify early and late Arianism.

2   For example, R.P.C. Hanson is his monumental *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* suggested that "…Aetius meets them [his adversaries] to this extent upon their own ground with acuteness, learning and a great display of basically Aristotelian logic." It is thus no surprise that Hanson immediately retires to St. Basil who "as a deacon retreated before the formidable machine of Aetius' logic". 2005. p. 610. This comment immediately indicates the source of Hanson's suggestion. More p.85

using a particular rhetorical trope to persuade the audience that the metaphysical and thus non-scriptural nature of arguments made by Aetius and Eunomius diverge from the mainstream Christianity of the fourth entury as being over-Hellenized and therefore loses its connection with Christian piety. By the fourth century Aristotelian philosophy was considered to be the most sophisticated and, in a sense, arcane system of thought, perfectly representing Hellenism which was perceived with a high level of suspicion by many Christians. Not many theologians were willing to subscribe to it at the time. This rhetorical trope thus should not be taken for granted.[3]

Another argument in defense of the attribution of Neo-Arians to Aristotelian philosophy is associated with the use of so called Aristotelian syllogistic reasoning in the *Syntagmation* of Aetius. This is just another example of the total reliance of contemporary scholars on judgments that came from the adversaries of Aetius to persuade the audience that the untenable premises of Aetius' arguments necessarily lead to invalid conclusions as the nature of Christian faith cannot be deduced from a few simple premises. Thus, this attribution should not be taken for granted either, but rather should be carefully studied and historically substantiated. It is this lack of historical substantiation of the philosophical roots of the movement that make it quite incomprehensible for students of church history. How can it be otherwise if a student is not able to find any traces of the Aristotelian syllogistic reasoning in the *Syntagmation*? This was precisely my impression when I read it the first time.

Now, the key points articulated by Aetius in his *Syntagmation* were the following: The unbegotten or ingenerate *ousia* (for now I will defer translating the term *ousia*) is essentially different from the begotten *ousia* and thus cannot be placed in line with it. Thus, the unbegotten God retains a higher rank in the schema of *ta onta* (beings). It produces or begets the only begotten God who, in turn, begets God the Spirit. Thus, there is a subordination between these three deities who represent three different types of *ousiai* and thus differ in essence from each other and from all other things that came into being through the creative activity of God the Son and God the Spirit.

It should be noted here that there was a significant terminological confusion over the notion of begotten or generated. There are three kinds of things that might be translated as begotten that should be taken into account in the context of the polemic: *gegnesenta*, *genesenta*, *poiesenta* (*genoma*, *gegnoma*, *poiema/ktisma*). Thus, the thing that is begotten in a sense of natural transmission of qualities of the species of living beings is juxtaposed to things that come into being and seize to exist, and thing that are made out of the will of the maker (which normally refers to the products of imitative arts and crafts). The etymology of the first type is biological, so to say. The second type is physical, and the third type artistic. The Neo-Arians used the terms interchangeably and did not discriminate between meanings which gave a good reason to the Cappadocians to say that the unbegotten *ousia* of the Father can be legitimately compared to the *ousia* of the stone,

as both are unbegotten (*agegnetos*) in the first sense of begotenness, and that the unbegotten *ousia* of the Son is the same as that of the Father due to its nature as, using the Aristotelian philosophical jargon, essential universal being (say, the form of divinity), and as the being of the Father (following the Aristotelian schema—non-accidental particular being) and of the Son (another non-accidental particular being) both indicate a natural relation to the same type of universal being under which they both fall, or which they both manifest. Based on the argument just reviewed one might immediately notice the use of Aristotelian philosophy by the Cappadocians. Thus I would like to suggest Basil's *Contra Eunomium* is more indebted to Aristotle than both the *Syntagmation* of Aetius and the *First Apology* of Eunomius.

Now it seems to me that the nature of reasoning found in the *Syntagmation* and the conceptual content of the notion of *ousia* used in this collection of propositions are the key points that can open the door to discernability of the subject at stake (namely, the philosophical roots of the Neo-Arian movement). Here I will explore those roots and will argue for their particular originative source which I will attribute to the popular Stoic philosophy of the time that could be found in logical manuals designed to provide a brief excurse to Zeno' and Chrysypus' philosophy. It is interesting to note that only a few scholars have indicated the connection between the *Syntagmation* and the *Apologies* of Eunomius and the Stoic philosophical heritage. For instance Richard Norris[4] and David Robertson, among others, can be credited for uncovering this important link (though they were able to point out the link but did not provide an explanation for such a connection).

In the mid twentieth century Harry A. Wolfson in his essay "The Philosophical Implications of Arianism and Apollinarianism" pointed out:

> Patristic opponents of Arianism as well as Patristic Church historians and heresiographers trace the Arian heresy to Aristotle. Thus Aristotle is mentioned as the source of the teaching of the various Arians by Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Socrates Scholasticus, and Epiphanius. But when we study the passages in which Aristotle is mentioned as the source of this heresy, we are surprised to discover that the reference is not to any particular theory with which the name of Aristotle is generally associated…but only to the Aristotelian method of reasoning. Thus they always speak in this connection of Aristotle's syllogisms, or of Aristotle's dialectics, or of Aristotle's systematical treatment of the art of reasoning…[5]

Interestingly enough the attribution of the "Aristotelian method of reasoning" to the Neo-Arians was quite univocally accepted by scholars so that

3   A very interesting discussion about texne of the Arians and their reliance on the "naked persuasiveness without regard for truth" can be found in Vaggion (2000) pp. 93-5.

4   As Frederick Norris in his "Of Thorns and Roses: The Logic of Belief in Gregory Nazianzen" noted, the major source of inspiration for the Neo-Arians comes from the Aristotelian and Stoic sources, as they "borrowed devices from Aristotle and Chrysippus." p.459.
5   Harry A. Wolfson. "Philosophical Implication of Arianism and Apollinarianism." Dumbarton Oaks Papers, Vol. 12 (1958), p. 6.

such attribution has never become a point of contention in the academy. It is my conjecture, however, that Aetius, who was meant to be the primary example of the use of the Aristotelian syllogistic reasoning in the fourth century, as a matter of fact, never used the Aristotelian syllogisms in his *Syntagmation*. On the first glance this judgment might seem to be unjustified or classified as a product of imagination of the amateur theologian, given the fact of the mutual agreement on this point by various scholars. However, I have a hope that the following analysis will substantiate my claim.

It should be noted in this context that the word "syllogism" is normally translated as deduction, conclusion, inference, etc. The etymology of the term is: to put thoughts together. There are various kinds of syllogisms offered by the late antique philosophers. The Aristotelian syllogisms are tied to a particular system of logic, namely, term or predicate logic. The syllogisms offered by, say, Chrysippus, are intrinsically connected with a different type of logic—propositional or sentential logic. These syllogisms therefore have different forms and follow different rules of inference.

Lukasiewicz and Mates identified the difference between Aristotle's and Stoic logical systems as twofold. Firstly, "Stoic logic was a logic of propositions, while Aristotelian logic was a logic of classes"[6] meaning that "the values of the variables appearing in Stoic formulae are propositions (the substituends being sentences), while the values of Aristotelian variables are non-empty classes (the corresponding terms being the substituends)."[7] Moreover, "Stoic logic was "a theory of inference-schemas, while Aristotelian logic was a theory of logically true matrices."[8]

Despite the structural differences in Aristotelian and Stoic syllogisms, such words as syllogism, syllogistic reasoning, etc., are commonly associated with the works of Aristotle. This unfortunate conflation of different types of logical theories leads to much confusion for the scholars of church history.

Aristotle defined syllogism in the following way "A syllogism is discourse in which, certain things being stated, something other than what is stated follows of necessity from their being so. I mean by the last phrase that they produce the consequence, and by this, that no further term is required from without in order to make the consequence necessary." [Prior Analytics. I.24.b.20] Two things are important in this regard. Firstly, that the conclusions ought to be different from what is supposed. This assumption necessarily eliminates arguments in which the conclusion and one of the premises are identical. Secondly, the reference to "certain things having been stated" rules out arguments with missing premises. However, the use of one premise was allowed by Aristotle for the incomplete syllogism, enthymeme. The first point is especially important in this context for the purposes of proper identification of syllogisms as it allows distinguishing Aristote

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lian syllogisms from these of the Stoics that allow for the conclusion to be identical with one of the premises.

It is obvious that Aetius uses sentential logic as the basic units of his 'syllogisms' in the *Syntagmation* as propositions. The basic syllogistic forms there, as I will argue, are also Stoic or reducible to the five indemonstrable forms of the Stoics. Moreover, the fact that the use of the conclusion identical to one of the premises (that can be found in the *Syntagmation* and which violates one of the basic principles of Aristotle's syllogistic) demonstrates the non-Aristotelian origin of Aetius' arguments. On the other hand, the absence of some (missing) premises in the arguments used in the *Syntagmation*, in my opinion, do not tell us much about the type of reasoning, but rather reveal Aetius' training in rhetoric.

Firstly, as one might note, it is not uncommon to see missing premises in the *Syntagmation*. Thus some propositions offer only one premise instead of two that constitute demonstrative syllogisms. In this light one might suggest that the arguments that can be found there represent Aristotle's enthymemes, incomplete syllogisms where the minor or major premise or conclusion is missing and must be supplied by the audience. However, the mere presence of two terms in an argument might not indicate that the nature of reasoning is non-syllogistic. Moreover, the arguments here are given in the form of conditionals (if-then). This again might be seen as quite acceptable for demonstrative syllogisms as Aristotle himself often used the conditional form in his syllogistic stretches of reasoning. What is really problematic in the *Syntagmation*, is that the propositions offered do not provide any traces of figures of syllogism and rules of inference that characterize Aristotelian predicate logic. It is quite evident that Aetius is familiar neither with Aristotle's proper syllogistic figures nor with the rules of inference. Thus, his reasoning found in the *Syntagmation* cannot be classified through the use of weak syllogisms.

I, however, think it is rather propositional logic of the Stoics that should be taken as the starting point of Aetius' reasoning. The reason for such classification is that Aetius' arguments (sentential and not predicate) do not run by the way of predicate or term logic. It is thus rather the Stoic propositional logic with its five indemonstrable forms that give way to the *Syntagmation* ((if p then q; p; therefore q (modus ponens); if p then q; not q; therefore not-p (modus tollens); it is not the case that both p and q; p; therefore not-q; either p or q; p; therefore not-q; either p or q; not p; therefore q)). This is precisely how the arguments run in the *Syntagmation*.

Now let us take a look at the arguments offered in the *Syntagmation*. The second proposition, taken as an example here, is stated by Aetius in the following way: "If the ingenerate Deity is superior to all cause, he must for that reason be superior to origination; if he is superior to all cause clearly that includes origination, for he neither received existence from another nature nor conferred it on himself." [2] This proposition of the *Syntagmation* can be reconstructed in the following way: If the ingenerate Deity is superior to all cause, he must for that reason be superior to origination (if p then q); if he is superior to all cause clearly that includes origination (p therefore q). For he neither received existence from another nature nor conferred it on himself. The use of *modus ponens* is easily identifiable here: If

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6   Mates, 2.
7   Mates, 2 footnote.
8   Ibid., 2-3.

p (x is superior to all cause), then *q* (x is superior to origination); *p* (x is superior to all cause), therefore *q* (x is superior to origination). P→Q; P; ∴Q. The syllogistic figure of Aristotle's logic (say, Barbara) would have had a following structure: A is B; B is C; therefore, A is C; 'that which is ingenerate is superior to all cause' (major term); 'X is ingenerate' (minor term); 'therefore, X is superior to all cause' (conclusion). 'The superiority to cause is superiority origination'; 'X is superior to cause'; 'therefore, X is superior to origination'.

Now the argument continues:

If he did not confer existence on himself (not because of ineffectiveness of nature but by virtue of his complete transcendence of cause) how could anyone grant that the nature which is posited is indistinguishable in essence from the nature which posited it, when such a substance does not admit of origination? [3]

This is clearly a disjunctive syllogism (P∨Q) that can be reduced to one of the basic forms, say: it is not the case that both *p* and *q*; *p*; therefore not-*q*; either *p* or *q*; *p*; therefore not-*q* (P∨Q; P; ∴¬Q); either *p* or *q*; not *p*; therefore *q* (P∨Q; Q; ∴¬P)

Let us try to connect these two propositions (2&3) and express them in formulae. A = *x* is superior to all cause; B = *x* is superior to origination; C = *x* conferred existence in himself; D = *x* received existence from another nature. E = *x* is the nature posited. Now: A→B; A; ∴B; B→ ¬C; B→ ¬D; B (¬C∧¬D); B¬(C∧D); missing premise: E→D∧¬C; E (D∧¬C); ∴B∨E. Suppose: B→E; *Reductio ad Absurdum*: B¬(C∧D)→ E (¬C∧D); B (¬D)→E (D); B·E → ¬D∧D; Impossible; ∴B∨E. Thus. If the ingenerate Deity is superior to all cause, he must be superior to origination; he is superior to all cause; therefore, he is superior to origination; he neither received existence from another nature nor conferred it on himself; the generate Deity received existence from another nature and did not confer it on himself; therefore the ingenerate Deity is distinguishable from the generate Deity. The implicit *reductio ad absurdum* provides an indirect proof of it.

Another argument runs is the following way:

If the Deity is ingenerate in essence, what was generated was not generated by surrendering of essence but he posited it by his power. For no reverent reasoning permits the same essence to be both generate and ingenerate. [5]

Thus, E→¬B∧D; B→¬D; ∴E∨B; suppose, E→B; *Reductio ad Absurdum*, B→¬D; ∴E→¬D; but E→D; ∴E∨B. Thus, the generate Deity was not generated by surrendering of essence (as in this case it will be ingenerate) but was posited by the power of the ingenerate Deity (i.e., received existence from another nature); the essence of the ingenerate Deity is ingenerate; therefore, the ingenerate Deity is different from the generate Deity; for, suppose, the generate Deity was generated by surrendering of essence. The essence of the ingenerate Deity did not receive

existence from another nature. Therefore, the essence of the generate Deity did not receive existence from another nature. However, it is said that that the generate Deity was generated by the ingenerate Deity, and thus received existence from another nature; therefore, the essence of generate Deity is different from the essence of the ingenerate Deity.

This can be converted to E∨B; E; ∴¬B and thus can be reduced to the following form: it is not the case that both *p* and *q*; *p*; therefore not-*q*. Thus, it is not the case that both *p* and *q* (it is not the case that the same essence to be both generate and ingenerate); *p* (the essence of the offspring is generate); therefore not-*q* *(therefore, it is not generated by surrendering if essence and is thus not-ingenerate)*. This argument can also be reduced to the following form: either *p* or *q*; not *p*; therefore *q*. Thus, either *p* or *q* *(either what was generated was generated by surrendering of essence or was posited by the power); not p (what was generated was not generated by surrendering of essence); therefore q (it was posited by the power). Reductio ad absurdum immediately follows.*

These examples clearly demonstrate that the figures of syllogism and the rules of inference that can be found in the *Syntagmation* are taken from Stoic logic. It is clear from these considerations that the use of Aristotelian syllogistic reasoning should not be attributed to the Neo-Arians. It can be found neither in the *Syntagmation* of Aetius, nor in the *Apologies* of Eunomius. It is rather propositional logic (the use of indemonstrable syllogisms and their derivatives) of the Stoics that is offered in the *Syntagmation*.

Another way of looking at the arguments provided in the *Syntagmation* was suggested by R.P.C. Hanson who attempted to articulate the paradoxical character of Aetius' arguments. Thus, he suggested that the *Syntagmation* consists of "the 37 propositions, all couched in the form of an *aporia*, i.e. a problem to which in his comment he tries to show there is no solution of the *ousia* of the Son is like to or identical with that of the Father."[9] For example, "the first *aporia* begins in characteristic fashion: 'is it possible for the ingenerate God to make something generate ingenerate?'"[10] However, this is the only example of a genuine (logically indiscernible in its unqualified form) *aporia* offered in the *Syntagmation*. There are a number of apparent *aporai* (for example: 23, 24) offered there and normally indicated by special markers: 'can,' 'how can,' 'how will,' etc. However, all those apparent paradoxes are immediately resolved by the proposed solution.

It is also true that most of the propositions can be classified by an excessive use of *reductio ad absurdum* making reference to the Law of Non-Contradiction and appealing to the impossibility for the subject to be characterized by the compresence of opposites. However, the use of such reduction does not signify an existence of genuine paradoxes but rather attempts to demonstrate that the denial of certain premises (in particular, that the *ousia* of the ingenerate God is different from that of the generate one) will inevitably lead (referring to the contra-arguments offered by his adversaries) to absurdities. Thus, the purpose in this context

9   Ibid., 607.
10   Ibid.

is to demonstrate that premises offered by his adversaries are untenable, capable of being reduced to absurdities (being self-contradictory) and thus fallacious.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the use of Chrysippus' indemonstrable forms (and their derivatives) is combined with the use of *reductio ad absurdum*. It is interesting that the use of *reductio ad absurdum* on the first glance might indicate certain knowledge of Aristotle who, as a matter of fact, extensively used it in his *Prior Analytics*. Where can this type of combination be found? However, this type of combination was quite extensively used by Cleanthes.[11] Thus, this combination seems to be common for the Stoics as well as for most of the late antique philosophers who used this proof by contradiction extensively.

Thus, it is my conjecture, that most of the arguments offered in the *Syntagmation* can be reduced to the five indemonstrable forms of the Stoics that go in conjuncture with arguments couched in *reductio ad absurdum* form and never leave the subject matter in the state of *aporia*.

Secondly, Aetius' notion of *ousia* might be said to be derived from Aristotle.[12] However, neither the *Categories*, nor the *Metaphysics Z* provide enough evidence of such conceptual connection. Now the question is the following: what is the meaning of *ousia* as it can be found in the *Syntagmation*? The notion of *ousia*, as one might point out, represents one of the most complex concepts of antiquity. In the twentieth century monographs it might be translated as substance, essence, existence, being, and subsistence. Its lexical form is the feminine participial of *eine* (being) and its conceptual content varies from one manuscript to another. The classical expositions of the notion in antiquity are associated mainly with Aristotle and Chrysippus. However, it is not to say that it does not play a significant role in other philosophers (a recent example of Silverman's Plato's Dialectic of Essence ([*ousia]*) demonstrates the importance of the notion of *ousia* for the middle and late platonic dialogues).

In the *Syntagmation* we can find that the *ousia* of the ingenerate Deity is ingenerate or unbegotten [1-5]. It is simple, immutable, completely transcendent as a cause, and is superior to its effects [2,3,17,32]. The notions of *homoousion* (same in *ousia*) and *homoiousian* (like in *ousia*) are rejected as perverse doctrines for the following reasons: the *ousia* of the ungenerate Deity cannot be shared or transferred to another entity due to its simplicity and immutability [4]. It abides within the boundaries of its own nature which is ingenerate [4]. It did not receive existence from another nature nor conferred it on himself [2]. That which is generated or came-to-be (its offspring), in other words the only begotten Deity, was generated not by surrendering of *ousia* but was posited by the power or will of the ingenerate Deity [5]. It did not exist in the ingenerate deity as a germ (*spermatikos* here reminds us of the notion of *Logos Spermatikos* and *logoi spermatikoi* of the Stoics) as the *ousia* of the ingenerate Deity is simple and thus not capable of being shared [9]. Its only qualifier is ingenerateness or unbegotenness [2,12]. The name 'ingenerate' does not represent the product of discursive capacities of human beings who

11   See Luke Gelinas and P.A. Maijer.
12   Hanson again.

conventionally ascribe names to entities during the process of conceptualization. It is rather a God given name. Thus, it has an essential connection with its referent [12,13,16,28].

Now it is time to compare this description of *ousia* with those that we can find in Aristotle and the Stoics. But before that one important question should be answered, namely, whether the notion of *ousia* in Aetius signifies particular/individual or universal type of being. It seems on the first glance that it is definitely particular as it cannot be shared by two or more entities (universal being, on the contrary, might have various manifestations and thus can be shared, or participated in, by many entities). Ingeneratness then might be thought of as an *idion*, a property of the Deity, or a certain quality of the Deity predicated to its *ousia* (which signifies a particular being). However, the statement that the *ousia* of the ingenerate Deity is ingenerate and is "superior to quality, quantity, and, in a word, all change" [22]; and ingeneratness is its *ousia* (the terms reciprocate here) does not fit well into such understanding [28]. If the very nature or the *ousia* of the ingenerate Deity is its ingeneratness, the *ousia* of the ingenerate Deity rather represents a universal type of being. Is there a way out of this *aporia*? I think there is. But first let us look at the notion of *ousia* as given in the *Categories*.

Here two criteria are offered, namely, said-of and present-in. Based on these criteria four types of beings are offered: said-of and present-in; said-of and not-present-in; not-said-of and present-in; not-said-of and not-present-in. It is the last kind that is classified as *ousia* (first or primary *ousia*). Thus, it is a non-accidental (not-present-in) particular (not-said-of) being. It is not predicated (said-of) of anything but everything is predicated of it (except other *ousiai*). It is not present in anything. Can this type of being be classified as representing Aetius' *ousia*. It definitely cannot. On the first place it seems that since Aetius' *ousia* cannot be shared it is an individual being and thus can be well reconciled with the Aristotelian notion of primary *ousia*. However, since Aetius' *ousia* is ingenerate and ingeneratness is the *ousia* of the Deity, such *ousia* is definitely said-of (predicated) and thus seems to be rather a universal being. Therefore, it is clear that one cannot identify the notion of *ousia* as presented in the *Categories* with the one given in the *Syntagmation*.

Now let us look at the notion of *ousia* as defined in the *Metaphysics Z*, namely, the most specific species (a narrow version of the notion of secondary *ousia* of the *Categories*). Here *ousia* represents universal type of being. Thus, it can be shared (participated in) by many individual entities. This possibility excludes the most specific species from the list of possible conceptual sources of Aetius. Moreover, it seems impossible to frame the *ousia* of the ingenerate Deity into the schema of genus and differentiae. Aristotle could do it with his unmoved mover. The genus mover is qualified by the differentiae of unmoved. Thus, there are two types of movers, unmoved and moved, that qualify God and other movers. But in the *Syntagmation* it does not seem to be the case. One can suggest here that the ingenerate Deity has Godhead as its genus and unbegotenness as a qualifier (differentiae). It seems plausible. One can say that two types of Deities are qualified by begotenness and unbegotenness. Thus, we have unbegotten Deity and begotten Deity. The use of negative predicates is not a subject of concern here. The problematic aspect of

such approach, however, comes from Aetius who insisted that unbegotenness or ingenerateness does not represent a quality. Thus, it cannot function as a qualifier (differentiae) for the genus of Godhead.

I will suggest in this context that we should rather look at the Stoic notion of *ousia* as a starting point. The language of partition and sharing of *ousia* [5,6,7] in the *Syntagmation* is a great stumbling block that confuses the readers and simultaneously redirects their attention to the Stoic notion of *ousia*.

In Zeno and Chrysypus *ousia* is an individual existing material being which cannot be shared and which upon the event of being mixed with other beings either preserves its identity (which was the reason of its extensive use during the monophysite controversy a century later), or ceases to exist. All 'existent' entities in Stoicism are particular. Universals entities, on the contrary, were understood by the Stoics as 'figments of the mind', or products of invention of human discursive faculties (concepts of discursive intellect). Thus an apparent universal being, say, ingeneratness, is as a matter of fact a non-existent (but subsistent in the mind) sayable or *lecton* that qualify *ousia*.

Ousia of Aetius is a particular being that cannot be shared with precisely one qualifier—ingeneratness. If one assumes that the nature of the qualifier is not existent but subsistent, a *lecton*, or sayable, a mind dependent entity, the *aporia* of individual vs. universal is easily eliminated here and the notion of *ousia* in Aetius becomes more coherent. However, as soon as the sayable and an entity which it signifies are concerned, the nature of their connection can be said to be essential or intrinsic. Thus, the Arian appeal to essential connection between the name unbegotenness and its referent can be easily preserved.

It is interesting to note that such qualifier as ingenerate was used by the Stoics to describe the nature of God as one of the first principles (*archai*) of the universe (along the line with utterly unqualified and inert matter. They identified God an eternal reason (*logos*) or intelligent designing fire which structures matter in accordance with its plan. It seems that Aetius internalized the notion of the ingenerate Deity, removed matter as one of the ungenerated principles, attributed the status of ingenerate to God the Father, and classified God the Logos as the generate Deity which is thus the subject of change and mutation, being a Divinity of the lower rank.

Another proof of conceptual connection between the Stoics and Aetius comes from the Stoic assumption that two individually qualified entities as incapable of coexisting within the same *ousia*. It provided a legitimate ground for Aetius to reject the notions of *homoousian* and *homoiousion*. Thus such individually qualified entities as the ingenerate Deity and the generated Deity cannot coexist within the same *ousia*; *ousia* here cannot be shared. The story of Theon and Dion perfectly exemplify this assumption.[13]

I will thus conclude by saying that by the fourth century C.E. it was Stoicism that perfectly manifested a "popular philosophy" which was easily accessible through the philosophical manuals of the time. It is precisely this philosophy that is so easily traceable in the fourth century controversy over the nature of the Triune God. It is thus my conjecture that the philosophical roots of Neo-Arianism can be found in the popular stoic philosophy of the time.

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13   For an excellent analysis of this subject see Rist (1969).