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The Shaping of Catholicity

The Arian Controversies and the Search for Orthodoxy

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sob orientação de:

Prof. João Eleutério

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Grant me, O Lord my God,
a mind to know you,
a heart to seek you,
wisdom to find you,
conduct pleasing to you,
faithful perseverance in waiting for you,
and a hope of finally embracing you. Amen.

(St. Thomas Aquinas)

ABBREVIATIONS

ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1989.
<i>Apol. c. Ar.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>Apologia Contra Arianos</i>
Apud	According to
<i>Bibl. Cod.</i>	Photius, <i>Bibliotheca Codices</i>
<i>Brev. Col. cum Donat.</i>	Augustine, <i>Breviculus Conlatticeonis cum Donatistis.</i>
<i>C. Cels</i>	Origen, <i>Contra Celsum</i>
CCEL	Christian Classics Ethereal Library
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum seu nova Patrum collectio Series Latina. Turnhout – Paris 1953ff.
Cf.	<i>Confer/ Compare</i>
<i>Coll. Anti-ariana</i>	Hilary of Poitiers, <i>Collectanea antiariana Parisina (Fragmenta historica)</i>
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum. Wien 1866ff.
CTh.	Theodosius II, <i>Codex Theodosianus</i>
<i>De Decret.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>De Decretis</i>
<i>De Eccl. Dogm.</i>	Gennadius of Massilia, <i>De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus</i>
<i>De Fuga.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>Apologia De Fuga</i>

<i>De Incarn.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>Oratio de Incarnatione Verbi</i>
<i>De mort. pers.</i>	Lactantius, <i>De Mortibus Persecutorum</i>
<i>De Or.</i>	Origen, <i>De Oratione</i>
<i>De princ.</i>	Origen, <i>De Principiis</i>
<i>De Res.</i>	Methodius of Olympus, <i>De Resurrectione</i>
<i>De sent. Dion.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>De Sententia Dionysii</i>
<i>De Synod.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>De Synodis</i>
<i>De Vir.</i>	Jerome, <i>De Viris Illustribus</i>
<i>Ep. ad Afros.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>Ad Afros Epistola Synodica</i>
<i>Ep. Caes.</i>	Letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to his church regarding the Nicene Creed
<i>Euse. con. Marc.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Contra Marcellum</i>
<i>Euse. Hist. eccl.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
ff.	And the following pages
<i>Fug.</i>	Philo, <i>De Profugis</i>
GCS	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Leipzig, 1897 –.
<i>Gel. Hist. eccl.</i>	Gelazius of Cyzicus. <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
<i>Hist. Ar.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>Historia Arianorum</i>

<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibidem</i> , in the same place
JAAR	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
JThS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> . London 1899ff
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
<i>Leg</i>	Athenagoras, <i>Legatio pro Christianis</i>
NPNF	Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers
<i>Or. con. Ar.</i>	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>Oratione contra Arianos</i>
PG	Patrologia Graeca, hg. v. J. P. Migne, 167 Bde. Parish 1857 – 66.
<i>Philost. Hist. eccl.</i>	Philostogius, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
PL	Patrologia Latina, hg. v. J. P. Migne, 217 Bde u. 4 Reg. -Bde, Parish 1847 – 64 (vgl. PLS).
<i>Prae. evan.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Praeparatio Evangelica</i>
<i>Protr</i>	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Protrepticus</i>
<i>Ruf. Hist. eccl.</i>	Rufinus, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
<i>Soc. Hist. eccl.</i>	Socrates, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
<i>Soz. Hist. eccl.</i>	Sozomen, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
<i>Strom</i>	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Stromateis</i>
SWLA	Archibald Robertson. <i>Selected Writngs of and Letters of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria: Editet,</i>

with Prolegomena, Indices, and Titles. Ann Arbor,
MI: Cusing Malloy Inc. 1987.

Theo. Hist. eccl.

Theodoret of Cyrus, *Historia Ecclesiastica*

TS

Theological Studies

TTH

Translated Texts for Historians. 1987ff.

VC

Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*

ZAC

Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum. Berlin 1997ff

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INTRODUCTION

In the fourth century after Constantine had turned the persecuted Christianity into a tolerated religion (*religio licita*), Christian Church, at one side, with imperial patronage and support started playing a very important role in the imperial politics, and at another side, the Christian Church became more manifestly engaged in theological debates and battles on orthodoxy, i.e., the question about defining which doctrines were the correct ones. By the cohesion of politics and religion, the Christian Church became a means for the stability and the unity of the Empire as Emperor Constantine expected and supported for; therefore, a threat for the Christian Church could also mean a threat for the Empire. The threat of the Christian Church was nothing else than a heresy or a division resulted mostly from the theological debates over the doctrinal matters. In particular, theologians of this century were embroiled with debates on Christology that led Constantine to summon the Council of Nicaea in 325, the first ecumenical council, to deal primarily on Arian proposals to express the relationship between the Father and the Son. However, the Nicene decision did not come out as a pure theological resolution; rather it came out as a mixture of theology and politics. Thus, Brendon Jones laments, “imperial power was now influencing theological decision.”¹ Significantly, theological disputes became thoroughly politicized and this politicization (of theological disputes) gave a reason for the Emperor in order to have a role in the theological decisions.

By reason of unsatisfactory outcome of the Nicene Council, Christian churchmen continued struggling to attain consensus over the Nicene decision among

¹ Brendon Jones, “The Arian Controversy: A Purely Theological Dispute or A Political Controversy?” *Phronema* 12 (1997): 55 – 68; esp. 57.

the Christian churches. In so doing, it was necessary for them to construct the orthodoxy relating to the catholicity in order that all Christian churches could be united by means of both theological and political reasons. In fact, the churchmen had grappled with doctrinal problems and tried to construct the orthodoxy in the face of heresies in the light of catholicity since the very beginning. Catholicity, in this sense, could be understood as the faith of the entire Christian Church, i.e. the doctrine believed everywhere, always, and by all. In another word, orthodoxy was defined in terms of whatever in any age is taught by the majority of bishops, and the adjective “Catholic” does not simply imply as worldwide, representative, and tolerant but as willing to incorporate ideas once deemed heretical.² The series of Arian controversies was one of the most serious disputes that gave “the Church the first standard by which orthodoxy could be reliably measured.”³ In ecclesiastical history, it was a very capital controversy, as Lewis Ayres remarks,

...that produced some of the basic principles of classical Trinitarian and Christological doctrine, the most important creed in the history of Christianity, and theological texts that have remained points for departure for Christian theology in every subsequent generation.⁴

Conventionally Arianism has been portrayed as an archetypal heresy that denied the full divinity of Jesus Christ the Son of God as the Logos, and that taught the subordinationist Christology and the creaturehood of Christ *ex-nihilo*, and that denied the co-eternal existence of Christ with the Father and had a beginning of existence, claiming the well-known Arian dictum that there was a time when Christ did not exist.

² Mark J. Edwards, *Catholicity and Heresy in the Early Church* (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2009), 7.

³ Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies: Heresy and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), 106.

⁴ Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1.

Arius himself has often been regarded as an arch-heretic and as the founder of archetypal Christian deviation in the development of Christian theological tradition. The Catholic historian, Hilaire Belloc identifies Arianism as one of the greatest heresies of all time.⁵ Joseph T. Lienhard remarks the portrayal of Arius as the arch-heretic has survived well into the age of historical-critical research, and lives on in many textbooks of the church history and doctrine.⁶ Rowan Williams also observes that this archetypal heresiological image of Arianism and Arius has been perpetuated in modern studies, and “has often continued to accept, consciously or not, the image of this heresy as the radically ‘Other,’ projecting on to it whatever theological or ecclesiological tenets currently represent the opposition to a Christian mainstream in which the scholar and interpreter claims to stand.”⁷ Lewis Ayres again laments that heresiological label covers up the complexity of theological development.⁸ The archetypal portrayal of Arius is unsatisfactory for many modern historians, theologians and scholars; perhaps this is one of the reasons that the study on Arianism still fascinates our modern scholars to re-examine, to re-evaluate, and to find the concrete answers of this controversy. Williams and Ayres believe that the fairer picture of Arius’ strength would appear in modern studies. Winrich Löhr too comments that if we try to recapture the historical Arius, we have to confront implicitly and explicitly the heresiological images of the constructions

⁵ Hilaire Belloc, *The Great Heresy* (Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books and Publishers, 1991), 16. The other heresies, according to Bellock, are Mohammedanism, Albigensianism, Protestantism and “Modern Attack.”

⁶ Joseph T. Lienhard, “Recent Studies in Arianism,” *Religious Studies Review* 8 (1982) 331-37, at 331.

⁷ Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, 2nd edition (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 2001), 2.

⁸ Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 2.

and reconstructions of earlier generations of theologians, historians, heresiologists and scholars.⁹

In modern studies, Arianism of the fourth century has been re-analyzed and re-evaluated from many angles, not only theologically but also historically and politically as well. Theologically it is the dispute over the expression of the relationship between God the Father and the Son; historically it is a complex matter of the most dramatic internal struggle of the Christian Church on the surface of the political reform of the Roman Empire; and politically it is a sophistication of power exercise of church-leadership with the mixture of religious and political interests. Charles Kannengiesser correctly asserts, “It was a controversy led by bishops and their theologians in a political background created by the interests of each Christian metropolitan in the boundaries of the Roman Empire.”¹⁰ Definitely many modern scholars have been re-analyzing the Arian controversy or Arianism so that Arius’ pure theology and his real figure may appear.¹¹ It does not, however, mean to make of Arius a theological hero but it is just to see how Arius was related with the Arians or Arianism which bears his name and what he really preached or taught and finally how the Arian controversy was relevant to the Logos Christology and Trinitarian theology in the theological development.

⁹ Winrich Löhr, “Arius Reconsidered,” *ZAC* 9 (2005): 524 – 560; esp. 524.

¹⁰ Charles Kannengiesser, “Athanasius of Alexandria and the Foundation of Traditional Christology,” *TS* 34 (1973): 103 – 113; esp. 106 – 107.

¹¹ The important works of the modern scholars on the studies of “Arian” controversy are: Maurice Wiles, “In Defense of Arius,” *JThS* 13 (1963), 339 – 347; Robert Gregg and Dennis Groh, *Early Arianism: A View of Salvation* (Philadelphia, 1981); Joseph T. Lienhard, “Recent Studies in Arianism,” *Religious Studies Review* 8 (1982); Charles Kannengiesser, “Arius and the Arians,” *TS* 44 (1983); Rowan Williams, “The Logic of Arianism,” *JThS* 34 (1983); Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1987; 2nd ed., 2001); Joseph T. Lienhard, “The Arian Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered,” *TS* 48 (1987); R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: the Arian Controversy 318 – 381* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988, 2005); Brendan Jones, “The Arian Controversy: A Purely Theological Dispute or a Political Controversy?” *Phronema* 12 (1997) and Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Thomas C. Ferguson has well noted that the modern scholarship has rendered this “Arian” controversy as a hermeneutic which is inviolable in two particular areas: the polemical creation of the term, and the false dichotomy between ‘heresy’ and ‘orthodoxy.’¹² R. P. C. Hanson also notes that the expression ‘the Arian Controversy’ is a serious misnomer.¹³ In point of fact, at the time of controversial debate, no one considered themselves “Arians” or even Arius himself did not think that he was a heretic. It was only in 341, that the Eastern bishops learned that they were being called ‘Arians.’¹⁴ Obviously the terms “Arians” or “Arianism” were the polemical creation of Athanasius (ca. 296 – 373 A.D.) in order to support his Christology in defense of Christian doctrine.¹⁵

The pair “Arian” and “Nicene” became polar opposites in the controversy. Joseph T. Lienhard ascribes that such the pair is anachronistic and perhaps too dogmatic.¹⁶ According to his survey, publications on Arianism in the last decades have shown that the questions are far from settled.¹⁷ In Charles Kannengiesser’s analysis, the reasons why the questions are far from being settled were due to: (1) too little knowledge of the primary sources; (2) a lack of appropriate methodology in the treatment of these sources; (3) a one-side consideration of the social and political setting of Arianism; and (4) a reluctance to accept what theology meant for Arius and the so-

¹² Thomas C. Ferguson, *The Past is Prologue: The Revolution of Nicene Historiography* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2005), 15.

¹³ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, xvii.

¹⁴ Lienhard, “The Arian Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered,” 417.

¹⁵ Ferguson, *The Past is Prologue*, 16.

¹⁶ Lienhard, “The Arian Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered,” 416.

¹⁷ Joseph T. Lienhard, “Recent Studies in Arianism,” *Religious Studies Review* 8 (1982), 5-20, esp. 15.

called Arians.¹⁸ Obviously the sources from this period, as Lewis Ayres mentions, survive only in fragments and some of them were placed into the heresiological categories – Arian, Semi-Arian, and Neo-Arian.¹⁹ Since they were placed into such the heresiological labels, early theologians and ecclesiastical historians had been prompted to tar enemies with the name of a figure already dishonored.²⁰

It is true that the primary sources on the Arian controversy are poor. As Ayres mourns, the fundamental problem in understanding of this controversy lies in the nature of our poor sources.²¹ The greater part of our information about Arian controversy comes from the opponents of Arius and Arians, who are often hostile to them, and who are per excellence to write mainly for their polemical purposes. Among those staunch opponents, Athanasius of Alexandria has been regarded as one of the most important and strongest opponents of Arius and his supporters. Athanasius fought against the Arians throughout his life and one of his greatest writings came in 339 – 343 called *Orations Against the Arians*.²² Based on what Athanasius wrote about his opponents, we have known so little about the theology of Arius and of Arians, and we have been confused with what Arians really were. As Hanson questions, can we get the exact words of Arius and the theologies of the so-called “Arians” from Athanasius?²³ Obviously it would be a bias if we just rely on Athanasius’ sources alone and we could easily miss the point. Kennengiesser criticizes, “One of the main failures of this

¹⁸ Charles Kannengiesser, “Current Theology: Arius and the Arians,” 457.

¹⁹ Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 2.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Khale Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Early Church Fathers* (London: Routledge, 2004), 16.

²³ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 19.

research belongs to a certain lack of criticism in regard to the Athanasian writings.”²⁴ After all, it is true, as Rowan Williams cautiously says that a heresy, compared to the present doctrinal priorities, is far behind us and “over against” us since it was undeveloped to form an adequate form of belief or it was demolished by its opponents.²⁵ Ayres also remarks that the use of the adjective ‘Arian’ is refrained; rather than Arius’ theology. He considers the labeling “Arian” as a mistake.²⁶

Lienhard guides us with an alternative way to look at the Arian controversy in the setting of the two conflicting theological traditions which were well established by the beginning of the fourth century.²⁷ He distinguishes these two conflicting theological traditions as *Dyohypostatic* theology and *Miahypostatic* theology. *Dyohypostatic* theology emphasizes on one God with Multi-Person whereas *Miahypostatic* theology takes strict monotheism as one God, one *hypostasis*, one *ousia*. He believes that the controversy was part of a larger movement: “a movement from the rule of faith to theology, from the language of confession to the language of reflection, from belief to speculation on what was believed.”²⁸ When the theologians came to express, in the language of speculation, Christian monotheism and Christ’s divinity, the two conflicting theological traditions inevitably clashed each other. Thus, he concludes that the categories “*miahypostatic*” and “*dyohypostatic*” show that the “Arian” controversy

²⁴ Kannergiesser, “Arius and the Arians,” 461.

²⁵ Williams, *Arius*, 23.

²⁶ Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 2.

²⁷ Lienhard, “The ‘Arian’ Controversy,” 420.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

was in reality a collision between two theological systems, neither of which was quite adequate; but collision prepared the way for a resolution.”²⁹

Obviously, the main reason for Constantine to convene the Council of Nicaea was to bring an end to the Arian controversy that threatened the unity of the Empire and, of course, of the Christian Church. What follows will be an investigation of the controversy from its beginning to the point of the triumph of Athanasian theology at the end of the fourth century. During this century, as the development of doctrine emerged from the scope of political and religious complexities plus social issues, one cannot be contented with a particular doctrinal dispute alone. This paper therefore will explore the Arian controversy from socio-political setting to theological development. In the first chapter, the paper will try to situate the background of the controversy within the socio-political context of the Roman Empire of the fourth century. Henceforth, the reversion of the fortune of Christianity with the conversion of the Roman Emperor. Constantine is considered a basic opportunity for the rise of Christianity and a crucial remark towards the decline of paganism in the Empire. On the same line, the importance of the roles of bishops both in social and religious life is also at stake. The second chapter will deal the doctrinal disputes between Bishop Alexander and Arius, providing some possible antecedents of Arianism. Additionally, the politicization of the controversy and partnership in the disputes are also explored in this chapter as one of the key factors that caused the controversy more combative. The third chapter is the main object of this study which will evaluate on how Nicene theology emerged from this controversy, how the course of the construction of orthodoxy went on through many creedal statements by many different synods, and most significantly how Athanasius, who lived Arianism’s beginning until the time when orthodoxy had almost

²⁹ *Ibid.*

triumphed, could be a test case for the quest into the historical and theological reasons behind the controversy. Finally the research will show how Athanasius' theology became a standard theology for orthodoxy.

1. SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE 4TH CENTURY

1.1. Constantine and Christianity

During the first three centuries in certain periods and in certain parts of the Roman Empire, to be a Christian was to be persecuted. Indeed, since the time of Nero, Christianity had always been a target for persecution (though persecutions were sporadic) till Emperor Constantine turned its destiny from persecuted religion to the favored religion. Therefore, it is usual and natural that Christians did not find difficult to see Constantine as God-sent-savior and so, at Rome, Constantine was hailed as *liberator et salvator* – Liberator and Savior.¹ According to Eusebius, Constantine, compared to Cyrus and Alexander of Macedonia whose conquests also followed a steady Eastward progress, was greater because he conquered nearly the whole world.² Within the Roman Empire, after the great Diocletian persecution, many social and political changes took place with the rise of Constantine the Great, the son of the Emperor Constantius and Helena. Indeed, the conversion of Constantine was a huge impact for radical and quick changes in the Roman Empire, and it had quite enormous consequences, as Ramsay MacMullen observes.³

The rise of Constantine was the joy and the glory of Christianity; indeed his reign was momentous for Christians. His victory is marked by the *Labarum*, an

¹ Peter J. Leithart, *Defending Constantine: The Twilight of an Empire and the Dawn of Christendom* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 106.

² VC 1. 7, trans. Averil Cameron and Stuart Hall (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999), 70. For the reconstruction of Eusebius' account of Constantine's conquests, see in Leithart, *Defending Constantine*, 241.

³ Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire: A.D. 100 – 400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 43.

avowedly Christian banner with *Chi* and *Rho* on top.⁴ According to both Eusebius and Lactantius in their *Vita Constantini* and *De Mortibus Persecutorum* respectively, Constantine, in the day preceding the Battle of Milvian Bridge, saw a vision of the Cross with the Greek symbol of Christ, *Chi* and *Rho*, and received the message, “By this conquer.”⁵ Thus, Grant remarks that “his victory had been due to the power of Christ.”⁶ Perhaps this is how Constantine’s devotion to the Christian God became so innate that he adopted Christianity as his personal religion. Apparently, Constantine made Christianity *religio licita* in the Roman Empire. Lactantius mentioned his formal recognition of Christianity as *religio licita* as the very first act of Constantine as an emperor.⁷

Constantine defeated the co-emperor Maxentius and became sole emperor of Rome, the western empire in 312 A.D. In 313, with the co-emperor of the East, Licinius, he issued the Edict of Milan which affirmed the permanent toleration of Christians and to return the Church’s properties confiscated by the previous emperors. While the Edict made all religions legal within the Roman Empire, its special intention of Constantine was to legalize Christianity as he decided that Christianity was a religion fit for a new empire.⁸ Charles M. Odahl remarks the Edict as the beginning of the partnership

⁴ Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Harvard University Press, 1981), 48; see also Robert M. Grant, *Augustus to Constantine: The Emergence of Christianity in the Roman World* (New York, NY: Barnes & Noble Books, 1996), 235.

⁵ VC 1.28 – 32, trans. Cameron and Hall, 80 – 82. *De mort. Pers.*, Ch. 44, trans. Mary Francis MacDonald, *Lactantius: The Minor Works*, vol. 54 (Baltimore, Md: Catholic University of America Press, 1965), 190 – 1.

⁶ Grant, *Augustus to Constantine*, 236.

⁷ *De mort. Pers.*, Ch. 24, trans. MacDonald, 168, when he took control, Constantine Augustus did nothing until he returned the Christians to their religion and their God. This was his first sanction of the restoration of the holy religion.

⁸ Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D 200 – 1000*, the 10th anniversary revised edition (Oxford: Wiley – Blackwell, 2013), 61.

between Christian Church and Roman State.⁹ Later on, Katherine E. Willems sees this partnership as the potential factor to change both religion and state, to transform a society, and to form the ecclesiastical state.¹⁰

Constantine was not the first emperor who issued the edict of toleration to Christianity. Gallien attempted to make Christianity a *religio licita* and issued an extending tolerance to Christians in A.D 250 – 260;¹¹ however, his edict was only temporary and partial. In 311, Galerius and Maxentius, the *de facto* ruler of Italy issued the edicts of toleration and restored the properties of the Roman Church to the bishop Miltiades.¹² Even so, they all failed in their attempts whereas Constantine succeeded at officially granting the permanent toleration to Christianity. Lactantius, thus expressed his recognition of Christianity as “the restoration of this holy religion”, having in mind of, as Ilaria L.E. Ramelli assumed, Gallien’s edict of partial tolerance.¹³

Regarding his relationship to Christianity, Constantine has often been seen as a bad tactician or simply as a political opportunist or “a shrewd politician who became aware of the advantages to be drawn from a ‘conversion.’”¹⁴ Constantine has also been

⁹ Charles M. Odahl, *Constantine and the Christian Empire* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 84.

¹⁰ Katherine E. Willems, “Constantine and Christianity: The Formation of the Christian State Church,” *The Concord Review* (1993); 1-21, esp. 2.

¹¹ *Euse. Hist. eccl.* 7. 13, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol.19 (New York, NY: Fathers of the Church, 1995), 114. See Hans Lietzmann, *A History of Early Church*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd, 1993), 629.

¹² *Brevic. Colat. Cum Donat.* III, xviii, 34, CCSL, 149A, 299.

¹³ Ilaria L. E. Ramelli, “Constantine: The Legal Recognition of Christianity and its Antecedents,” *Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia* 22 (2013), 65 – 82, esp. 65; regarding the attempts of issuing the edict of toleration to Christianity, Ramelli, in page. 69, also presents Severus Alexander, Elagabalus, Hadrian, and Tiberius.

¹⁴ Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1984), 113. See the critics of Constantine, a few to name, Craig Carter in *his The Politics of the Cross*; John Howard Yoder, *The Priestly Kingdom*; Jacob Burkhardt in *his The Age of Constantine the Great*, etc.

seen as “a religious syncretist, recognizing all religions, to strengthen his political power.”¹⁵ Peter Brown sees his conversion as a very “Roman” conversion – he had come to regard the High God of the Christians, rather than the traditional gods, as the proper recipient of *religio*.¹⁶ Perhaps, why Constantine’s conversion or his belief in Christian God was a controversial matter is due to a struggle between his personal belief and public figure; on the one hand, there is no doubt that he had personally come to believe in the Christian God who ought to be worshiped throughout the world; on the other hand, he as an emperor had to continue accommodating the devotion of the Roman gods.¹⁷ Anyway, regardless of whatever his critics have said about him from the very beginning of his conversion to his bed-death baptism, the paramount importance is his impact on Christianity which is undeniably massive and remarkable. H. A. Drake remarks that more change took place in the status, structure, and beliefs of the Christian Church than any previous period of its history.¹⁸ His great benefactions and contributions are enough evidence and proof of his favor to Christianity, and his authentic (yet putative) spirit of Christian conversion; especially after 324 when he founded a Christian city, *Roma Nova* or later called Constantinople.

¹⁵ Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (325 – 787): Their History and Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1983), 29.

¹⁶ Brown, *Western Christendom*, 61.

¹⁷ Dale T. Irvin & Scott W. Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement: Earliest Christianity to 1453*, Vol.1 (Maryknoll, New York, NY: Orbis Books, 2001), 162. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 211, says that Constantine tolerates paganism only because to attempt complete suppression would cause rebellion and public disorder. See also MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 44; Constantine himself, for years after A.D. 312, continued to pay his public honors to the Sun.

¹⁸ H. A. Drake, “The Impact of Constantine on Christianity,” *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, ed. Noel Lenski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 111.

By early 313, Constantine wrote a letter with instructions to the *vicarius* of Africa to provide monies to the bishop of Carthage.¹⁹ By the time, an ecclesiastical advisor, the Spanish bishop Ossius was already present beside the emperor and some other bishops were also around him, dining at his table and accompanying him wherever he went.²⁰ Ossius' influence could probably be crucial in resolving theological disputes in future soon. From his imperial treasury, Constantine built churches for Christian worship; especially he constructed a number of grand basilicas.²¹ The property of Lateran family, the palace of his second wife Fausta, was given to the bishops of Rome as an episcopal residence.²² Individual churches were supported with money for their charitable use; he also gave financial sponsor for the new copies of the Bible.²³ Though ambiguous, he legislated Sunday as a day of rest or holiday.²⁴ In 313,

¹⁹ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 49; See also Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), 612. In Barnes' account, the letter was sent to Patricius, the *vicarius* of Africa, Annullinus, the proconsul, and Heraclides, the procurator of the imperial estate. Probably they were the ones replaced by Constantine in place of Maxentius' appointees, and were given *mandata* for a new attitude to the Christian church. To these appointments, Fox mentions that Ossius gave the list for the new appointees. See also Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils*, 30.

²⁰ VC 1.42, 1, trans. Cameron & Hall, 86.

²¹ VC 1.42.2, trans. Cameron & Hall, 86, reports that Constantine supplied rich help from his own resources to enlarge and elevate churches and to decorate them beautifully. Cf. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 49; for Basilicas, Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (New York, NY: Penguin Group, 1993), 128, talks about the traditional shrines of Peter and Paul in Rome, the Holy Sepulchre in Bethelhem; See also Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 622; probably, St. John the Lateran and Sessorian basilicas would be constructed as early as his reign in the West in 312. The other basilicas would be constructed later; the shrines of Roman martyrs and the Church of the apostle on the Vatican were built as late as his reign in 325.

²² Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 128.

²³ Willison Walker et al., *A History of the Christian Church*, (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's sons, 4th ed., 1985), 129. See Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 128.

²⁴ Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils*, 30; explains that the legislation of Sunday as a day of rest or holiday was ambiguous since it was the day of Christ's resurrection and the day of the Sun (Roman cult); See also Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, who well observes that Constantine, in order to gradually change the attitudes of Roman society into a Christian direction, legislated Sunday as a holy day for all (at that time). In 321, it was clear that all official businesses and the manufacturing artifacts were prohibited on the Lord's Day; See also Chadwick, *the Early Church*, 128; who notes that the motive for introducing this custom is respected for the sun.

by law all Church officials were exempted from public obligations so that they may devote themselves without any distraction to their own functions of divine worship.²⁵ Slaves could be freed in Christian churches since bishops and clergies were given such a privilege. Barnes evaluates that all Constantine's contributions were "to elevate Christianity to a privileged position among the religions of the Roman Empire."²⁶

By the time the Christians in the West were already enjoying their full freedom of worship and privileges of imperial patronage, the Christians in the East were, somehow, still undergoing a sort of indirect persecution by Licinius. For Licinius, the edict of Milan was "nothing more than a political move."²⁷ In the East, under the rule of Licinius, the Christians were expelled from imperial service, women and men are not allowed to attend divine worship together; synods were forbidden that bishops might not meet together; Christians were likely put to jail; and probably Christians were executed in some provinces.²⁸ What would happen when this news of persecutions reached into Constantine's ears? Constantine who proclaimed himself a "potential liberator for persecuted Christians elsewhere" would not tolerate Licinius' persecution.²⁹ Besides, his relationship with Licinius had already become tenser on account of the political rivalry. In result, this led to what Michael Collins states, "the

²⁵ *Euse. Hist. eccl.* 10.7, trans. Deferrari, 279 – 80. Cf. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 50. See also Edward A. Johnson, "Constantine the Great: Imperial Benefactor of the Early Christian Church," *Journal of the Evangelical Theology Society* (22/2 June 1979), 161 – 169, esp. 164.

²⁶ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 50.

²⁷ Lietzmann, *A History*, 651. See also Willems, "Constantine and Christianity," 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 651 – 652. See also Noel Lenski, "The Reign of Constantine," *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, ed. Noel Lenski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 75.

²⁹ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 28.

political situation now took on the mantle of a religious war, with Constantine finally defeating Licinius in battle at Chrysopolis in 324.”³⁰

In 324, Constantine became the sole ruler of the entire Roman Empire and reformed the structures of the empire with Christian policy, giving a new status to bishops, equal in rank to senators, and making them almost like state officers.³¹ In the same year of his victory over Licinius, he declared his unreserved allegiance to Christ and Christianity.³² This declaration could be seen as his public confession of Christian faith, yet it also could be a political means in seeking for the unifying forces that he found in Christian churches. Nevertheless, Constantine himself believed that he had been called by God to rule.³³ Thus, he had gradually portrayed himself as God’s appointed ruler who was responsible for the unity of both empire and the Church. Indeed, one of his chief concerns was the unity of the diverse Christian churches in his realm.³⁴ However, the unity was never actualized as he hoped for; instead, he himself confronted the threat of schism caused by two major controversies: Donatist controversy and Arian controversy. So in A.D. 325, a year after he became a sole emperor of the entire Roman world, he gathered the Christian bishops at Nicaea in order to seek the uniformity, fixing the date for Easter celebration, solving the doctrinal issues regarding the nature of Christ and His relationship to God the Father, and promulgating of early canon law.³⁵

³⁰ Michael Collins & Matthew A. Price, *The Story of Christianity: A Celebration of 2,000 years of Faith* (New York, NY: DK Publishing, 1999), 58.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 58.

³² Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 162.

³³ Drake, “The Impact of Constantine on Christianity,” 116.

³⁴ Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 164.

³⁵ Cf. Brown, *Western Christendom*, 61.

1.2. Decline of Paganism and Constantine's Successors

Once the emperor Constantine had come to regard the High God of the Christians, rather than the traditional gods, from A.D. 321, a lot of social and religious changes occurred so rapidly and dramatically that the great flourishing pagan cults, the religion of the majority came to become extinct in the Roman Empire.³⁶ On the other hand, a minority Christianity which had formerly no right to exist in the Empire came not only to exist as a *religio licita*, but to become, in the end, the only religion which was permitted to exist within the Roman Empire, and definitely became the religion of the State under Emperor Theodosius I (A.D. 347 – 395). Why and how did this change happen so rapidly and dramatically in the Roman Empire, especially the change from paganism to Christianity?

Since Constantine's enthronement, though he continued his title, "Pontifex Maximus," his imperial policies included Christian clergy in his court circle, immersed himself in Christian literature, and got involved in ecclesiastical and theological disputes.³⁷ Moreover, Christian letters and speeches were more and more seen everywhere in the Empire; church buildings appeared promptly here and there; Christian gatherings became more exposed and public in the Roman society. To what could these lead?

³⁶ "Pagan cults" or "paganism" refer to polytheism of Roman traditional religious cults; the religious life in the Roman Empire encompassed an extraordinary diversity of deities and expressions of devotion to those deities. See A. D. Lee, "Traditional Religions," *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, ed. Noel Lenski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 159 -176. See also Stephen Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284 – 641*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Wiley – Blackwell, 2015), 242, "an unprecedented level of religious change," and the central transformation was the conversion of pagans to Christians in the fourth century.

³⁷ Odahl, *Constantine*, 1.

After October 312, Constantine thought of himself as God's servant, entrusted with a divine mission to convert the Roman Empire to Christianity.³⁸ Thus, his conversion has been thought to be the beginning of Christianization of the Roman Empire, and a crucial remark towards the decline of paganism. Nevertheless, though the emperors played a very important role in the social and religious changes of the empire, they were not the main factor of those changes, but they were only a part of the natural consequences of social and religious revolution. Hence, it is true as Peter Brown concludes that the end of paganism was the natural consequence of a long prepared "triumph of monotheism" in the Roman world.³⁹ Regarding the triumph of Christianity, the extraordinary phenomenon, there are some considerable factors as Robert L. Cleve proposes: 1) the "appeal" of Christianity's promise of salvation; 2) its "rational" theology; 3) the strong organization of the Church hierarchy; and 4) the support and coercion of the government.⁴⁰ In contrast, paganism was not a united, monolithic religion – they had no common organization, no common system of theology, no supreme cause to unite them into an organic form like Christian Church.⁴¹ Therefore, Stephen Mitchell states, "certain features of pagan polytheism were more easily discarded than others," but Christians "undoubtedly retained and perpetuated pre-Christian traditions."⁴²

³⁸ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 43.

³⁹ Peter Brown, "Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World," *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values* (1993), 112 – 190; esp. 117.

⁴⁰ Robert L. Cleve, "The Triumph of Christianity: Religion as an Instrument of Control," in Toru Yuge and Masaoki, eds., *Forms of Control and Subordination in Antiquity* (Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1988), 530 – 540, 1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴² Mitchell, *Later Roman Empire*, 243.

Christianity is a religion with full of growing force. Since its beginning, it had been steadily growing and increasing in its members. This steady growth is so inevitable that Constantine extended legal recognition while Diocletian and his three imperial associates paid little attention to the growth of Christianity.⁴³ Before Constantine's recognition of Christianity, the Church was not so small and significant sect already in the Empire, so it would not be correct to say that the imperial patronage alone immediately raised it to a dominant position over its rivals.⁴⁴ Being profoundly cosmopolitan and egalitarian, Christianity attracted many people from different social classes and won new converts from time to time. In the beginning of the third century, the Church had already shaped and emerged as the great Church, by means of uniform across the various parts of the world.⁴⁵ One of the most attractive implications was probably martyrdom. Irvin put it, "following each wave of persecution through the third century, membership roles in the churches took a dramatic leap forward."⁴⁶ Later, martyrs played an important role in the struggle between emperors and bishops to control access to the divine; indeed bishops used martyrs to control emperors.⁴⁷ In order

⁴³ Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 155 – 161. See also Willems, "Constantine and Christianity," 3; Christianity was a factor that the Roman rulers could no longer ignore. However, Cleve, "The Triumph of Christianity," 2, argues that Christianity in the early fourth century had become so irresistibly popular that it forced the emperor of the Roman Empire to adopt it as the most-favored religion of the state. Cf. Peter Brown, *Western Christendom*, 62, considers it an inevitable religious "empire-wide phenomenon."

⁴⁴ Cf. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 191, Christianity was powerful and respectable long before it acquired an imperial champion. By the end of the third century, there were completely Christian villages ... the Christian bishops had become a respected figure of urban establishment whom provincial governors treated with respect or deference, bishops acted as a judge in legal disputes within the local Christian community.

⁴⁵ Cf. Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 103 – 108; according to *Chronicle of Arbela*, there were twenty bishops in all of Persia around the year 225; and Cornelius also easily gathered some sixty bishops from the neighboring districts in Italy alone for a council in the middle of the third century. Christians around the world exercised their faith as members of local communities or churches overseen by bishops, assisted by trained presbyters and deacons.

⁴⁶ Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 161.

to honour the martyrs of Nicomedia, Constantine built a huge Church and later a great shrine of martyrs in his new city, Constantinople as well.⁴⁸ Christianity had already advanced its social ethos that appealed many, including Constantine as well.⁴⁹

Despite many disputes over his conversion and faith, it is undeniable that Constantine indirectly or directly inserted Christianity into the Roman cults. Irvin sees Constantine's embrace of Christianity as the first step toward a great synthesis of religion, state and culture in Roman world.⁵⁰ According to Odahl, Constantine totally reversed the religious policies of Diocletian, trying to convert the Roman world to Christianity, and to transform a pagan state into a Christian empire.⁵¹ To transform the empire from paganism into Christianity, there was no need for Constantine and his successors to annihilate the pagan cults with a brutal persecution like what the previous pagan emperors did to Christians before. They did not make any individual pagan martyr; rather they took measures to render pagan worship incapable of being performed in public.⁵² Obviously Constantine in his late reign, then his son, Constantius II (337 – 361), and, finally Theodosius I (379 – 395) progressively enforced their anti-

⁴⁷ H. A. Drake, "Intolerance, Religious Violence, and Political Legitimacy in Late Antiquity," *JAAR*, 79 (2011): 193 – 235; esp. 193.

⁴⁸ Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 669.

⁴⁹ Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Council*, 20. See also Robert L. Cleve, "The Triumph of Christianity," says that Christianity had more appeal to the masses than did any of the other religion Salvationist religions, offering salvation in the form of life beyond the grave. In the argument of "appeal," it seems one form of Salvationist religion was bound to replace paganism- that is, classical humanism.

⁵⁰ Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 155.

⁵¹ Odahl, *Constantine*, 204 -250; says that Constantine felt that the attempts of earlier tetrarch emperors who patronized Olympian paganism, to destroy the Christian religion was an error and a failure because the God of Christianity, he was convinced after his conversion, was the only true Deity, and that had been given a special mission by the Almighty to protect the Catholic Church and to promote Christian religion. Cited from VC 2.48 -60, trans. Cameron & Hall, 111 - 114, he further says of his promotion of the truth of Christianity against the errors of paganism. Cf. Peter Brown, *Western Christendom*, 74; includes Constantine's Christian successors.

⁵² Brown, *Western Christendom*, 74.

paganism policy, prohibiting public sacrifices, closing of all pagan temples, removing the traditional Altar of Victory from the Senate, and colluding in frequent acts of local violence by Christians against major cult sites.⁵³

In Barnes' view, Constantine's intolerance towards the pagan cults was probably for the sake of his Christianizing mission entrusted by the Christian God in his divine vision, so to speak. As Constantine and his successors were gradually Christianizing the empire, the Greco-Roman paganism slowly became more marginalized and, at the end, extinct. Obviously Constantine shifted to a somewhat hostile stance towards the pagan cults, authorizing the destruction of several pagan temples at Aegeae in Cilicia, Heliopolis in Syria, and Aphaca in Phoenicia to name a few, ordering the sacrifices in the old Greek temples be stopped, commissioning to despoil pagan shrines and temples of their precious treasures in 327 – 330.⁵⁴ Constantius was more severe in his anti-paganism policy with the emanation of laws and edicts which punish pagan practices.⁵⁵

In order to prove his authenticity in Christian beliefs, Constantine established a new capital, *Roma Nova* later called Constantinople at ancient Byzantium in 324, which would reflect the glories of Christian faith or the beginning of the rise of Christendom,

⁵³ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 211. VC 3. 5, trans. Cameron & Hall, 121; "...of these same buildings he completely destroyed those most highly prized by the superstitious." CTh. 16.10.4. IMPERATORIS THEODOSII CODEX liber decimus sextus. <http://ancientrome.ru/ius/library/codex/theod/liber16.htm#10>. Accessed January 5, 2015. See MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 76. Timothy D. Barnes, "The Constantinian Reformation," *The Crake Lectures* (1984), 39 – 57; esp. 50. See also Peter Brown, *Western Christendom*, 60 & 74. Mitchell, *Later Roman Empire*, 263, assumes that Constantius removed the pagan altar of Victory from the Senate House because he saw, during his visit to Rome, that the pagan priestly colleges were brought up to strength.

⁵⁴ Odahl, *Constantine*, 206 & 223 - 4. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, sees this as Constantine's vigorous program to suppress paganism that include a law banning sacrifice; and it is a Constantine's religious reformation, see Timothy D. Barnes, "The Constantinian Reformation," 50.

⁵⁵ CTh. 16. 10. 4. "Placuit omnibus locis adque urbibus universis claudi protinus temple et accessu vetito omnibus licentiam delinquendi perditis abnegari. Volumus etiam cunctos sacrificiis abstinere."

free from the hold of the older Roman aristocracy and its religion.⁵⁶ In this new Christian capital, not only the churches but also other public buildings and monuments were decorated with Christian symbols, reflecting a religion's new status in the empire.⁵⁷ A great cathedral, later called Hagia Sophia, stood up splendidly in this new Christian city. Constantinople was hailed by Christians as a city without temples.⁵⁸ Probably the founding of Constantinople was connected with Constantine's decision to make Christianity the official religion of the Empire.⁵⁹ Was this the triumph of Christianity? Then, what happened to the flourishing Paganism?

At least, up to the time of Constantine's conversion, paganism was an integral part of life and government in the Roman Empire, and it was a form of patriotism, the religion of the majority and of course, the religion of the aristocracy of the Empire. Hence, the pagan cults were not quick to die away; even with all their anti-paganism policy and propaganda, Constantine and his successors did not bring about the end of paganism.⁶⁰ However, paganism significantly declined within a century, affected by the imperial extensive propagation of Christianity. Constantine died in 337 after receiving the deathbed baptism. Yet his sons, Constans and Constantius II expanded their father's policy of actively patronizing Christianity and aggressively weakening paganism.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Cf. Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 163. See Odahl, *Constantine*, 205; the creation of a Christian capital city in the east would serve as the symbol of his victory over Licinius and the pagan past, and mark the triumph of his faith and the Christian future. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 48; claims that he was consistently true to his Christian beliefs from 312, if not earlier.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Brown, *Western Christendom*, 85.

⁵⁹ John Laux, *Church History: A Complete History of the Catholic Church to the Present Day* (Rockford: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1989 ed.), 94; because of its consequences, the founding of Constantinople is said to be one of the turning points in history.

⁶⁰ Brown, *Western Christendom*, 77.

⁶¹ Odahl, *Constantine*, 247.

Regardless of the previous emperors' efforts, Julian the Apostate (A.D. 361 – 363) who secretly converted to paganism tried to revive the traditional pagan religions, and persecuted Christians. However his influence was short-lived as he died in battle in Mesopotamia, and Christians believed his death in battle to be divine punishment for his apostasy.⁶² Then, Jovian (A.D. 363 – 364) restored patronizing Christianity and later Valentinians renewed the Constantinian policy of supporting Christianity. And finally Theodosius declared Christianity as the religion of the State in the Edict of Thessalonica.⁶³ From then on, paganism and all forms of pagan practices were outlawed in the Empire for next dozen years.

After the death of Constantine, the Empire was split into three parts: Constantine II ruled over the west; Constans received Italy, Africa, and Greece; and Constantius became the lord of the east together with the Danubian region.⁶⁴ Since Constans was still a boy, he was in no way subordinated to his elder brother, Constantine II, and all his shares were apparently under the supervision of Constantine II. Constans soon grew impatient and prompted Constantine to invade Italy in 340, in which year Constantine died and left Constans to rule the whole Western Empire.⁶⁵ Constans remained orthodox in his Christian beliefs whereas Constantius zealously supported Arian Christianity. In 350, Constans was assassinated in the revolt of Magnentius (A. D. 350 – 353) who was proclaimed emperor and gained control of much of the West but failed to win

⁶² *Ibid.* See also Collins, *The Story of Christianity*, 59.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 248.

⁶⁴ Lietzmann, *A History*, 754. In Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 212, Constantine invested his son Constantius on 8 November 324 with the imperial purple and formally marked out the perimeter of the new city, that is, Constantinople.

⁶⁵ Lietzmann, *A History*, 754 – 5, see also William E. Dunstan, *Ancient Rome* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), 444.

recognition from Constantius.⁶⁶ Constantius defeated Magnentius at the battles of Mursa Major and Mons Seleucus.⁶⁷ Finally Magnentius committed suicide in 353, and Constantius became the sole emperor of the entire Roman Empire.⁶⁸

As far as the Arian controversy is concerned, we have to enter into the pivotal period dominated by Constantius II who “alone is responsible for the policy exercised by the Roman government towards the Christian church and its warring factions.”⁶⁹ Indeed he became closely involved in ecclesiastical politics.⁷⁰ Eventually the next phase shows that he, as an Arian, engaged in a long battle field with Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 296 – 373) who strongly and aggressively opposed the Arian doctrine, and tirelessly promoted the Nicene doctrine.

⁶⁶ Dunstan, *Ancient Rome*, 445. Constantius was revolted by Magnentius and his soldiers, because of his harshness in restoring discipline among his soldiers, and of his relish of masculine embraces in private life. Cf. Lietzmann, *A History*, 755.

⁶⁷ R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy, 318 – 381* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2005), 317. See Timothy D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 166. See also Mitchell, *Later Roman Empire*, 76.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 315.

⁷⁰ Mitchell, *Later Roman Empire*, 263.

1.3. Episcopal Authority in Religio-Political Context

Investigations of the role of the bishops during Constantinian dynasty acquire careful analyses and considerable studies. It is often easy to fall into the attempts to categorize the role of bishops only in the political entity; as far as the Arian controversy covers the period, particularly between 318 to 381, bishops are often seen as prominent politicians whose rivalry came to social frontiers in the ecclesiastical politics which after Nicene Council became “party politics,” according to Barnes.⁷¹ It could also lead us to misunderstanding if we confine the rise of episcopal prominence with only some selected bishops like Ossius of Cordoba, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Athanasius of Alexandria, or Ambrose of Milan who played very prominent roles under the emperors. To have a proper understanding of the role of bishops in this period, Rapp suggests us to rid ourselves of the anachronistic baggage of a supposed secular-religious dichotomy.⁷² In fact, the history of the episcopal leadership really acquires us to look as broadly as possible at them in “different social, geographical, and chronological contexts.”⁷³

Barnes claims that the court and its ceremonial reflected the emperor’s new religion, and the beginning of “new ideology.”⁷⁴ How much important were the roles of the bishops in this new ideology? How shall we justify the expansion of their episcopal authority in the cohesion of the Church and Empire? David M. Gwynn in his

⁷¹ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 225.

⁷² Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley etc., University of California Press, 2005), 6.

⁷³ David M. Gwynn, “Episcopal Leadership,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, edited by Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 876.

⁷⁴ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 48.

Episcopal Leadership tries to explore a number of the various roles of the bishops in the Late Antiquity.⁷⁵ Brown acknowledges that the Church, in the course of the third century, developed a recognizable hierarchy with prominent leaders whom the imperial authorities singled out for attack in 250 – 257.⁷⁶ Certainly by the middle of the third century, the Church had developed a kind of ruling community itself forming a hierarchy of bishops, priests, and deacons. Indeed, the Church was like “a state within the state,”⁷⁷ or a veritable “city within the city”⁷⁸ and its president was certainly a bishop who had become a respected figure of the urban establishment and whose prominence and authority the provincial governors had to encounter with respect or difference.⁷⁹ Moreover, bishop acted as a judge in legal disputes within the local Christian communities.⁸⁰ Perhaps, Constantine foresaw that church leadership could provide what he needed in his reform of the Roman society.

In order to refashion the Roman society in a Christian direction, Constantine in no way had to approach the Christian bishops. His approach to the bishops could have both political and religious interests. Obviously, his decision to choose a monotheistic religion, “Christianity,” rather than polytheistic religion or traditional *religiones*, reveals his political interest; he expected Christianity could be a means to establish a sort of monarchy by which he could gain more unity, uniformity, and stability of his

⁷⁵ Gwynn, “Episcopal Leadership,” 876 – 915.

⁷⁶ Brown, *Western Christendom*, 62.

⁷⁷ Cleve, “The Triumph of Christianity,” 4. See Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 191; Christianity was powerful and respectable long before it acquired an imperial champion... and in most eastern cities and provinces, Christian constituted either a majority of the population or at least an influential minority.

⁷⁸ Brown, *Western Christendom*, 62.

⁷⁹ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 191. See also Danielle Slootjes, *The Governor and His Subjects in the Later Roman Empire* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 19.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 191.

empire. Cleve put it, “one supreme, all powerful god in heaven; one supreme, all powerful emperor on earth, acting as God’s viceroy.”⁸¹ On the other hand, it is likely to be natural for Constantine as a pious emperor who had encountered a religious conversion like Paul, the apostle, to come closer to the bishops, the teachers of faith, and let himself influenced and conducted by them; for example, Eusebius reports that wherever he went, he was accompanied by bishops.⁸² In his encyclicals, bishops were addressed as “beloved brother,”⁸³ which expression is very Christian. In another occasion, Constantine expressed himself as a sort of bishop, saying to a group of bishops: “You are the bishops of those within the Church, I am perhaps a bishop appointed by God over those outside.”⁸⁴ This expression seems to reveal that he was very motivated by the bishops or their bishop-hood. Johannes Roldanus discusses if this expression could refer to the political realm as its Greek word can be translated as “inspector of the things outside.”⁸⁵ However it is not impossible to think that he admired the bishops for their way of ruling or leading the Christian communities as a well-united Church. Peter Brown comments, “The emperor’s willingness to listen to bishops, as he had once listened to philosophers, implied his recognition of new forms of local power.”⁸⁶

⁸¹ Cleve, “The Triumph of Christianity,” 4. See also Jacob Burckhardt, *Age of Constantine the Great*, trans. Moses Hades (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 279, observes that Constantine became convinced by the significant growth of the community, by the clearly developed character of its hierarchy, by the peculiar form of its synodic organization, and by the entire character of contemporary of Christianity... this power has already begun to assure itself of the Emperor.

⁸² VC 1. 42. 1, trans. Cameron & Hall, 86.

⁸³ Constantine to Catholic Bishops at Arles, 314, in Eg. P. R. Coleman-Norton, ed., *Roman State and Christian Church: A Collection of Legal Documents to AD 535* (London: SPCK, 1966), I, 59 – 61.

⁸⁴ VC 4. 24, trans. Cameron & Hall, 161.

⁸⁵ Johannes Roldanus, *The Church in the Age of Constantine: The Theological Challenges* (London & New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 59.

In the Christian Church, the episcopal leadership had well developed already before the rise of Constantine. Avery Cardinal Dulles gives us a summary of emergence of the episcopate in his *Magisterium: Teachers and Guardian of Faith*. Even if the New Testament did not single out any episcopal office, the word “bishop” (*episkopos*) was generally used interchangeably with “presbyter” (*presbyteros*) in the New Testament.⁸⁷ Besides, a single local church could have many bishops and probably there was no monarchical form yet in the first generation of Christianity. However, due to the threats of many heretical movements within Christianity and persecution, the monarchic episcopate emerged as Christian communities looked to the teaching of bishops for orthodoxy and authenticity of the faith because bishops inherited the teaching the apostles directly, and they were already not only the leader of the communities but also the teachers of the faith.⁸⁸ Regarding such a rise of the office of monarchical bishop, Harry R. Boer gives four reasons: 1) because of a natural tendency for one in the governing group to become the leader; 2) because of a need to centralize the Church’s authority for the rapid growth; 3) because of the rise of persecution and a need of spokesman for the community; and 4) because of the appearance of heresy and a requirement of authoritative leader for orthodoxy.⁸⁹ The notion of bishops as the

⁸⁶ Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 5.

⁸⁷ Avery Cardinal Dulles, SJ, *Magisterium: Teacher and Guardian of the Faith* (Naples, Florida: Sapientia Press, 2007), 21 – 23. See Acts 20: 17, 28; Phil 1:1; 1Peter 2:25; 1 Timothy 3:2; and Titus 1:7. See also Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 24, not only in Christian communities, but also in the college of pagan priests, *episkopoi* was used to refer the highest officers of corporations.

⁸⁸ Dulles, *Magisterium*, 21. Frank K. Flinn, “Bishop” in *Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (New York, NY: Checkmark Books, 2008), 113. For example, Tertullian (c. 200) challenged heretics to prove the apostolic origin in their own tradition while he could prove with the apostolic succession in the line of continuity of bishops. See also Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 7; the monarchic episcopate arose at a time when the unity and integrity of the church were threatened by persecution and heresy.

⁸⁹ Harry R. Boer, *A Short History of Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), 29 – 30.

continuity of the succession of the apostles were first laid down by Clement of Rome (c. 96) in his *The Epistle to the Corinthians*, and later Ignatius of Antioch (c. 115) developed a clerical theme, “one bishop, one local community.”⁹⁰ Eventually all the official Church ministries in local community are assumed by a ruling bishop assisted by presbyters and deacons.⁹¹ After the acceptance and elevation of Christianity as *religio licita*, bishops became more influential and prominent not only in religious life but also in political and social life. Therefore, Rapp presents a common underlying assumption that “the rise of Christianity goes hand in hand with the rise of the bishop to political prominence.”⁹² And Danielle Slootjes agrees with Jones’ claim that the emergence and acceptance of Christianity as a leading religion gave rise to an important role for bishops in provincial communities.⁹³

Some authors like Peter Brown and A.H. Drake attempt to minimize the role of bishops in the late antiquity, emphasizing only their social and political prominences. In a sense, it is true as Brown argues that in the post-Diocletianic empire, the public role of bishops and their political prominence became greater than ever before, and they became a part of a tighter administrative web of the emperor.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, it should be noted that the authority of bishops was not based on imperial legislation and

⁹⁰ Clement, *The Epistle to the Corinthians* 42.2, trans. James A. Kleist, *The Epistles of St. Clement of Rome and St. Ignatius of Antioch*, eds. Johannes Quasten & Joseph C. Plumpe (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1946), 34. Ignatius, *Magnesian* 6.1, trans. James A. Kleist, 69. See Dulles, *Magisterium*, 22. Flinn, “Bishop,” 113. See also Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 28.

⁹¹ Anthony J. Tambasco, “Bishop,” in *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, eds. Michael Glazier & Monika K. Hellwig (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 97.

⁹² Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 7.

⁹³ Slootjes, *The Governon*, 43; with Citation no. 139.

⁹⁴ Brown, *Power and Persuasion*, 35 -70, 78, 94, Brown bases his argument on the language of *paideia* – the mode of comportment and a form of expression based on a thorough education in the classical tradition – that is shared by bishops and educated persons, provincial governors alike. Furthermore, Brown claims that the bishops by a form of *parrhesia* with the monks were better calculated to sway the will of the emperor.

patronage at all. According to Rapp, there are three elements for the basis of episcopal authority: spiritual, pragmatic and ascetic authority, which make them influential and prominent in religious, social and political life, and remarkably distinguish them from civic leaders.⁹⁵ Here it is not to make an attempt to argue over the legitimacy of the authority of bishops, but just to have in mind that the episcopal polity was different from civic politics; especially in a way they exercised their power. Nevertheless, it is also undeniable that political power goes beyond social prominence to mean actively taking part in a local politics, dealing with both internal and external affairs on behalf of the whole community. In fact, it was the expansion of the charism of episcopal governing as necessary in time of social and political changes. Rapp put it, “the newly gained public prominence of Christian religion challenged the men of the church to give shape and definition to their position in an increasing Christian society.”⁹⁶

In the earlier Christian custom, the quarrels among the faithful were settled through a bishop by a sort of court of arbitration, but some cases had to go to the civic judges for final appeal. Constantine now abolished this right of appeal and made the bishop’s decision as final judgment.⁹⁷ Bishops by virtue of their calling were thought to be just and fair.⁹⁸ In remolding Roman law and the attitudes of Roman society into Christian direction, one of Constantine’s innovations was validation of *episcopalis audientia* – the court of bishops, which Barnes considers as “purely Christian

⁹⁵ Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 16 – 18; Based on *Pneuma*, the Spirit from God, spiritual authority is personal and self-sufficient. Ascetic authority is attained by requisite practices (*askesis*), so this authority is visible. Then, pragmatic authority is based on actions (from *pratto*, meaning “to do”), and this pragmatic authority is always public.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁹⁷ Burckhardt, *Age of Constantine*, 308. See also Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 51.

⁹⁸ Sloopjes, *The Governor*, 44.

precedents and a purely Christian justification.”⁹⁹ Brown thinks that this led the bishops to be regarded first God-like judge among the believers, and second the *ombudsman* of an entire local community.¹⁰⁰ *Episcopalis audientia* offered arbitration services, settling disputes between citizens, and between citizens and the local imperial authorities.¹⁰¹ By validation of *episcopalis audientia*, bishops were given powers superior to those of their secular counterparts, and there could be no appeal from a bishop’s verdict.¹⁰² Unlike civil magistrates, bishops gained their authority and legitimacy from both imperial and spiritual reputation. Harries assumes that the reason for validating *episcopalis audientia* was because the laws were irrelevant to the daily operation of episcopal jurisdiction within the Christian community.¹⁰³ However, this extension of episcopal courts led the bishops to gradually become involved on a hitherto unknown limit in the administration of their cities and in regional politics. David M. Gwynn put it that bishop became “inseparable from the smooth operation of city government.”¹⁰⁴ In fact, in the traditional societies of Roman Empire, political and religious authorities were indissolubly bond together at all levels, from emperor as pontifex maximus down to the priests and magistrates of small provincial towns.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 51.

¹⁰⁰ Brown, *Western Christendom*, 78.

¹⁰¹ Burcu Ceylan, “Episkopeia In Asia Minor,” in *Housing in Late Antiquity: From Palaces to Shops*, edited by Luke Lavan et al. (Leiden: Brill NV, 2007), 169 – 196; esp. 171.

¹⁰² Jill Harries, *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 191.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 191.

¹⁰⁴ Gwynn, “Episcopal Leadership,” 887.

¹⁰⁵ Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 179.

Another considerable development in this period is the rise of metropolitan bishops. As the Church organization and structure clearly corresponded with the existing secular institutions and divisions into provinces and dioceses, every province started to have a leading bishop, the metropolitan, residing in the most important city like Alexandria, which was often the secular capital of the province or the headquarters of the governor.¹⁰⁶ Bishops became more responsible and yet more social prominent figures in provincial communities, and were in charge of financial resources, especially for imperial supplies for the poor. The bishops were regarded as “the lovers of the poor,” and the project of supplies was like a public welfare system, according to Brown.¹⁰⁷ Consequently distinctions arose among the bishops according to the position of their cities and with particular consideration for the apostolic foundation of certain congregations.¹⁰⁸ Now the bishop of a large city had a number of different roles, Rapp put it;

He was a preacher to his community; a teacher to the catechumens; administered baptism to neophytes; celebrated the Eucharist and other liturgical occasions; handled the administration of justice and administered the finances of his church; admonished, and if necessary, reprimanded Christians who had stumbled; acted as advocates, protectors, and intercessors with authorities on behalf of the rural population. He was responsible for the charitable works and in many cases for the administration of the charitable institutions of his congregation, the care of consecrated virgins, widows and orphans, the care and relief of prisoners, travelers, ex-prostitutes, and the poor. In addition, he was in charge of the discipline and proper discharge of the clergy under his authority, the priests, deacons and perhaps *chorepiscopi*- and if he was metropolitan or patriarch- of the other bishops within his region.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Sloopjes, *The Governor*, 44. See also Boer, *A Short History*, 30; The Greek word “*metropolis*” means “mother city.”

¹⁰⁷ Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2002), 1; Brown, *Western Christendom*, 78.

¹⁰⁸ Burckhardt, *Age of Constantine*, 126.

¹⁰⁹ Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 23.

The synods, which were convened to discuss problems and to regulate doctrine and discipline, served to unite the bishops as a higher rank. Though the synodic practice was institutionalized in the middle of the second century, it had been practiced in Christian communities since the very early Church in order to settle questions of faith and morals. In the synods, presbyters, deacons, and laypersons were allowed to attend, and yet the decision was rendered by the bishops.¹¹⁰ At the beginning of the third century, it became one of the most powerful authorities in dealing with church life. Novatian heresy was condemned at the synods of Carthage and Rome in c. 251; Paul of Samosata was condemned at the synod of Antioch in 269; and in 314 a synod was convened at Arles in Southern France to deal with Donatism, in which Constantine attended and was here probably impressed by the Church's way of dealing the problems. Thus, he probably had the idea to convene a greater synod at Nicaea as means to solve the Arian controversy for the unification of the Church. Together with the rise of local and regional synods, bishops became more prominent as they were the leaders and representatives of their local churches, or of their sees in the case of metropolitan bishops.

¹¹⁰ Dulles, *Magisterium*, 23.

2. THEOLOGICAL DEBATES

2.1. Possible Antecedents

A large number of names and influences have been proposed as possible antecedents of Arius and Arianism, but no decisive agreement has reached by so far. John H. Newman, in his *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, presented Arianism as a product of the Antiochene biblical literalism, and argued that Arius could have been influenced by the teaching of Paul of Samosata through Lucian of Antioch.¹ Perhaps, this would be the last example of what is called ‘traditional way’ to look at the Arian controversy with the categories ‘Alexandrian’ and ‘Antiochene’. In fact, it has been disputed by modern scholars since late 1970s.² Adolf Von Harnack, in his *Outline of the History of Dogma*, concludes that “Arianism is a union of Adoptionism with the Origenistic-Neo-Platonic doctrine of the subordinate Logos which is the spiritual principle of the world, carried out by means of the resources of the Aristotelian

¹ John H. Newman, *The Arians of the Fourth Century* (London: E. Lumley, 1871), 201, [note 4] when the Eternal Word, after the Nicene Council, was defined to have a personal subsistence, then the Somasatene doctrine would become identical with Nestorianism. Both heresies came from Antioch.

² L. W. Barnard, “The Antecedents of Arius,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 24 (1970), 17 – 188, has dedicated in research of whether Arius shared a common tradition of Alexandrian thoughts and developed a logical system of his own. Robert Gregg and Dennis Groh, “The Centrality of Soteriology in Early Arianism,” *Anglican Theological Review* 59 (1977), 260 – 278 and *Early Arianism: A View of Salvation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981) were trying to reconstruct the theology of Arius with a careful examination. Rudolf Lorenz, *Arius Judaizans?: Untersuchungen zur dogmengeschichtlichen Einordnung des Arius* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprech, 1980) has explored the possibility of Judaism’s influence on Arius’ theology. Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1987, 2nd edition, 2001) has rejected the risk of Newman’s view and reconstructed the possible background of Arius and Arians. R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: the Arian Controversy 318 – 381* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988, 2005) has also attributed a very helpful discussion over the possible predecessors of Arius. Joseph T. Lienhard, “The ‘Arian’ Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered,” *TS* 48 (1987), has suggested to reconsider the categories ‘Alexandrian’ and ‘Antiochene’ as the background of Arian controversy.

dialectics."³ In turn, this suggests us that Arianism has its hypothetical synthesis of a variety of backgrounds, both theologically and philosophically.

Hanson starts his discussion whether Philo could be a former of Arius' thought, proposed by H. A. Wolfson in his *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*.⁴ Philo (c. 25 B.C – c. 50 A.D) was a Jewish rabbi who sought to show the harmony between Plato and Moses.⁵ He allegorically interpreted the Scriptures harmonizing with Greek philosophy. The most profound interpretation would be his "Divine Logos," the Word and Wisdom of the Supreme Being.⁶ In the prologue of the Gospel, John seemed to use this Hellenistic Jewish philosophical concept "Logos" of Philo.⁷ Philo taught two *Logoi*, and the creation of one of them *ex nihilo*, and the incomparability of God.⁸ Nevertheless, Hanson denies the possibility of Philo as an ancestor of Arius because Philo's two *Logoi*, as he sees, are quite different from those of Arius; his description of the Logos as a creature (κτίσμα) was also not in the sense of Arius.⁹ Thus, he disagrees with Wolfson's proposal and sees that Wolfson was obsessed to an excessive degree with the influence of Philo on the Fathers.¹⁰ On the other hand, Williams rightly finds

³ Adolf Harnack, *Outline of the History of Dogma*, trans. Edwin Knox Mitchell (New York, NY: Funk & Wagnalls, 1983), 125.

⁴ H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of The Church Fathers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).

⁵ Dale T. Irvin & Scott W. Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement: Earliest Christianity to 1453*, Vol.1 (Maryknoll, New York, NY: Orbis Books, 2001), 86.

⁶ Hans Lewy (ed), *Selected Writings of Philo of Alexandria* (Mineola, New York, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2004), 11.

⁷ D.A. CARSON & Douglas J. MOO, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2nd ed., 2005), 225.

⁸ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 61.

⁹ *Ibid.* Hanson agrees with Lorenz, *Arius Judaizans?*, 103 – 106, "we cannot claim Philo as an ancestor of Arius' thought."

¹⁰ *Ibid.* Hanson here follows Rudolf Lorenz, *Arius Judaizans?*, 103 – 106.

several points to agree with Wolfson's statement and quoted that Arius was responsible for 'a reversion to the original view of Philo on the Logos.'¹¹ Philonic Logos has two phases of existence, as a quality of the divine essence and then as a separate being created in an act of divine act. In the sense of second phase of existence, Logos is "firstborn" and "oldest of creatures," a reality distinct from the unbegotten God.¹² In fact, what Williams points out is that Philo "mapped out the ground for the Alexandrian theological tradition to build on, and that Arius' theological problematic is firmly rooted within that tradition."¹³ Certainly, what we cannot reject is the fact that Philonic conception of Monad and the distinctive existence of Logos from the unbegotten God are clearly seen in Arius' thoughts. The only difference from Philo is that Arius, as a Christian, identifies the Logos with the pre-existence of Christ.¹⁴

Athenagoras as one of the possible antecedents is particularly proposed by Barnard. Athenagoras (c. 133 – c.190) who wrote two works: *the Supplication for the Christians* (Πρεσβεία περὶ τῶν χριστιανῶν) and *on the Resurrection of the Dead* (περὶ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν), is one of the most eloquent of the early Christian apologists.¹⁵ He is not well-known to us because he is mentioned only once in Christian literature, in Methodius, *De Ressurrectione*.¹⁶ His thought was strongly dualistic, and

¹¹ Wolfson, *The Philosophy*, 585. Williams, *Arius*, 122, finds at least three areas of shared concern between Philo and Arius; first divine freedom and grace, secondly Logos as a mediator of God's gifts, and thirdly the austere apophatic tone.

¹² Eusebius of Ceasarea assuredly recalls Philo's description of the Logos as "the second God." *Prae. evan.* VIII. 12. 1. 2. 2 in K. Mras, *Eusbius Werke VIII: Die Praeparatio evangelica Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 43. 1- 2 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1954, 1965), 352. and also as the "Firstborn of all creation," "eldest of created things," and "chiefest of all beings." *Fug.* 101. LCL Philo V, 155.

¹³ Williams, *Arius*, 123.

¹⁴ Wolfson, *The Philosophy*, 585 – 587.

¹⁵ Johannes Quasten, *Patrology: From the Apostle Creed to Irenaeus*, vol. 1 (Westminster, Md.: Christian Classics, 1990), 229.

¹⁶ *De Res.* VII. ANF 6, 622.

his emphases were “Soleness,” “Oneness,” Priority” of God (μονάς);¹⁷ and Christ is the Father’s offspring (γέννημα), he is nonetheless ingenerate (οὐχ ὡς γενόμενον).¹⁸ Arius also uses *monas* (μονάς) of the indivisibility of Godhead.¹⁹ Barnard believes that Arius may owe most to him among Christian Platonists, probably for his strong emphasis on the Oneness of God.²⁰

Our next point of reference is Clement of Alexandria (A. D. 150 – 250) who succeeded Pantaenus as the head of the school of catechumens (*Didaskaleion*).²¹ Clement is well known as the pioneer of Christian Apophaticism and as the initiator of what is now called Christian Platonism.²² To briefly mention his theology, it is Platonic and apophatic; God is inexpressible (ἄρρητος) in his own *dynamis*, ingenerate (ἀγέννητος), uncircumscribed (ἀπερίγραπτος), and without limit (ἄπειρος), incapable of being rightly called (κύριος) named; all the names attributed to God are indicative of His Almighty *dunamis*.²³ Therefore, it is helpless and logically incorrect

¹⁷ Leg. 6, Athenagoras states ἀλλ’ ἐπειδὴ ἀδύνατον δεικνύειν ἄνευ παραθέσεως ὀνομάτων ὅτι μὴ μόνοι εἰς μὴάδα τὸν θεὸν κατακλείομεν, ἐπὶ τὰς δόξας ἐτραπόμην. cf. Leg. 4. 1. f. in Barnard, “Antecedents of Arius,” 174. English translation for Athenagoras’ works, see Joseph Hugh Crehan, *Athenagoras: Embassy for the Christians, the Resurrection of the Dead*, eds. Johannes Quasten & Joseph C. Plumpe, *Ancient Christian Writers: The Works of the Fathers in Translation* (New York/Ramsey: Newman Press, 1956). But Greek text for *Legatio Pro Christianis* are mostly used from Barnard, “Antecedents of Arius.”

¹⁸ Leg. 10. ἀλλ’ ὡς μονὰς καὶ ἀρχὴ πάντων, οὕτως ὁ θεὸς πρό πάντων ἐστί.

¹⁹ Barnard, “The Antecedents of Arius,” 174.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 176.

²¹ Birger A. Pearson, “Egypt,” *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origin to Constantine*, Margaret M. Mitchell & Frances M. Young (eds.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 341 & 343. See also Quasten, *Patrology: The Ante-Nicene Literature After Irenaeus*, vol. 2 (Westminster, Md.: Christian Classics, 1990), 5 & 37.

²² Robert Pierce Casey, “Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Platonism,” *Harvard Theological Review* 18 (1925), 39 – 109; esp. 39.

²³ *Strom.* I. 24, ANF 2, 552; V. 10, ANF 2, 759; II.2, ANF 2, 569; V. 7, ANF 2, 766. See also Henny Fiskå Hägg, *Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Apophaticism*, Gillian Clark and Andrew Louth, eds. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006), 159; collects a series of negative adjectives of God’s characteristics —invisible (ἀόρατος), eternal (ἀίνας), indivisible (ἀδιαίρετος), incomprehensible (ἀκατάληπτος), infinite or without limit (ἄπειρος), unknown (ἄγνωστος),

for us to give a name to God, and Clement writes, ‘What is divine is unutterable (ἄφθεγκτος) by human power.’²⁴ In order to describe the Indescribable God, Clement finds his solution in Logos as the only revealer. Clement writes, ‘‘how ever could a creature subject to birth draw near to the unborn and the uncreated?’²⁵ Henceforth, God has to draw near to us in His mercy for us to know him. For this purpose, God has His Logos or Son who is His image and inseparable from Him, His mind or rationality.²⁶ The Logos is the *prosopon* (προσωπον) of God on the earth; as plurality-in-unity Logos is *monas* (μονάς).²⁷ Unlike Philonic Logos, Clement taught the Logos descended into our sensual world in order that we might ascend.²⁸

However, when Clement taught that Christ was no ordinary man with physical passions, he seemed to fall into Docetism but he was not a Docetist.²⁹ In fact, Clement was trying to explain the theology of God-man by Greek ascetical ideal of *apatheia* (ἀπάθεια), or emancipation from passion.³⁰ Christ, by His own nature sustained by ‘divine power’, is without suffering and so the *apatheia* (ἀπάθεια) is complete by the

unbegotten (ἀγέννητος), without name (ἄωνόμαστος), inexpressible, unspeakable (ἄρρητος), unutterable or unspeakable (ἄφθεγκτος), unmade or uncreated (ἀποίητος) without beginning (ἀναρχος), without form (ἀσχημάτιστος), incapable of being circumscribed (ἀπερίγραπτος), uncontained (ἄχώρητος), without passion (ἀπαθής), without need (ἀνεπιδεής/ ἀνεδεής), incorruptible (ἄφθαρτος).

²⁴ *Strom.* V. 12, ANF 2, 765.

²⁵ *Strom.* II. 2, ANF 2, 569.

²⁶ *Strom.* VII.2, ANF 2, 877 - 80 on ‘becoming *logos*’, cf. *Prot.* 98, 3; *Strom.* I, ANF, 267.

²⁷ *Strom.* VII.3, ANF 2, 880 - 84; V.14, ANF 769 – 93.

²⁸ *Protr.* 11, ANF 2, 231. Clement claimed that ‘The Lord was laid low, and man rose up.’

²⁹ J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine*, 5th rev. ed. (New York, NY: Continuum, 1977, reprinted in 2007), 154.

³⁰ *Strom.* VI. 9, ANF 2, 830. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine*, 154. See also Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition: from the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, vol. 1, trans. John Bowden (Atlanta: John Knox, 2nd ed., 1975), 137; teaching on *παθη*, Clement distinguishes two kinds: the one is necessary for the preservation of the body, and the other is a suffering of the soul. These are replaced by the indwelling ‘holy power.’ So, *apatheia* (ἀπάθεια) is complete.

indwelling Logos that perceives all necessities of an ordinary man; preservation of the body and suffering of the soul.³¹ Perhaps, his duality of Logos Christology (the origin of the Logos' existence before and after the creation of the world) might mislead his successors, probably Arius as well. Grillmeier notes that non-Christian Logos doctrinal element found in Clement leads to total obscuring of the distinction between Logos and soul in his Christology.³² On Clement's Logos Christology, Salvatore Lilla sees with his "three-stage" theory, but his theory has been disputed by M. J. Edwards.³³ Edwards rightly concludes that Clement emphasized only one, eternal process of emergence of the divine Logos from his Father, which culminated in incarnation.³⁴ What are vaguer and ambiguous in Clement's theology were his *Hypotyposes* (Ἰποτυπώσεις) and his tendency of subordination of Godhead.³⁵ This vagueness and ambiguity could lead Photius to charge against him, and Arius to misinterpret a doctrine of two *logoi*, one immanent, one subsisting independently as a result of the action of God by means of the other.³⁶

³¹ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 137.

³² *Ibid.*, 136. His teaching on πάθη is an indication on this.

³³ Salvatore R.C. Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism* (Oxford University Press, 1971), 204-212, 'three-stage' Logos Christology. M. J. Edwards, "Clement of Alexandria and his Doctrine of the Logos," *Vigiliae Christianae* 54 (2000): 159 – 77. Edwards sees that Lilla's analysis is unexceptionable, these are three successive 'stages of existence.'

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ The Son and Spirit were seemingly subordinated as 'primordial powers, first created, unchangeable, existing in their own right (secundum substantiam). adumb. 211.15 – 16, cited in Williams, *Arius*, 128. cit. no. 108.

³⁶ Piotr Ashwin Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria on Trial: The Evidence of 'Heresy' from Photios' Bibliotheca* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), has done a remarkable work on Clement's lost work *Hypotyposeis* as summarized in the 109th codex of Photios (c. 820-893 CE), but in his conclusion, he finds the limits; nonetheless, eight accusations by Photios is worth to discern. Siejkowski believes that there is no doubt that Photios did not invent the accusations, but he misunderstood Clement's complex theology and vocabulary. Williams, *Arius*, 128. Thalia, A (iv), S. 23. Quoted from Williams, 'a very clear foreshadowing of what Athanasius reports of Arius' teaching.'

The influence of Origen (A.D. 182 – c. 253) on Arius and Arianism is disputable among scholars.³⁷ Origen’s theology is indeed complex and sophisticated but definitely profound. Being influenced by Plato and Philo, he holds the strong notion of God as *monas* (μονάς) –He alone is *monas* (μονάς) in the strict sense (αὐτόθεος), unique (εἷς), being alone ingenerate (ἀγέννητος), being *per se* (ἐπέξειναν οὐ καὶ οὐσίας), and to exercise His perfection and goodness, he created a world of spiritual beings, or souls, coeternal with Himself.³⁸ Nevertheless, these spiritual beings are creatures and dependent on the divine will. In order to mediate God and His creation, God has His Son, Christ, the second divine *hypostasis*. Necessarily, Christ has twofold roles: the source of creaturely *ratio*, but also of supernatural *sapientia*.³⁹

Origen’s Christology could be summarized in his doctrine of *epinoia* which has a subjective and an objective side. While *epinoia* in God the Father is, due to His absolute simplicity, not plural, Christ as multiplex in *constitutione* has many rooms for *epinoiai*; Christ, therefore, is called with many titles or expressions such as Wisdom (σοφία), the Might, the Power of God (δύναμις), the Thought of God, the Logos (λογος), the Life, and so forth.⁴⁰ In Origen’s point, Christ receives these titles in His divine nature but His *epinoia* are objective multiplicity, partly absolute and partly relative; partly

³⁷ Lorenz, *Arius Judaizans?* (1980). Barnard, *The Antecedents* (1970), Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine* (1988, 2005), Williams, *Arius* (1987, 2001), have discussed some of the more significant issues relating to Origen’s influence on Arius or Arianism. In this regard, Williams concludes that Origen presents us with so varied and nuanced a picture that is easy to see why his relation to Arianism has been the subject of so much dispute. Joseph W. Trigg, *Origen: The Early Church Fathers* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998), esp. his work on *The Divine Hypostases in Peri Archon* where he relates Origen with Arius.

³⁸ *De princ.* I, 1, 6; I, 2, 10; I, 4, 3; II, 9, 1 in ANF 4, 422 – 26; 506. *C. Cels* VII, 38, trans. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 425 -6. See also Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 128.

³⁹ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 139-140.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 141.

absolute because of His divine identity, and partly relative for the salvation of human kind by His begetting the human form.⁴¹

While holding the monotheistic doctrine, Origen developed and consistently insisted three *hypostases* (Father, Son and Spirit) within the Oneness of God. Each *hypostasis* has its own individual *ousia*, the substance (*hypostasis* and *ousia* were not clearly distinguished, more or less synonymous for Origen) but they have a common nature; Father is unchangeably good and likewise the Son and the Spirit.⁴² According to Eusebius of Caesarea, Marcellus of Ancyra criticized Origen for subordinating Logos as the second distinct *hypostasis*.⁴³ Indeed, he firmly insisted that Logos or Son is a *hypostasis*.⁴⁴ In his *Peri Archon (De principiis)*, he clearly taught the divine *hypostases*; in which God's Logos and Wisdom, a second divine *hypostasis*, subordinate to and eternally generated by the Father and the Son is called a creature (κατίσµα).⁴⁵ On *Commentary on Psalm 1*, Origen taught that the Son was creature and originated God (του γενετου θεου).⁴⁶ Yet, he firmly holds the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son.⁴⁷ Arius strongly reacted against his doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son, yet he was strongly influenced by Origen's subordinationist doctrine of the Son, though

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 141-142.

⁴² Franz Dünzl, *A Brief History of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Early Church*, trans. John Bowden (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2007), 36.

⁴³ *Euse. con. Marc.* I. 4, 17 -19. Apud E. Klostermann, *Eusebius Werke IV* (GCS 14).

⁴⁴ *C.Cels.* VIII.12, Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 460, Father and Son are two distinct existences, but one in mental unity and in identity of will. In *De Or.* 15.1; trans. Rowan A. Greer, *Origen: An Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer and Selected Works* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1979), 112, "the Son is a being and subject distinct from the Father."

⁴⁵ Trigg, *Origen*, 23; Holy Spirit, the third divine is *hypostasis*. *De princ.* 4.28, ANF, 646, "procreated."

⁴⁶ *Hanson, Search for Christian Doctrine*, 61.

⁴⁷ *De princ.* I. 4, ANF, 436, His generation is eternal and everlasting as the brilliancy which is produced from the sun.

he diverged to his own interpretation.⁴⁸ Joseph W. Trigg believes that Origen's Platonic understanding of the relationship of the divine *hypostases*, in which the second is inferior and subordinate to the first, is the alleged foundation for Arius' heresy.⁴⁹ Moreover, Williams adds that he probably has as Origen on his side in repudiating the *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) and the idea that the Son is 'ἐξ οὐκ' the Father's substance.⁵⁰

After Origen, the Alexandrian Church continued developing its so called 'Alexandrian tradition,' rather than the controversial term 'Origenism' (albeit Origen's influence was unquestionable). Dionysius (d. 264-5) who succeeded Heraclas as the head of the catechetical school was the most remarkable disciple of Origen, and became Bishop of Alexandria in 247-8.⁵¹ Dionysius is important to understand the Arian antecedents because we find that Arius himself appealed to Dionysius in support of his views.⁵² Athanasius in his *De Sententia Dionysii* mentions that Dionysius was presented by the Arians as a great authority in the past who supported their doctrine.⁵³ In *De Trinitate* by Pseudo-Didymus of Alexandria, the Arians invoked the authority of Dionysius, and used his metaphor (the vine and planter of the vine) for the relation between the Son and the Father as a model for their doctrine.⁵⁴ Dionysius insisted that the Son was a creature and ἀγεννητον, a thing made and generated, not 'proper' (ιδιός) to the nature of God but "alien in substance" as the vine-dresser is different from the

⁴⁸ Barnard, "The Antecedents of Arius," 176. See also Trigg, *Origen*, 23.

⁴⁹ Trigg, *Origen*, 23.

⁵⁰ Williams, *Arius*, 143.

⁵¹ *Euse. Hist. eccl.* 6. 29, trans. Deferrari, 54. Cf. Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 2, 101.

⁵² Gennadius, *De Eccl. Dogm.* 4, PL 58, 982. "*Dionysius, fons Arii.*"

⁵³ Athanasius, *De sent. Dion.* I.1 – 3.

⁵⁴ Pseudo – Didymus, *De Trinitate.* III.8. See Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 72.

vine and the shipwright from the boat: “and ... he did not exist before he was generated.”⁵⁵ Pope Dionysius was shocked by his Origen-inspired term of *hyposteses*, and warned him that it is blasphemous ‘to speak of Christ as a creature or to say that there was when he was not.’⁵⁶ Pope Dionysius probably convened a synod which condemned the expressions used. Later, as Athanasius defends Dionysius (despite the admittance of what he wrote), Dionysius may have refined his theology; yet it is impossible to avoid seeing some influence upon Arius; Εὐφράνορα καὶ Ἀμμώνιον are significant like Arian doctrine.

Another head of the catechetical school was Theognostus (c. 265 – 282) whose works were outlined and his thoughts were linked with Origen’s by Photios.⁵⁷ According to this, he wrote seven-volume book called *Hypotyposeis* (ὑποτυπώσεις) in which he dealt with such subjects as the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Angels and demons, the Incarnation of the Savior and the Creation. Apparently he had Origenist sympathies, as Barnard remarks.⁵⁸ Theognostus denied the eternity of matter; he regarded the Son as a creature (κατίσμα), and has to do only with those who are endowed with reason

⁵⁵ *De Sent. Dion.* 4, SWLA, 547. See Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 134. See also, Williams, *Arius*, 150. The five errors which Dionysius of Alexander was charged were clearly summarized in Barnard, “The Antecedents of Arius,” 177, (1) he separated the Father and the Son (διαρρεῖ καὶ μακρύνει μερίζει τὸ υἱὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρός: *Atha. De Sent. Dion.* 16); (2) he denied the eternity of the Son (οὐκ αἰεὶ ἦν ὁ θεὸς πατήρ, οὐκ αἰεὶ ἦν ὁ υἱός, ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν θεὸς ἦν χωρὶς τοῦ λόγου, αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ υἱὸς οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γεννηθῆναι, ἀλλ’ ἦν ποτὲ ὅτε οὐκ ἦν. οὐ γὰρ αἰδιδίος ἐστὶν ἀλλ’ ὕστερον ἐπεγέγονεν: *De Sent. Dion.* 14); (3) he named the Father without the Son and the Son without the Father (πατέρα λέγων οὐκ ὀνομάζει τὸν υἱὸν καὶ πάλι υἱὸν λέγων οὐκ ὀνομάζει τὸν πατέρα: *De Sent. Dion.* 16); (4) he virtually rejected the term ὁμοούσιος used of the son (προσφέρουσιν ἕγκλημα κατ’ ἐμοῦ ψεῦδος ὃν ὡς οὐ λέγοντος τὸν χριστὸν ὁμοούσιον εἶναι τῷ θεῷ: *De Sent. Dion.* 18); (5) he spoke of the Son as a creature of the Father and used misleading illustrations of their relationship (ποίημα καὶ γενητὸν εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, μήτε δὲ φύσει ἴδιον, ἀλλὰ ξένον κατ’ οὐσίαν αὐτὸν εἶναι τοῦ πατρός, ὡς περ ἐστὶν ὁ γεωργὸς πρὸς τὴν ἀμπελον καὶ ὁ ναυπηγὸς πρὸς τὸ σκάφος. Καὶ γὰρ ὡςποίημα ὃν οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γένηται: *De Sent. Dion.* 4).

⁵⁶ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 134-5.

⁵⁷ Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 2, 109.

⁵⁸ Barnard, “The Antecedents of Arius,” 180.

(υἰὸν δὲ λέγων κτίσμα αὐτὸν ἀποφαίνει καὶ τῶν λογικῶν μόνον ἐπιστατεῖν).⁵⁹ Κτίσμα is a metaphor, capable of being use in various senses: Arius took up this term in distinguishing the οὐσίας of the Father and the οὐσίας of the Son; in contrast, Athanasius quoted Theognostus as using the phrase ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας (of the Father) in reference to the Son which, excluded Arianism.⁶⁰

Another two Alexandrians were Pierius, the ascetic presbyter and Peter, the Martyr. Pierius, as he was called ‘younger Origen, clearly followed Origen’s subordinationism.⁶¹ Regarding the Father and the Son, Photius says, was orthodox but one exception that he spoke of two οὐσίαι and two φύσεις of them and the Spirit was inferior in glory to them.⁶² Barnard concludes that albeit any possible debt of Arius to him, it is not impossible that he paved a way for Arius to develop further the somewhat fluid terminology found in Pierius’ extant fragments into a system in which the “Oneness” of God is contrasted with the creativity and “other: status of the Son.⁶³ On the other hand, Peter’s time presents us that there was strife between Origenist and anti-Origenist factions in the Alexandrian Church. Peter stood up as anti-Origenism, repudiating Origen’s teaching on the allegorical interpretation of Scripture;⁶⁴ and approached to literalistic Biblicism. Barnard says that Peter and Arius were associated for a time but Peter excommunicated Arius, probably for complicity in the Meletian

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 180. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 159.

⁶⁰ *De Decret.* 25, trans. Khale Anatolios, *Athanasius, Early Church Fathers* (London: Routledge, 2004), 163. Barnard, “The Antecedents of Arius,” 180-1.

⁶¹ Photius, *Bibl. Cod.* 119, trans. J. H. Freese, *the Library of Photius*. Vol. 1 (1920), available at CCEL, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/pearse/morefathers/files/photius_03bibliotheca.htm, accessed on March 12, 2015; Jerome, *De Vir.* III. 76, PL23, 642: *ut Origenes iunior vocaretur.*

⁶² Photius, *Bibl. Cod.* 119. CCEL.

⁶³ Barnard, “The Antecedents of Arius,” 182-3.

⁶⁴ Procopius, *Comm. in Gen.* 3.21. cited in Barnard, “The Antecedents of Arius,” 183.

cause.⁶⁵ Quasten writes that Arius himself was a Meletian.⁶⁶ Arius was probably influenced and inspired by Peter's literalistic Biblicism or biblical literalism.

To turn to Antiochene possible influences, we see for Arius two more influential persons: Paul of Samosata and Lucian. Paul of Samosata (A.D. 200 – 275) denied the divinity of Christ and taught that Jesus had not “come down from heaven” but was from “below.”⁶⁷ Accordingly his Christology was the “indwelling” of the Logos in a man, Jesus who had a pre-existence. For his erroneous teachings, he was excommunicated at an Antiochene Synod in 269 A.D. Richard R. Hopkins considers Paul of Samosata as the forerunner of Arius, saying that his teaching became the “characteristic tenet of Arianism.”⁶⁸ Aloys Grillmeier conditionally accepts the tradition of Paul of Samosata as a possibility of common ground for Arianism, Apollinarianism and some aspects of Alexandrian Christology.⁶⁹ Rowan Williams, on the other hand, criticizes Newman's view of Arianism, and argues that the teaching of Paul of Samosata would appear to be Sabellianism to Arius.⁷⁰ Hanson also rejects the possibility of Paul's influence on Arius, and he sees such assumption of Paul's influence on Arius rests almost wholly upon speculation.⁷¹

⁶⁵ Barnard, “The Antecedents of Arius,” 184.

⁶⁶ Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 2, 114.

⁶⁷ *Euse. Hist. eccl.* 7, 30, trans. Deferrari, 142 -9. Cf. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 165.

⁶⁸ Richard R. Hopkins, *How Greek Philosophy Corrupted the Christian Concept of God* (Springville, UT: Horizon Press, 3rd ed., 2005), 193 – 4.

⁶⁹ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 165.

⁷⁰ Williams, *Arius*, 3 – 5. Williams, “The Logic of Arianism,” *JThS*, Vol. 34 (1983): 56 – 81, esp. 60 – 61.

⁷¹ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 71 – 2.

Another possible predecessor of Arius could probably be Lucian of Antioch. A teacher-pupil relationship between Lucian and Arius has been interpreted by a number of Church historians and scholars.⁷² However, it is vague whether Arius ever met him. Apparently Williams argues that Arius could not be considered as a disciple of Lucian in the sense of Eusebius of Nicomedia. Besides, if the word ‘*sulloukianista*’ (συλλουκιανιστὰ), found in Arius’ letter to Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, had been taken as ‘fellow-Lucianist,’ it would be pretty literally, and could be assumed a period of study with Lucian.⁷³ Still, Williams illustrates that ‘fellow-Lucianist’ may be no more than *captatio benevolentiae*, a claim to common ground with potential supporters.⁷⁴

What then of any possible influence on Arius? Henry M. Gwatkin, in his *Studies of Arianism*, made a statement that Arianism was “almost as much a philosophy as a religion.”⁷⁵ He argued that Arianism was not from Antiochene tradition, but it was an inevitable reaction of heathen forms of thought against the definite establishment of the Christian view of God.⁷⁶ As a whole, his Arian God is the remote Absolute of Middle Platonism, and his Arian Christ is nothing but a heathen demigod. Thus, Gwatkin’s presentation of Arianism as a product of philosophical rationalism is too far to deal with

⁷² B. J. Kidd, *A History of the Church to A. D. 461* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1922), 508; says that Lucian was a teacher of Arius and several Arian leaders whose bond of union was that they were ‘fellow Lucianists’. In his footnote n. 4, he further indicates to see a list of the pupils of Lucians to Tillemont, vi. 253; A. Robertson, *Athanasius*, xxviii. Newman, Hopkins and Gwatkins and many scholars agree over their teacher-pupil relationships.

⁷³ Williams, *Arius*, 30.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁷⁵ Henry M. Gwatkin, *Studies in Arianism: Chiefly Referring to the Character and Chronology of the Reaction Which Followed the Council of Nicaea* (Cambridge, 2nd ed., 1900), 20. In his *The Arian Controversy* (London: Longmans and Green, 1914), 5; he has made a similar statement that Arianism began its career partly as a “theory of Christianity,” partly as an Eastern reaction of “philosophy” against a gospel of the Son of God.

⁷⁶ Gwatkin, *Studies in Arianism*, 16.

the theological and scientific synthesis of Arianism. Maurice F. Wiles and Christopher Stead also explored the philosophical background.⁷⁷ Stead states that Arius drew on a Platonic tradition evolving within the Alexandrian Church, and L.W. Barnard comments that Arius' theology may have been shaped by a dialogue with non-Christian Platonist contemporaries in the Egyptian metropolis.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Maurice F. Wiles, "In Defence of Arius," *JThS* 13 (1962), 339 – 47. Christopher Stead, "The Platonism of Arius," *JThS* 15 (1964), 16 – 31, reprinted in G. C. Stead, *Substance and Illusion in the Christian Fathers*, Chapter III). Stead, *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), 143, describes the Arian conception of God.

⁷⁸ Barnard, "The Antecedents of Arius," 172.

2.2. Alexander and Arius: Doctrinal Dispute

About 318, regarding the *Logos* used in John's Gospel, Arius (d. 336), a Libyan presbyter who was in charge of the Baukalis church in Alexandria, probably gave unusual or different interpretation contradicted to tradition.⁷⁹ Thus, Bishop Alexander called a meeting in order to discuss on the theological points made by Arius.⁸⁰ Possibly in the discussion, Arius found difficulty to solve the important question of Incarnation, and he stated that the Son of God was created and that therefore there was a time when he did not exist⁸¹ - "foreign to faith" as Carlos R. Galvão-Sobrinho comments.⁸² Then, a strong objection was raised from those opposed to Arius insisting that the Son of God was really God, one in being with the Father. In fact, Arius and his companions came to the meeting, convinced that Bishop Alexander could be in their partnership sharing the same views or at least he did not oppose them.⁸³ However, Bishop Alexander stood up from the side of those opposed to Arius and prohibited Arius to never propose his idea again.⁸⁴ Apparently the decision of Bishop Alexander frustrated Arius and his

⁷⁹ It is obscure how the controversy began, whether by Arius criticizing Alexander's theology or by Alexander taking action on Arius' interpretation of *Logos*. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 129 – 138, has dedicated on the problems of its starting date, and by how.

⁸⁰ *Soc. Hist. eccl. 1.5*, NPNF 2/2, 28.. See Richard M. Hogan, *Dissent from the Creed: Heresies Past and Present* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2001), 79.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

⁸² Carlos R. Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power: Theological Controversy and Christian Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2013), 36.

⁸³ Arius on Alexander, H. C. Opitz, *Athanasius Werke III, Urk.* 6, 12, 2.3-6; and 6, 13, 2.13-4. See also Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 38; Galvão-Sobrinho observes that there was Alexander's favoritism toward Arius for his talents as exegete and orator, and that is why Alexander took a long delay to react to Arius and his followers; this is what Arius thought of Alexander to be of his partnership in the meeting or at least their views would be accepted.

⁸⁴ Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 38.

followers.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, Arius refused to comply with the bishop's mandate, therefore, Alexander excommunicated him.

Arius withdrew to Asia Minor to find the supports among his *Sylloukianistai*, the fellow pupils of Lucian. Definitely, he won many supports there; more importantly he gained two Eusebius, that of Nicomedia and Caesarea who organized in latter day another council supporting him. On the other hand, it forced Alexander to seek supports on his side as well. Alexander called a synod of all the bishops of Egypt and of Libya probably between 319 – 321, which affirmed the excommunication of Arius and extended to those who followed him.⁸⁶ Then, Alexander sent out the customary synodal letter at least to seventy bishops informing about the excommunication of Arius, refuting Arius' view, and defending the Alexandrian view of theology.⁸⁷

In order to review both of their doctrines, it is more likely anachronistic. Arius' doctrine is found in his three letters (to Eusebius of Nicomedia, to Alexander of Alexandria, and to the Emperor Constantine) and some fragments of *Thalia* (Banquet), which are preserved in the works of his opponents. Thus, it is never wholly creditable to assume Arius own theology from what his opponents ascribed to him. However it does not mean to reject them, of course not, but to cautiously handle those sources.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ The date is, as Hanson discusses, based on the calculation of the fact that Athanasius in his *Letter to the Bishops of Egypt* (22) reported that it was now 36 years since Arians (collective use) were expelled from the church by an ecumenical synod (it is assumed to have written in 356). Cf. Hogan, *Dissent*, 80. Cf. Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 3, 12, the number of bishop attendees is counted nearly one hundred, and date is said to be in 318 (that is what Hanson calls 'traditional way'). Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 243 – 4, assumes that the dispute might have begun with small arguments before 318, in 318 it became publicized and Alexander found it necessary to convene a synod around 320 which condemned Arius and other clergy.

⁸⁷ Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (325 – 787): Their History and Theology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 53. "Alexandrian view" is represented by Bishop Alexander, and in latter course in his defence, he would export his own theology yet we can assume it was in the same line of what he represented.

Grillmeier, Williams and Hanson have shown their enormous interests in Arius's own words or teaching, reconstructing from those limited sources. The letter to Alexander is most likely explicit in confessing Arius' doctrines. Arius' emphasis on God's soleness, transcendence and inaccessibility is clearly found as he wrote – we know one God – alone unbegotten, alone everlasting, alone without beginning, alone true, alone possessing immortality, alone wise, alone good, alone master, judge of all, manager, director, immutable and unchangeable, just and good...; moreover God's providential governance was also emphasize –νόμου καὶ προφητῶν καὶ καινῆς διαθήκης θεόν.⁸⁸ In his letter to Eusebius, he claims that God is without beginning (ὁ δὲ θεός ἀναρχός).

In Arius' Christological teaching, unlike Origen's notion of eternal generation (ἀνάρχος γέννησις), his notion of generation has a starting point (γέννησις) in God's eternal realm. Therefore he teaches that the only unbegotten God begot him before eternal times (...γεννήσαντα υἷον μονογενῆ πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων), and that he was created (κτισθέντα) by the will of God before time and ages. However, the creation of the Son differs from the creation of cosmos; the Son is like the Father, (ἄτρεπτον καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον, κτίσμα τοῦ θεοῦ τέλειον), but not like one of the creatures, a product (γέννημα), not like of one the things produced (γεγεννημένων).⁸⁹ Furthermore, his Christological doctrine is set fully in his letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia;

That the son is not unbegotten nor in any way a part of an Unbegotten, nor derived from some substratum, but that he exists by will and counsel before times and before ages, full of truth, and grace, God, Only-begotten unfaltering. And before he was begotten, or created or

⁸⁸ Opitz, *Urk.* 6, 12, 4- 7. οἶδαμεν ἕα θεον, μόνον ἀγέννητον, μόνον αἰδιον, μόνον ἀναρχον, μόνον ἀληθινον, μόνον ἀθανασιαν ἔχοντα, μόνον σοφόν, μόνον ἀγαθόν, μόνον δυνάστη, πάντων κριτήν, διοικητήν, οἰκονόμον, ἄτρεπτον καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον, δίκαιον καὶ ἀγαθόν, νόμου καὶ προφητῶν καὶ καινῆς διαθήκης θεόν. Cf, Williams, *Arius*, 96.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* cf. Williams, *Arius*, 96, he is called 'Son' *alethos*, and is like the Father, 'unchangeable, inalienable' (*atreptos* and *analloiotos*), not yet *agenetos*.

determined or established, he did not exist. For he was not unbegotten (or unoriginated).⁹⁰

Henceforth, Arius argues that it is inadmissible to say that God and his Son ‘co-exist’; God must *pre-exist*.⁹¹ Then, he complains to Eusebius that they were persecuted because they taught that ‘the Son has an origin, but God is unoriginated’ (ἀναρχος) and that ‘the Son derives from non-existence’ (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐστίν).⁹² Besides, Arius says that the Father is the Son’s origin (ἀρχή).⁹³ Thus, Arius strongly holds the notion of three *hypostases*.

Turning to the fragments of *Thalia* which is written in partly in prose and partly in verse, it is more confusing and more likely in different context.⁹⁴ It is more advanced in usage and terms, explicit in confession of faith, and more methodological in statements. Thus, as Williams suggests, we should expect the *Thalia* to take us a little further towards the core of Arius’ theology, Hanson also suggests that the arguments found in *Thalia* cannot be taken as *ipissima verba* of Arius.⁹⁵ In *Orationes contra Arianos*, Arius is said to teach that God was not always Father, but there was a time when he was alone. Including the Son, all things were made out of nothing (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων); as all things exist as creatures and work, he too is a creature and work, and so there was a time when He did not himself exist, and before He was not begotten, he was

⁹⁰ Opitz, *Urk.* 1, 2, 4-5. ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγέννητος οὐδὲ μέρος ἀγεννητοῦ κατ’ οὐδένα τρόπον οὔτε ἐξ ὑποκειμένου τινός, ἀλλ’ ὅτι θελήμαστι καὶ βουλῇ ὑπέστη πρὸ χρόνων καὶ πρὸ αἰώνων, πλήρης (χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας), θεός, μονογενής, ἀναλλοίωτος. Καὶ πρὶν γεννηθῆ ἦτοι κτισθῆ ἦτοι ὀρισθῆ ἢ θεμελιωθῆ, οὐκ ἦν. ἀγέννητος γὰρ οὐκ ἦν. Translated text is taken from Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 6.

⁹¹ Opitz, *Urk.* 1, 2.1; 2.6. Williams, *Arius*, 97.

⁹² Opitz, *Urk.* 1, 3, 5. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 6-7.

⁹³ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 8. Cf. Williams, *Arius*, 97.

⁹⁴ A few fragments of the *Thalia* have been preserved, chiefly by Athanasius (see *Contra Arianos* 1, and *De Synodis* 15) who is the main opponent of Arius and Arians. Williams, *Arius*, 100-9, has made a comparison between two sources (A and S).

⁹⁵ Williams, *Arius*, 99. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 11.

not, rather he has a beginning of existence. God was alone (μονᾶς), and his Word and Wisdom did not yet exist. But then God wanted to make us, he made certain kind of being (τινᾶ) and called him Word and Spirit and Son so that through him he might make us. There are therefore two “Wisdoms,” one God’s proper who has existed eternally with God, and the other the Son who was brought into existence in this Wisdom, only by participating (μετέχουσα) in this Wisdom, he is called Wisdom and Word. ‘Wisdom existed in Wisdom by the will of the wise God.’ So there is another Word in God besides the Son, and the Son, by participating in this Word is, called Word and Son by grace-and-favor (χάριν).

Arius further teaches that the Word is not true God (ἀληθινός θεός), even if he is called God, but he is not true God, by being sharer of grace, just like other people (sharers), he is called God only in name. Besides, the substances (ουσιαι) of Father, Son and Holy Spirit are separate in nature, foreign to each other, no participation with each other. The Son is a distinct *hypostasis* in himself and no kind of participation in the Father. Hence, in *De Synodalis*, Arius teaches that God alone is inexpressible (ἄρρητος) to all, He alone has no equal, none like him, none of equal glory. He is unoriginated (ἀγέννητος), without beginning (ἀναρχος), invisible (ἀόρατος), but in contrast to Him, the Son is begotten (γέννητος), has a beginning (ἀρχή). The Son has nothing peculiar to God, not equal...far less is he consubstantial (ὁμοούσιος) to God. Therefore, the Monad (μονάς) existed, but the Dyad (δυάς) did not exist before it attained existence. He is only-begotten God and he is different from any others. Wisdom became Wisdom by the will of the Father, so he is apprehended in an uncountable number of aspects (ἐπινοίας). He is God’s Glory, Truth, and Image and Word. All in all, the Son does not only not know the Father precisely, for He is incomprehensible, but the Son does not even perceive his own essence.

In order to reconstruct the doctrines of Arius' earliest opponents represented by Alexander (so it is acceptably called Alexander's doctrine), we are again facing with the lack of complete sources.⁹⁶ Nonetheless, his doctrine is clearly seen in his surviving two very important encyclicals concerned with the Arian controversy. One epistle was addressed to "all the fellow-ministers of the Catholic Church in every place" written in ca. 319, preserved by Socrates, and the another epistle was addressed to Alexander of Thessalonica or Byzantium, written in ca. 324, preserved by Theodoret of Cyrus.⁹⁷

Alexander's doctrine was seemingly formulated in response to that of Arius. Thus, in his encyclicals, he first set forth a concise summary of the heretical teaching of Arius and his supporters, and inserted his doctrinal formulas. As Harnack set up, his doctrinal formulas were: "God always, the Son always, at the same time the Father, at the same time the Son; the Son co-exists with unbegotten God; he is not born by begetting; neither by thought nor by any moment of time does God precede the Son; God always, Son always, the Son exists from God himself."⁹⁸ Despite that Arius accused Alexander of Sabellianism, Alexander insisted that the Son and Father were both eternal by nature. In Origenistic model, he describes the Son as the only-begotten nature which mediates (μεσιτεύουσα φύσις μονογενής) between God and creation. Nonetheless, the Son is not himself a creature, not from nothing but is always from the Father. He therefore is like the Father, immutable and unchangeable, and self-sufficient and perfect. Alexander also emphasized that the Father alone is unbegotten

⁹⁶ According to Epiphanius, *Haer.* 69, 4, there existed a collection of seventy letters by Alexander.

⁹⁷ *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 1, 6, NPNF 2/2, 29; *Theo. Hist. eccl.* 1, 3, NPNF 2/3, 75 – 86.

⁹⁸ Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 245: αἰὲν θεός, αἰὲν υἱός, ἅμα πατήρ, ἅμα υἱός, συνυπάρχει ὁ υἱός ἀγεννήτως τῷ θεῷ, ἀειγενής, ἀγεννητογενής, οὐτ' ἐπινοία οὐτ' ἀτόμῳ τιμὴ προάγει ὁ θεὸς τοῦ, αἰὲν θεός, αἰὲν υἱός, ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ υἱός. Cf. Opitz, *Urk* 14, 23, 26; ἔστι δὲ πατήρ αἰὲν παρόντος τοῦ υἱοῦ, δι' ὃν χρηματίζει πατήρ. αἰὲν δὲ παρόντος αὐτῷ τοῦ υἱοῦ, αἰὲν ἔστιν ὁ πατήρ τέλειος, ἀνελλιπῆς τυγχάνων ἐν τῷ καλῷ, οὐ χρονικῶς οὐδὲ ἐκ διαστήματος οὐδὲ ἐξ οὐκ οὐντων γενήσας τὸν μονογενῆ υἱόν.

(ἀγεννητος), that the Father remains the same forever and knows neither progress nor diminution.⁹⁹ For him, it is not acceptable to say that the Son of God is begotten ‘from nothing’ (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων) because he believes that the Son of God is fully divine and always from the Father (ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς). Avoiding Origen’s subordinationism, or teaching of two ‘unbegotten’ Gods, he warns that the eternal being of the Son does not amount his being unbegotten for this is the one distinctive characteristic which the Father has.¹⁰⁰ As Harnack notes, he wants to see the ‘coming forth’ of such a Son revered as a mystery: it is a question of faith, not of speculation.¹⁰¹ All in all, Alexander was trying to maintain the full divinity of the Son. Thus, he rejected above all the dialectics about ‘begotten’ and ‘unbegotten.’¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Dünzl, *A Brief History*, 47.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 74-8.

¹⁰¹ Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 245.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

2.3. Politicization of the Controversy and Partnership in Debate

Unlike its previous dissensions, why was the Arian controversy so vexed, covering almost an entire fourth century? The question is simple but to answer to this might be complex and might require some attention. Brendan Jones, in his *The Arian Controversy: A Purely Theological Dispute or A Political Controversy?*, has shown how theology and politics became intertwined and inseparable force in the course of Arian controversy. In a sense, Jones has his right starting point to talk about the politics of the controversy after Constantine came to full power.¹⁰³ Recently Carlos R. Galvão-Sobrinho, in his *Doctrine and Power: Theological Controversy and Christian Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*, has approached to the controversy from a new angle, focusing on the episcopal authority that cemented itself anew in the life of the church while confronting the challenges of doctrinal disputes, and dealing with them in the calling of councils for final decision over the discussion of theological and ecclesiastical arguments. Galvão-Sobrinho argues that Alexander did not want to condemn Arius at first, however, the error of Arius' position and his alliances forced Alexander to embrace a more forceful stance.¹⁰⁴

As soon as we see the term 'politicization,' we may immediately think of the imperial involvement in the ecclesiastical dispute; however it is not the beginning of politicization of this controversy at all, rather it would be right to understand that Arius already initiated it by recruiting his members who could support his theological view when he withdrew to Asia Minor after being excommunicated by his bishop Alexander. In order not to make any confusion about the term, it is right to understand that

¹⁰³ Brendan Jones, "The Arian Controversy: A Purely Theological Dispute or A Political Controversy?" *Phronema*, 12 (1997): 55 – 68, esp. 56.

¹⁰⁴ Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 38.

politicization, first and foremost, does not necessarily mean or indicate the immediate involvement of state-politics, although its ascendancy is undeniably connected with imperial involvement in its later course. For this, best example could be the Arian controversy itself. Certainly the term ‘politicization’ meets what Galvão-Sobrinho calls “theological polarization.”¹⁰⁵

Jones thinks that the controversy, in terms of politics, began innocently enough; the dispute was theological, a battle over the place of Christ in Godhead.¹⁰⁶ However, when we carefully examine the origin of the controversy, we find that there are many more complex factors involved; a few to mention such as a critical involvement of Arius in Melitian schism, his excommunication and reconciliation under Alexander’s predecessors, his exegetical position, and more importantly his popularity and status in Alexandrian diocese. With all these facts, it is not right to leave out what Theodoret and Sozomen reported about Arius’ malicious intentions.¹⁰⁷ Above all, Arius had a strong position in the Alexandrian church before Alexander was elected.¹⁰⁸ On the other side, complex social issues or a conception of episcopacy particular in Alexandrian church during these times were also at stake, as Lewis Ayres indicates.¹⁰⁹ Ayres points out that as Alexandria moved towards a monarchical model from a sense of the bishops as *primus inter*, despite maintaining a tradition of independent priests, their relationship with the

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁰⁶ Jones, “The Arian Controversy,” 55 – 6.

¹⁰⁷ See *Theo. Hist. eccl.* 1.2, NPNF 2/3, 74; and *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 1.15, NPNF 2/2, 553.

¹⁰⁸ *Philost. Hist. eccl.* 1.3, trans. Philip R. Amidon (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 8. Winrich Löhr, “Arius Reconsidered (part 1),” *ZAC*, vol. 9 (2006): 524 – 560; esp. 530, conditionally concludes in that way.

¹⁰⁹ Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 16. Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 43, also notes that the position of bishop causes further problems.

bishop was complex.¹¹⁰ Löhr comments that Alexander, with his encyclicals, found a device to communicate his position to his fellow bishops and to use their support in order to strengthen his position within the Alexandrian church.¹¹¹ In fact, Alexander was probably aware that Arius had gained a lot of supports by many Alexandrians and maintained ties with influential churchmen outside Egypt and Libya.¹¹² Hereafter, we may grasp a clue of the struggle of schismatic or partisan rivalry of two groups in the Alexandrian church; later, as we see, they appeared as a gathering force or partnership in the debate at either Alexander's side or Arius'. Is it, in a sense, a means of politicization, seeking their respective supports in the course of the controversy?

Within a few years after the outbreak of controversy, both Arius and Alexander had their respective supporters gathered around themselves, and at the same time, they had shared their theological views, mostly by sending letters to other prominent leaders of the church (mostly bishops). It is said that Arius set out his doctrinal ideas into a form of memorable rhymes as well, on the model of *Thalia* and it was one way to spread his ideas among the uneducated.¹¹³ After the Egyptian synod (ca. 319), the issue became at stake with the overtones of disagreement between two parties, and the dispute spread to the entire church of the East. Without knowing of the particulars of the problems, bishops and theologians, priests and deacons quickly took sides, either with Arius or Alexander.¹¹⁴ The Arians (probably including Arius) went to other sees to win more episcopal support.¹¹⁵ Inspired by Eusebius of Nicomedia, a council of 250 prelates, the

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Löhr, "Arius," 560.

¹¹² Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 45.

¹¹³ *Philost. Hist. eccl.* 2.2, trans. Amidon, 16. See also Jones, "The Arian Controversy," 55.

¹¹⁴ Hogan, *Dissent*, 81.

party supporting Arius was held in Bithynia, and pronounced Arius' teaching orthodox, and demanded Alexander to restore Arius' status; however no response came from Alexander for their conciliatory approach.¹¹⁶ Another council was again held in Palestine, probably inspired by Eusebius of Caesarea, and vindicated Arius' view orthodox, and demanded Alexander to reinstate Arius in his diocese. At the same time, many synods were convened also in Egypt and the controversy is at its height.¹¹⁷ Arius came back to Alexandria after secured by the authority of conciliar decrees made at the Palestinian synod.¹¹⁸ Then, the Alexandrian priest, Kolluthus who was reinstated after having first denouncing Arius, probably broke with the bishop re-joining Arius.¹¹⁹ Therefore Alexander was accused of being soft on the priest, and using the priest's reinstatement as a pretext to appoint himself 'bishop' of yet another schismatic community.¹²⁰

The chronology of the period between c. 321 – 324 is confusing as Licinius launched the final persecution of the Christians in the East. Still, Hanson suggests us to follow Hans-Georg Opitz who has examined the period thoroughly and minutely, so that we may have more confidence on this critical period. Then it was in 322 that Licinius banned the meetings of bishops, and other Christian activities in his empire.¹²¹ Hereafter it indicates that the chances for both sides to politicize or to gather their

¹¹⁵ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 134-5.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 130 & 135. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 17. The council is mentioned in *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 1.15, NPNF 2/2, 551. The conciliatory letter is mentioned in Athanasius, *De Synodis* VI. 5f, ASWL, 1083.

¹¹⁷ *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 1.16.1, NPNF 2/2, 594. Löhr, "Arius," 535.

¹¹⁸ Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 73.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* See also Opitz. *Urk.* 14, 19, 1.11 – 20, 1.3. Williams, *Arius*, 46.

¹²¹ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 136.

partners during this period are less possible. Nonetheless, they may keep sending letters to one another. Constantine heard of the dispute; probably while he was preparing to fight against Licinius in Thessalonica, he would have had informants.¹²² Barnes comments that if the Christians obeyed the prohibition of Licinius, the controversy was suddenly arrested while the tension were most acute, then when Constantine came to full power after the defeat of Licinius, controversy was once resumed.¹²³

By the time when Constantine learned of the controversy, politicization of Alexander and Arius had critically affected the relationship among the churchmen, and congregations had been divided into two parties.¹²⁴ Barnes tells us that Constantine felt a moral duty to intervene in the dispute, and so he wrote a letter to Alexander and Arius urging them to settle their differences peaceably.¹²⁵ However, Constantine's approach displays a lack of theological knowledge about the dispute, and failed to grasp the theological importance of the debate.¹²⁶ All in all, in Constantine's theology, the unity was far more important.¹²⁷ Besides, state-politics starts involved in the ecclesiastical dispute. Jones put it, "...the very fact that he involved himself in an ecclesiastical dispute meant that politics and religion now became intertwined."¹²⁸

Bishop Ossius of Cordoba, to whom Constantine entrusted the case of Alexander and Arius, called a synod to settle the dispute but Ossius' mission failed as

¹²² Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 78.

¹²³ Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Harvard University Press, 1981), 206.

¹²⁴ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 212. See also Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 64.

¹²⁵ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 212.

¹²⁶ Jones, "The Arian Controversy," 56.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹²⁸ Jones, "The Arian Controversy," 57.

Arius and his partisans refused to submit to the silence imposed on them by the Emperor.¹²⁹ Again another council was held, probably on the occasion of the election of the bishop of the Antiochene church. More than fifty bishops from Palestine, Arabia, Phenice, Syria Coele, Cilicia, and Cappadocia attended the council at Antioch and acted decisively to support Alexander of Alexandria, and excommunicated the three bishops, Theodotus of Laodicea, Narcissus of Neronias, and Eusebius of Caesara, for supporting Arius. But they were given a chance to repent at the forth-coming council at Ancyra.¹³⁰ In fact, the council to be held at Ancyra was moved to Nicaea by Constantine with pragmatic reasons. Barnes thinks it was to become the first “ecumenical council” of the Christian Church.¹³¹ But Jones thinks that the intention was for Constantine to be able to control the proceedings more by his actual attendance.¹³² Indeed Constantine was acting as a religious leader, as of a traditional task of the Roman Emperors (*pontifex maximus*).¹³³ Alexander and Ossius are said to have agreed in advance that the word *homoousious* should be the touchstone of orthodoxy.¹³⁴ Hereafter, the council of Nicaea would appear as the meeting-point for politicization of both ecclesiastical and imperial political mixture. Jones remarks that “the Nicene decision was a mix of politics and religion” and that it was for the sake of the unity of the empire, rather than of the Church.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 213. The synod is mainly told to demote the schismatic Colluthus from bishop to priest and declare Colluthus’ ordination invalid.

¹³⁰ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 123.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 214.

¹³² Jones, “The Arian Controversy,” 57.

¹³³ Hogan, *Dissent*, 82.

¹³⁴ *Philost. Hist. eccl.* 1.7, trans. Amidon, 9.

¹³⁵ Jones, “The Arian Controversy,” 58.

3. NICENE THEOLOGY AND THE MAKING OF A HERESY

3.2. The Course of Nicene Council

The Council of Nicaea was most probably held from the end of May to the end of July in 325.¹ The Council was indeed a ‘great and hieratic synod’ as announced at the Council of Ancyra by Ossius.² It was also a historic event since it was the first time that an emperor was convoking a general council of the entire Christian church in order to settle the problems and to seek a universal consensus over the doctrinal and disciplinary matters. Eusebius of Caesarea, in his *Life of Constantine*, records, “From all the churches which filled Europe, Libya, and Asia the choicest of the servants of God were brought together; and one place of worship, as if extended by God, took them in all together.”³ The number of bishops, though the greatest number by far, was inaccurate and most probably around 300.⁴ The Council is said to be overwhelmingly

¹ The date of the Council of Nicaea is disputably reported by many Church historians; *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 1.8 – 13, NPNF 2/2, 48 - 57; *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 1.17 – 24, NPNF 2/2, 557 - 8; *Theo. Hist. eccl.* 1.7.1 – 9, NPNF 2/3, 91 - 93; *Gel. Hist. eccl.* II.5 – 11, PG 85, 1230 - 1247; *Ruf. Hist. eccl.* 10.2, trans. Philip R. Amidon, *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia, Books 10 and 11* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997), 9 – 10; see also Opitz, *Urk.* III. 20 – 26. For modern scholars, see Henry. M. Gwatkin, *The Arian Controversy* (New York, NY: Longmans, 1914), 24 - 40; Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon*, vol. 1, rev. and trans. John Bowden, 2nd ed. (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), 264 – 73; John Laux, *Church History* (New York, NY: Benziger Brothers, 1930), 109; Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Harvard University Press, 1981), 215; R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: the Arian Controversy 318 – 381* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988, 2005), 152 (with useful footnote).

² Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 148 & 153.

³ Eusebius, *VC* 3.7, trans. Cameron & Hall, 124.

⁴ *Theo. Hist. eccl.* I.6, NPNF 2/3, 91, says ‘about 318’; Constantine in his *Letter to the Church of Alexandria* in Opitz, *Urk* III. 25, 5, 53, says ‘more than 300’; Eusebius in *VC* III. 8, trans. Cameron & Hall, 124, says ‘more than 250’; Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum* 66, says ‘about 300’ and ‘318’ later in his *Letter to the Bishops of Africa*; Hilary, *Coll. Ant-ariana.* 2. 9, Alfred Feder (ed.), CSEL 65 (Vienna and Leipzig, 1916), 47, says ‘three hundred or more.’ For modern scholars, Laux, *Church History*, 109, says that the number of bishops present was 250 and had grown to 318 before its last session; Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 156, assumes between 250 and 300, after making a good examination from many ancient sources.

Eastern, with a few Western representatives. Ossius of Cordoba who presided over the Council was probably representing the Emperor's interest, and that of the Church of Hispania (Spain), and acted as the legate of the bishop of Rome, together with the two Roman presbyters Victor and Vincentius.⁵ The Council was opened by Constantine in the judgment hall of the imperial palace and bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia delivered a panegyric address of welcome.⁶

In the Council, it is highly possible that there were already two partisan groups: the group of the supporters of Arius' view and the group of the supporters of Alexander's view.⁷ Besides, there must be also a group of the bishops who wished to maintain the traditional Logos theology of the Church without taking a strong anti-Arian position.⁸ Deacon Athanasius who later became the Bishop succeeding Alexander and played a very dramatic role in fighting against Arians was certainly present at the Council as he himself tells us.⁹ However, it is noteworthy that he as a deacon could never have been permitted by the bishops to play a prominent part on such an occasion, although he might be prominent in private conferences and semi-public disputations.¹⁰ It is likely that Athanasius' legend at the Council came from his sharpness and prominence during those private meetings as prelates were allowed

⁵ Laux, *Church History*, 110. See also Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 156, including a discussion about the Western participants. W. A. Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers: Pre-Nicene and Nicene eras*, vol. 1 (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1970), 280.

⁶ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 215.

⁷ See the lists of the supporters present at the Council in Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 156.

⁸ William G. Rusch, *The Trinitarian Controversy* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 19.

⁹ *De Decret.* 3, trans. Anatolios, 163 – 4.

¹⁰ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 157. Cf. Laux, *Church History*, 109.

during the early sessions to have their own meetings and debates.¹¹ Rufinus and Sozomen tell us that the bishops met ‘many times’ to discuss Arius’ proposition. “The bishops held long consultations; and after summoning Arius before them, they made an accurate test of his propositions...when at length the appointed day arrived on which it had been decided to settle the doubtful points, they assembled together in the palace...”¹² Arius must be present as well, and Rufinus says that Arius’ presence was by the Emperor’s command.¹³ During the course of the Council, Constantine celebrated the twentieth anniversary of his reign, his *vicennalia*.¹⁴

The proceedings of the Council have not survived yet it is still possible to follow the events. The Emperor opened the first session with a discourse in Latin, which has been preserved as summary by Eusebius in his *Life of Constantine*.¹⁵ Then, the debate must have begun till they reached to a standard formulation of faith agreeable to all parties. Apparently the two parties must have read their own statements, rejecting each other’s. Lewis Ayres says that Constantine’s alliance to Alexander’s part from the council of Antioch caused tension among Eusebian bishops.¹⁶ Probably that is why Eusebius must have prepared a very careful creed that he presented to the Council in the presence of the Emperor.¹⁷ Eusebius himself tells us that it was accepted

¹¹ Carlos R. Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power: Theological Controversy and Christian Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2013), 84.

¹² *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 1.19, NPNF 2/2, 561; *Ruf. Hist. eccl.* 10.2 – 5, trans. Amidon, 9 – 12.

¹³ *Ruf. Hist. eccl.* 1.1, trans. Amidon, 13.

¹⁴ *VC* 3. 15, trans. Cameron and Hall, 127.

¹⁵ *VC* 3.12, trans. Cameron and Hall, 126. “For to me internal division in the Church of God is graver than any war or fierce battle...”

¹⁶ Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 89.

wholeheartedly; ‘no room for contradiction appeared.’¹⁸ However, the contradiction is found when a fragment from Eustathius of Antioch reports ‘Eusebius’ reading a text as very badly received.’¹⁹ Perhaps, it was another Eusebius of Nicomedia who seemed to offer a creedal statement in favor of Arian view or perhaps, it was due to Eusebius’ ambiguous terminology regarding the Son. Then, Athanasius tells us about the bishops’ effort to find the proper language to express the Son.²⁰ Finally the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was introduced to define the Son as being of the same essence of substance as the Father.²¹

Certainly the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was not acceptable to Arius and his supporters and so they reviled the term.²² In fact, Athanasius reports on the first attempt of those running the Council to declare the Son to be ‘like’ (ὅμοιον) the Father, and ‘exactly as the Father in all things (ἀπαράλλακτον κατὰ πάντα τῷ πατρὶ) and immutable (ἄτρεπτον) and always in the Father.’²³ Still it is inadequate option since Arians could find it parallel statements in the Bible and could regard the Son as a creature, and thus the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was inserted in the Nicene Creed.²⁴

¹⁷ For Creed, see Opitz, *Urk* III. 4 – 6, 43. For English translation of the Creed, see Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 159.

¹⁸ *Ep. caes.* 4, Opitz, *Urk* 22, 43. Franz Dünzl, *A Brief History of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Early Church*, trans. John Bowden (London/New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2007), 54, praises Eusebius for his dialectical skill putting the two Christological titles from the Gospel of John and the letter to the Colossians.

¹⁹ *Theo. Hist. eccl.* I. 7, NPNF 2/3, 94. See also Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 89. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 160. Eusebius is not clear, either of Caesarea or of Nicomedia.

²⁰ *De Decret.* 16ff, trans. Anatolios, 156; id., *Ep. ad Afros*, 5 – 9, ASWL, 1161 - 66.

²¹ *De Decret.* 20, trans. Anatolios, 159. Cf. Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 85.

²² Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 85.

²³ *De Decret.* 20, trans. Anatolios, 159; *Ep. ad Afros* 5, ASWL, 1161.

²⁴ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 163. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 90. Further discussion about the term *Homoousios* will be continued in Chap. 4.1 ‘Debates on Terminology.’

Hereafter, Eusebius, in his *Letter to the Church of Caesarea* reports on endorsing the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος), but he insisted that it did not imply any material division in God.²⁵ Eusebius' creed was also accepted to be sound orthodox, and therefore excommunication lifted.²⁶ Nonetheless, a new Creed (Nicene Creed) had to be drawn since majority of the bishops wanted a clearer stand against the provocation of Arius.²⁷ Thus, the Nicene Creed was finalized and all bishops present required signing it. Furthermore, the Council reached consensus over the date of Easter, and the Melitian schism was fixed. Twenty canons (probably more than twenty canons though only twenty canons survive) were also drawn. Two bishops who refused to sign the Creed, Secundus of Ptolemais and Theonas of Marmarique, were deposed by the Council and exiled by the Emperor.²⁸ Arius was exiled as well.

²⁵ *Ep. caes.* 9 in Opitz, *Urk.* 22, 45.

²⁶ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 162.

²⁷ Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 55.

²⁸ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 162 – 3.

3.2. The Construction of Orthodoxy in the Face of Heresy

Prior to the Council of Nicaea, it is interesting to take a look at the Synod of Antioch, 325. We are told that the majority at the Synod were unfavorable to Arius' cause and acted decisively to support Alexander's view, composing a Creed which contradicted Arius' theology. Except three bishops (one of whom was Eusebius of Caesarea), all bishops agreed over the creed made at the synod.²⁹ According to its creed, the Son is begotten not from nothing, but from the Father, even though no one can describe his begetting. He always exists and never before did he not exist; however he is not unbegotten (ἀγεννητον) for he is clearly begotten of the Father according to the Scriptures; he is the real and truly begotten Son, who is unchangeable and unalterable. He is the image not of the will nor of anything else except the actual *hypostasis* (ὑπόστασις) of the Father.³⁰ The language of the Creed here is very similar to the doctrinal view of Alexander who was not present at the Synod, and was mentioned as the victim of Arian heretics.³¹ Furthermore, anathemas were added, the first known Synod to pronounce anathemas against false-doctrines.³² Obviously the anathemas were directed to those of Arian views such as 'the Son is a creation (κατίσμα)' or 'he has come into being (γενητος)' or 'was made (ποιητος)' or 'was not truly begotten' or 'that there was a time when he did not exist' or 'he is unchangeable only by his free will' or 'he did not exist before he was begotten and he is not unchanging by his nature as the Father is.'³³ Aloys Grillmeier also remarks the importance of the confession of

²⁹ Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 51.

³⁰ Cf. Opitz, *Urk* 18. Cf. Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 51. Cf. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 149.

³¹ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 146.

³² Cf. *ibid*, 150.

the Antiochene synod in which Arian theses are taken up and rejected.³⁴ Nonetheless, it is worth to note that the word *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) is not found in this Synodal Creed.

This Synod is very important because it had pre-constructed the orthodox faith, and the bishops had already known which side they had to stand at the Council of Nicaea. Grillmeier would say ‘by earlier tradition’ that had prepared for the new statements made in the Nicene Council regarding the relationship of Logos-Son to the Father, but had required the emergence of Arius and his friends to provide a standard of faith for the whole church.³⁵ Perhaps, Eusebius of Caesarea was also aware of the necessity to revile his creedal statements so as to present to the Council of Nicaea, so he did. Further, Ossius must have been satisfied with what the synod of Antioch confessed because Tertullian’s formulation of one God subsisting in three persons had been already embraced in the Latin Church.³⁶ In fact, among the Greek speaking churches there was already a general tendency to regard the Logos as divine.³⁷ After all, the objective of the Council of Nicaea was to formulate a statement of faith agreeable to all the Christian communities, for the sake of necessity and unity of the whole church, in awareness of the challenge of heretical teachings. During the course of the Council, it is said to have debated on the doctrinal propositions for ‘many times’ among the parties, yet it is nothing new to its previous debates before the Council.

³³ Opitz, *Urk* 18.13 (39 – 40).

³⁴ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 265.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 264.

³⁶ Cf. Dale T. Irvin & Scott W. Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement: Earliest Christianity to 1453*, Vol.1 (Maryknoll, New York, NY: Orbis Books, 2001), 176. For Tertullian’s Trinitarian formulation, see in his *De Pudicitia*, 21.16; *Adversus Praxean*, 8.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Finally inserting the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος), the Council adopted the Creed which is known as the Nicene Creed. It ran thus:

We believe in one God Father Almighty Maker of all things, seen and unseen:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, begotten as only-begotten of the Father, that is of the substance (*ousia*) of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things came into existence, both things in heaven and on earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate and become man, suffered and rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens, is coming to judge the living and the dead:

And in the Holy Spirit.

But those who say, “there was a time when he did not exist,” and “before being begotten he did not exist,” and that he came into being from non-existence, or who allege that the Son of God is of another *hypostasis* or *ousia*, or is alterable or changeable, these the Catholic and Apostolic Church condemns.³⁸

Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Letter to the Church of Caesarea* gives his own impression over the Nicene Creed as if it were more or less his own baptismal creed except the insertion of the single word *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος).³⁹ Adolf Harnack put it, “Into the Caesarean creed the watch-words “generated not made, from the *ousia* (οὐσίας) of the Father, consubstantial with the Father” were inserted.”⁴⁰ The structure of the Creed is, as Franz Dünzl notes, based on a ‘building-block system,’ for as a rule, the confessions consist of three basic building blocks: belief in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁴¹ The Creed is clearly anti-Arian. Indeed, if we carefully analyze

³⁸ The English translation is taken from Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 163, which he translated from Dossetti’s Greek text. For further information of the text, see his footnote no. 42. See also Opitz, *Urk* 24.

³⁹ Opitz, *Urk* III. 22.7 (44).

⁴⁰ Adolf Harnack, *Outline of the History of Dogma*, trans. Edwin Knox Mitchell (New York, NY: Funk & Wagnalls, 1983), 253. γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ.

⁴¹ Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 53.

the Nicene Creed, it is more likely to be constructed in direct response to Arian statements such as ‘the only begotten Son is begotten from the substance (οὐσίας) of the Father,’ ‘Jesus Christ is true God of true God’ ‘begotten not made’ ‘consubstantial with the Father.’ These are strongly anti-Arian. In addition, its anathemas are explicitly directed against Arians. Nevertheless, the Nicene Creed was constructed to be the standard of faith for the whole Christians, rather than just to respond to the Arian challenge. Still, the choice of the term *homousios* strikingly defeated Arius because Arius was known to reject it.⁴² The term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) became the core of Nicene theology.

The key to understand the orthodox theology of the Council of Nicaea is the insertion of the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) in order to affirm that the Son and the Father are of the same substance. Hanson remarks that *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) or that the Son was ‘of the substance’ of the Father were certainly startling innovations.⁴³ Grillmeier also remarks those terms as of typical Nicene formulas.⁴⁴ Still, the term *homoousios* made some of the Eastern bishops uneasy to accept because the term had been notoriously used in a material generic sense. Obviously Paul of Samosata had used it in an Adoptionist sense.⁴⁵ However, it is clear that the council fathers used or adopted the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) in a completely different understanding from what Paul of Samosata meant.⁴⁶ Then, who was responsible for the insertion of this term

⁴² Cf. Opitz, *Urk* 6. 12, 1.11. cf. Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 85. cf. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 165. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 90.

⁴³ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 166.

⁴⁴ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 265.

⁴⁵ Richard M. Hogan, *Dissent from the Creed: Heresies Past and Present* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2001), 83.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*; cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine* (London: A&C Black, 5th ed., 1977), 236.

homoousios (ὁμοούσιος) in the Nicene Creed? Grillmeier thinks that the Arians were those who probably gave an occasion of the insertion of *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) in the Nicene Creed.⁴⁷ According to ancient tradition, it was Ossius who introduced it and Alexander definitely supported him and persuaded the Emperor. Even so, both Ossius and Alexander did not explain the meaning of the adjective *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος). When the Creed was presented to the whole Council, Constantine made it clear that he expected all to accept it, even Arius himself.⁴⁸ Eusebius of Caesarea also tells us that the Emperor himself proposed the inclusion of the term in the statement of faith.⁴⁹

Even if the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was accepted by majority of the Council either by imperial force or by their own free will, its meaning was still ambiguous and equivocal to many bishops. Thus bishops within the limits could read their own meaning into the term.⁵⁰ Eusebius of Caesarea explains to his church that the term did not imply any material division in God, and that the phrase ‘from the substance of the Father’ did not mean that ‘he is part of the Father.’⁵¹ After the Council, we find Eusebius of Caesarea accusing Eustathius of Antioch of giving a Sabellian meaning into the word.⁵² Thus, it is clear that bishops considered this matter still very much open to dispute, and Ayres comments that Nicaea’s terminology is a window onto the confusion and complexity of the early fourth-century theological debates.⁵³ Galvão-

⁴⁷ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 269.

⁴⁸ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 216.

⁴⁹ *Ep. Caea.* 7 in Opitz, *Urk* 22, 45.

⁵⁰ Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Council (325 – 787): Their History and Theology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 62.

⁵¹ *Ep. Caea.* 9 in Opitz, *Urk* 22, 45.

⁵² Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine*, 236.

⁵³ Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 92.

Sobrinho sees Constantine's forceful intervention in the Council for bishops to accept the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) as defining the Son was a temporary solution but in a long run, it was a failure because of one-sided solution.⁵⁴ Dünzl sees Constantine's forceful intervention as the emergence of the influence of politics on the church and on theological development that made those who promoted the resolutions of the synod of Nicaea uneasy.⁵⁵ Overall, it is true, as Simonetti estimates, that Nicene Council was a temporary alliance for the defeat of Arianism between the tradition of Alexandria led by Alexander and Asiatic circle (i.e. Eustathius, Marcellus) whose thought was at the opposite to that of Arius.⁵⁶ Therefore, though the Son's full divinity and consubstantiality with the Father were affirmed as the orthodox faith in the presence of all representatives of the Christian communities from all over the *oikumene*, the Council could not eliminate the Arian forces to an end, but just drove them into the underground state.

⁵⁴ Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 86.

⁵⁵ Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 59.

⁵⁶ Cited in Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 171, cit. no. 66.

3.3. Aftermath: Athanasius and Arians

The Nicene Council did not end the Arian controversy; rather it gave a rise to pro-Nicene and anti-Nicene (Arian) parties. According to Sozomen, the Arian controversy and all other heretical movements were silenced by Constantine's decree; however it was reactivated by partisans of Eusebius of Nicomedia and of Theognis of Nicaea, circulating a statement upon the Nicene confession.⁵⁷ A number of Arius' sympathizers such as Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea were deposed by the Council and banished by Constantine replacing their Sees with the orthodox bishops, Amphion and Chrestus.⁵⁸ Arius too was deposed and exiled.⁵⁹ Constantine seemed to act like a pro-Nicene emperor, "criminalizing" the members of the anti-Nicene party or the Arians, as Galvão-Sobrinho comments.⁶⁰ However, it may not be true because Constantine as a politician does not have a pair of pure theological eyes like that of the Council's Fathers', rather a pair of political eyes by which he sought to maintain the unity and peace of the Empire by means of the unity of the Church. His letter to the Alexandrian church is observable that he made Arius a political scapegoat on theological dissent. Constantine writes,

At the command of God the splendor of truth has dissolved all the poisons so deadly to unity: dissensions, schisms, commotions ... Arius alone has been misled by the devil, was found to be the only one set on promoting this unholy mischief, first among you, and afterwards among others as well.⁶¹

⁵⁷ *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 2. 32, NPNF 2/2, 623.

⁵⁸ *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 1.21, NPNF 2/2, 529. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 172.

⁵⁹ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 173.

⁶⁰ Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power*, 91.

⁶¹ Opitz, *Urk* III. 25. 2 – 5.

Nevertheless, within two or three years, the situation changed in a dramatic way; the exiled Arians were recalled and restored to their respective positions.⁶² Did the emperor change his religious policy or Nicene stand? Certainly, as Fünzl says, Constantine did not change any of basic religious policy and Nicene stand, but tried to promote more perfect peace and unity by reconciling the two parties. In fact, the exiled bishops sent a petition letter to unnamed bishops to ask petition to Constantine for their recall, and Arius himself with Euzoius also sent a petition letter to Constantine, compromising their theological position in an orthodox way. Even so, it is unlikely that their humility and repentance were genuine as the forthcoming evidence would reveal their intentions. Eusebius of Nicomedia became a close imperial advisor in place of Ossius, and indeed administered the rite of baptism to Constantine in 337 on the emperor's deathbed.⁶³ Under his leadership, the Arians began to get rid of anti-Arians in the East.⁶⁴ Thus, political interests become more prominent and the ecclesiastical politics has become party politics, Barnes remarks.⁶⁵

The Arians attacked Nicene bishops with accusations of all sorts of crimes, including adultery and spreading rumors about the royal family.⁶⁶ The first to fall was Eustathius of Antioch, one of the most imposing Nicene figures. Eustathius was

⁶² The motivation for Constantine of the restoration of the exiled bishops and clerics is variedly reported. According to *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 1.14.NPNF 2/2, 63; and *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 2.16, NPNF 2/2, 184, the bishops sent a petition letter to some unnamed bishops to ask petition to Constantine for their recall. Opitz, *Urk* III.30 (64). *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 1. 26, NPNF 2/2, 85, reports that Arius and Euzoius also sent a petition letter to Constantine. For further discussion, see Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 175 – 178. Hogan, *Dissent*, 85, thinks it was the motivation of Constantine's half-sister Constantia who lived in Nicomedia and interceded for her exiled bishop, Eusebius of Nicomedia.

⁶³ Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 177.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* Jones, "The Arian Controversy," 59.

⁶⁵ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 225.

⁶⁶ Hogan, *Dissent*, 86.

accused of immoral behaviors and of Sabellianism.⁶⁷ Then, the Arian attack was shifted to the Alexandria See. The Emperor supported the rehabilitation of Arius in Alexandria but Bishop Alexander refused him.⁶⁸ In 328, the episcopal leadership of Alexandria changed upon the death of Alexander.⁶⁹ His successor, Athanasius (295 – 373) continued refusing Arius, albeit the strict orders and threatened to exile.⁷⁰ This courageous or stubborn act raised the fury of the Arians to the highest pitch, as Laux thinks.⁷¹ Perhaps, Athanasius from then on became the chief opponent of the Arians *plus* Melitians. Definitely much of Athanasius' career was spent in defense of the Nicene decisions and his life was to fight for orthodoxy against Arianism or the Arians which terms he himself created. Jones calls him a staunch defender of 'orthodoxy,' living through Arianism's beginning until the time when 'orthodoxy' had almost triumphed.⁷² Barnes looks at his career as the interpretation of ecclesiastical and

⁶⁷ Cyrus of Beroea formally accused him of Sabellianism in *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 1.24, NPNF 2/2, 81; but Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 227 – 8, says it was not the main charge, his immoral conduct and disrespectful words to emperor's mother (CSEL 65.66; *Hist. Ar.* 4.1, ASWL, 731; *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 2.19, NPNF 2/2, 599; *Theo. Hist. eccl.* 1.21ff, NPNF 2/3, 126). See Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 211, concludes that Eustathius was primarily deposed for the heresy of Sabellianism, with other minor charges.

⁶⁸ It is likely that Arius' reconciliation was done by a local council at Nicaea or Nicomedia; Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Life of Constantine* 3:23 would explain it as a reference to a 'second session' of the Council of Nicaea. See Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 174 – 178.

⁶⁹ The date of Alexander's death is firmly put to April 27th, 328 in the index to the Festal Letters of Athanasius. See Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 175, who cited Schwartz *Gesamm. Schr.* III.7.189; Barnard op. cit. 182 – 184.

⁷⁰ See further discussion on Athanasius' succession and Arius' return from exile, in Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 172 – 178, 239- 240. For further detail about Athanasius' biography, see Johannes Quasten, *Patrology: The Golden Age of Greek Literature*, vol. 3 (Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, Inc., 1986), 20 – 79. Timothy D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993). Khale Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Early Church Fathers* (London: Routledge, 2004). Duane W.- H. Arnold, *The Early Episcopal Career of Athanasius of Alexandria* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991). His episcopal election and career see in Brendan Jones, "The Arian Controversy: A Purely Theological Dispute or a Political Controversy?" *Phronema*, 12 (1997): 55 – 68, esp. 59 – 63. Athanasius' refusal of Arius and his followers into communion, see in his *Apol. c. Ar.* 59.4-6, noted in ASWL, 399.

⁷¹ Laux, *Church History*, 113.

imperial politics.⁷³ Athanasius lived through eight emperors, and five exiles, witnessing the up and down of Arian and Orthodox failure and success. Therefore, Athanasius was so important to the whole controversy that he became the central figure of the polemic.

In Athanasius' first exile, he was sent to Trier in 335. It is said that Eusebius of Nicomedia, one of the closet sympathizers and the head of the anti-Nicene party after the return from exile, forged an alliance with the Egyptian Melitians in order to put Athanasius on trial which led Constantine to call a Synod in Tyre, 335.⁷⁴ Arius was finally rehabilitated but died on his way to the church in Constantinople in 336.⁷⁵ With Constantine's assistance, Athanasius was allowed to return to Alexandria.⁷⁶ However it was short-lived as the Arians tried to dislodge him again.⁷⁷ His second exile occurred in 339 by the deposition of the Council of Antioch. Athanasius sailed to Rome and gained the support of Constantine, its bishop Julius and the Western Church. In the East, Constantius and Eusebians firmly supported Arianism. Athanasius probably met Marcellus, the extreme Nicene bishop who was deposed at the Council of Constantinople in 336. It is assumed that Athanasius learnt from Marcellus to argue

⁷² Jones, "The Arian Controversy," 59.

⁷³ Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 165.

⁷⁴ Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 11. Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 117. "Eusebius of Nicomedia as head of the anti-Nicene party" in Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 237. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 23 - 25, provides the four grounds on Athanasius' deposition, and Constantine must have sympathized with Athanasius; he therefore refused to accept the validity of the new appointment of the bishop in the place of Athanasius, expecting the deposition of Athanasius to be null and void.

⁷⁵ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 242. Irvin and Sunquist, *History of World Christian Movement*, 177. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 103 with a note on the report of Arius' death in Epiphanius, *Panarion* 68.6.9.

⁷⁶ Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 11 - 12. Laux, *Church History*, 115.

⁷⁷ Athanasius, *Epistola Encyclica* 2, mentions that Alexandria was in peace and concord with the unity of all Egyptian bishops until Gregory, a Cappadocian, came from court to replace him; and the Arians charged him of bribery and violence.

over Proverb 8: 22 in his *Oration against the Arians*.⁷⁸ Ayres believes that Athanasius' engagement with Marcellus in Rome might have encouraged Athanasius towards the development of a richer and richer account of his enemies' fundamental theological motivations, and resulted a masterpiece of the rhetorical art, construction of the 'Arian' heresy.⁷⁹

Pope Julius sent his complaints to the eastern bishops, calling them 'Eusebians' (οἱ περὶ Εὐσέβιον) not only for the unjust depositions of Marcellus and Athanasius but also for causing disorder in the Church by abandoning the Nicene decisions.⁸⁰ He invited them to a council in Rome but they ignored. Here we come to open the discussion over the theological split in the empire. Behind Athanasius and Marcellus, the western church stands firmly. Since Marcellus' deposition was on the ground of his theology, he was probably asked by the Pope to demonstrate his orthodoxy by a written confession, which has been preserved in his *Letter to Julius* by Epiphanius.⁸¹ According to Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Contra Marcellum*, Marcellus' theology was the theology of the undivided Monad: though named distinctly as Father and Son, they are one in *ousia* and *hypostasis*.⁸² Marcellus rejected that the Logos was begotten before the ages, and instead of the language 'begotten,' he prefers that the Logos was put forth. When *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was inserted in the Nicene Creed, Marcellus must have enthusiastically welcomed because for him, *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was not merely

⁷⁸ Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 106.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 106 – 107.

⁸⁰ Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 57.

⁸¹ Epiphanius, *Panarion* 72.2, trans. Williams, 423. Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 71.

⁸² *Euse. con Marc.* 1.1.4, GCS 14, 3.

‘consubstantial’ or ‘similar substance,’ but ‘of identical being’ (ταυτούσιος).⁸³ Marcellus probably first taught the kingdom of Christ will have an end, but later he rejected that teaching and refined that the kingdom of Christ will have no end.⁸⁴ Overall, the Roman community allowed itself to be convinced that Marcellus was defending orthodox Nicene theology.⁸⁵ Here Dünzl adds the linguistic problem that the Latin equivalent of the Greek term *hypostasis* was *substantia*.⁸⁶ If Eastern theology spoke of two *hypostases*, the Roman community understood that Father and Son are in different *substantia*.

Meanwhile in the East, led by Eusebians, the Arians were campaigning to modify the Nicene Creed, reformulating their own creed. In doing so, the leading supporters of the Nicene decisions had been deposed or disgraced or exiled.⁸⁷ In 341, the ninety eastern bishops, in the presence of Constantius II, held a council at Antioch which produced three creedal *formulae*, and a few months later in Antioch, another assembly of bishops produced a fourth creed.⁸⁸ The Second Creed as known as the ‘Dedication’ Creed was the most important result of the Council.⁸⁹ In this Creed, *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was omitted, and the emphasis on the distinct identities of the Trinity was clear as the Creed says, ‘...they are three in hypostasis but one in

⁸³ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 229 – 230.

⁸⁴ Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 73.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁸⁷ Athanasius in *De Fuga* 3, ASWL, 701, and *Hist. Ar.* 4, ASWL, 731, listed the deposed and exiled bishops – Athanasius, Eustathius, Marcellus, Asclepas of Gaza, Paul of Constantinople, Euphratation of Balanea, Cymatius of Paltus, Carterius of Antarados, Eutropius of Adrianople, and his successor in that see, Lucius.

⁸⁸ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 284– 285.

⁸⁹ Full text of the Creed in English translation is found in Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 286 – 287. See *De Synod.* 23, ASWL, 1101; *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 2.10, NPNF 2/2, 115.

agreement.⁹⁰ Hanson tells that its chief *bête noire* is Sabellianism, the denial of a distinction between the three within the Godhead.⁹¹ The third Creed is not really a manifesto by the assembled bishops, but just a profession of faith of Theophronius, bishop of Tyana.⁹² The fourth Creed was said to have been produced by an anonymous group in Antioch some months later.⁹³ It is positive in its statements but omissions are more significant. There is no mention of *ousia* (οὐσία), and the distinctness of the ‘Persons’ in Godhead. Hanson thinks it as a reconciling formula obnoxious to nobody and capable of being accepted by all.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, when it was presented to the West, nobody took any notice of creed because their concern was not theological agreement, but the reversion of the deposed bishops.⁹⁵ Dünzl notes that East and West were not only divided in church politics but also split theologically and incapable of union on their own.⁹⁶ Although Pope Julius and Constans made effort to reunite the split by the Council of Sardica, it was ended fruitlessly. Then, Constans was undoubtedly pressing his brother Constantius strongly to restore Athanasius to his see of Alexandria.⁹⁷

The East also responded with a delegation of its own, sending four bishops with the new Creed, so-called Long-lined (Macrostich) Creed based on the fourth Creed of

⁹⁰ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 286; ὡς εἶναι τῆ μὲν ὑποστάσει τρία, τῆ δὲ συμφωνίᾳ ἓν.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 287.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 291. *De Synod.* 24.1 – 5 ASWL, 1102 -3; *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 2.10, NPNF 2/2, 115.

⁹³ *Ibid.*; *De Synod.* 2.1 – 5, ASWL, 1081; *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 2.18, NPNF 2/2, 127.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 293.

⁹⁶ Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 77.

⁹⁷ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 307. At the attempt of pressing his brother Constantius, Constans is said even to have threatened civil war. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 97, says that Constantius did the restoration of Athanasius only out of political weakness and necessity.

Antioch, in which two Arian propositions were rejected.⁹⁸ By the Creed, the Easterners explained that they did not make three gods but believed in one unbegotten and unoriginated God, in Christ who is begotten from God and according to nature, he is true God who is like in all things to the Father. Interestingly, the Creed was cautiously reconstructed, avoiding the controversial terms like *ousia* and *hypostasis*. Besides, they replaced *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) with the term *homoiousios* (like in all things).⁹⁹ Hanson would look at this situation as the beginning of reconciliation of East and West. In 345 upon the death of Gregory of Alexandria, Constantius requested Athanasius' return to the See and restored him with full privileges.¹⁰⁰ Athanasius returned to his See in triumph in 346 and remained there for ten years, until 356.

The third exile of Athanasius occurred in 355 by the Synod of Milan. After his main protector Constantine's death in 350, the Arians tried to dislodge him by the synods held at Sirmium, Arles and Milan.¹⁰¹ Athanasius escaped the imperial arrest and hid himself in a monastery on the bank of Nile until Constantius' death. Laux comments that Athanasius was hunted down like a criminal.¹⁰² By that time, the Arians had split into three different sects: the Extreme Arians, who maintained that the Son was

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ See detail presentation of Athanasius' return in Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 87 – 93.

¹⁰¹ At the council of Sirmium, Athanasius was accused of treason not only for turning Constantine against his brother but also for writing to Magnentius (Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 103); for more information at the council of Sirmium, see *Ibid.*, 109; the full twenty-six anathemas in Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 326 – 7. Original sources for this creed are Athanasius, *De Synodis* 27; Socrates *HE* II. 30. For Latin version, Hilary *De Syn.* 37. At the council of Arles, the westerners were asked to renounce their support of Athanasius (Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 329). At the council of Milan, Athanasius was condemned together with those who refused to sign the Creed, including Pope Liberius, Ossius of Cordoba, and Lucifer of Cagliari (Laux, *Church History*, 116. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 333 – 341. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 117 – 119).

¹⁰² Laux, *Church History*, 116.

anhomoios (unlike the Father) of Aetius; the Semi-Arians, who wanted to replace *homoousios* (the same substance) in the Nicene Creed by the word *homoiousios* (of like substance) of Basil; and the Middle Party who simply wanted to affirm the Son was *homoios* (like the Father) of Acacius.¹⁰³ At Constantius' ultimatum for one universal confession of faith to define the religious policy of the empire, the different Arian groups proposed and presented their own creedal statements for a theological compromise. First, the so-called Nearians or Anhomoians led by Aetius and Eunomius proposed that the Father and the Son are not *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος), of the same substance, but decidedly *heteroousios*, of different substance. This kind of thought came from Aetius who, based on a kind of linguistic philosophy, thought that the substance (οὐσία) of the true God could be conceptualized precisely, with the term of unbegottenness (αγεννησία); in contrast, according to the Church teaching, the Logos/Son is begotten, therefore his begotten substance does not consist in unbegottenness of God.¹⁰⁴ Henceforth, Aetius and his party conclude that the substance of the Son is dissimilar (*anhomoios*) with the substance of the Father. Their theology is too radical for a compromised theology. Second, another Arian proposal was *homoiousios* by Basil of Ancyra and Gregory of Laodicea in order to declare that the Son is like or similar to the Father in substance.¹⁰⁵ Those who followed this trend of thought are called Semi-Arians or Homoiousians. Basil's theological approach was in terms of a Father-Son relationship and in terms of a creator-created relationship.¹⁰⁶ He argues that if we remove the corporeal connotations of the Father-Son relationship, we

¹⁰³ Laux, *Church History*, 117. See also Hogan, *Dissent*, 93.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Dünzl, *History of the Doctrine*, 89.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹⁰⁶ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 352.

are left with ‘only the generation of a living being like in essence.’¹⁰⁷ Thus, the Father and the Son are alike according to essence (ὅμοιος κατ’ οὐσίαν) but not identical with the Father.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, the Father and the Son are two distinct *hypostases* but each has his own *ousia* (οὐσία), individual substance. It was likely that Basil could convince Constantius to reject the Anhomioian theology and to agree upon his statement. Thus, in the letter to Aetius, Eudoxius and their partisans, Constantius writes, “...when we first made a declaration of our belief; for we confess that our Savior is the Son of God, and of like substance with the Father.”¹⁰⁹

Nevertheless, Constantius finally chose the third Arian proposal which confesses that the Son is like/similar to God *in all respects* (ὅμοιος κατὰ τὰς γραφάς), omitting any reference to *ousia*. Therefore, this Arian party is also called Homoians led by Acacius. Apparently the Homoian party emerged in 359 under the leadership of Acacius, who had succeeded Eusebius as bishop of Caesarea in 340.¹¹⁰ In the course of the controversy, the Homoian party was the last hope of Arianism, derived from the thought both of Arius and Eusebius of Caesarea.¹¹¹ By the Sirmian manifesto, the original doctrine of Arius and Eusebian coalition had been given up by majority except by the Homoians. Hanson presents us twelve creeds or rules of faith associated with the Homoian Arianism, and remarks that they tend to take Scripture literally in the sense that they insist upon the actual meaning of metaphorical or analogical language

¹⁰⁷ Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 151.

¹⁰⁸ Epiphanius, *Panarion* 73. 3. 1 – 8; 73. 8. 8, trans. Williams, 433 – 442.

¹⁰⁹ *Soz. Hist. eccl.* 4. 14, NPNF 2/2, 689.

¹¹⁰ Rowan A. Greer, “Homoeans,” *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, vol. 1, eds. Everett Ferguson et al. (New York/London: Garland Publishing, 2nd ed., 1999), 540.

¹¹¹ Henry M. Gwatkin, *Studies in Arianism: Chiefly Referring to the Character and Chronology of the Reaction Which Followed the Council of Nicaea* (Cambridge, 2nd ed., 1900), 245.

used of God, scarcely recognizing its equivocal nature.¹¹² Evidently the Homoians rejected the Nicene watch-words *homoousios* (ὁμούσιος) and *ousia* (οὐσίας), reasoning that they were not found in the Scripture; rather they were willing to talk of Son being ‘like’ (ὅμοιος) the Father, or ‘like according to the Scripture,’ applying the word *homoios* (like) in avoiding all technical terminology.¹¹³ It is noteworthy to take a look at the Creed signed in Constantinople in 360, which was the edification of the so-called fourth formula of Sirmium or “Dated Creed” of 359. It is the Homoian Creed preserved by Athanasius in his *De Synodis* and by Socrates in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*. It ran:

We believe in one God Father, Almighty, from Whom are all things; And in the only-begotten Son of God Who was begotten from God before all ages and before all beginning, through Whom all things came into existence, visible and invisible; begotten the only-begotten alone from the Father alone, God from God, like the Father Who begot Him according to the Scriptures; Whose generation no one knows save [except] the Father alone who begot Him. We know that this only-begotten Son of God, the Father sending Him, came down from heavens as it is written for the destruction of sin and death; and was born from the Holy Spirit, and from the Virgin Mary as regards the flesh as it is written, and consorted with the disciples, having fulfilled all economy according to the Father’s will was crucified and died, and was buried and descended into the lower world (at Whom hell itself quailed): Who also rose again from the dead on the third day, sojourned with the disciples, and when forty days were fulfilled was taken up to heaven, and sits on the Father’s right hand purposing to come on the last day of the resurrection in his Father’s glory, so as to render to each according to his deeds.

And in the Holy Spirit, Whom the only-begotten Son of God Himself, Christ our Lord and God, promised to send as a Paraclete to the race of men, as it is written, “the Spirit of truth,” Whom he sent to them when He had ascended to heaven.

¹¹² Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 558 – 559; the twelve creeds or rules of faith are (1) the Second Sirmian Creed of 357; (2) the Creed of Nice of 360; (3) the Creed put forward by Acacius at Seleucia, 359; (4) the Rule of Faith of Ulfilas; (5) the Creed uttered by Ulfilas on his death-bed, 383; (6) the Creed attributed to Eudoxius; (7) the Creed of Auxentius of Milan, 364; (8) the Creed professed by Germinius when corresponding with Valens and Ursacius; (9) Palladius’ Rule of Faith; (10), (11), (12) the credal statements to be found in the fragments of Mai/Gryson and Turner.

¹¹³ Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 138.

But as for the name ‘substance’ (*ousia*), which was adopted simply by the fathers, but being unknown to the people occasioned offence, because the Scriptures themselves do not contain it, it has pleased us that it should be abolished and that no mention at all should be made it henceforth, since indeed the divine Scriptures nowhere have made mention of the substance of Father and Son. Nor indeed should the term hypostasis be used of Father and Son and Holy Spirit. But we say the Son is like the Father, as the divine Scriptures say and teach. But let all the heresies which have either been condemned previously, or have come about more recently and are in opposition to this creed, be anathema.¹¹⁴

Accordingly, it is plainly taught that the Son is like/similar (ὅμοιος) to the Father, without specifying any metaphysical relationship between the Father and the Son. The use of *ousia* (οὐσίας) and *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was condemned, and the use *homoiousios* (ὁμοιοούσιος) was banned because the Son could not be described even as *like in substance*. The Homoians have the strong conception of the incomparability, soleness and transcendence of God the Father as Hilary of Poitiers says that they speak of God as “being a lone good, alone omnipotent, alone immortal,” and that they speak of God’s nature as “unapproachable, invisible, inviolable, ineffable, and infinite, endued with omniscience and omnipotence, instinct with love, moving in all and permeating all, immanent and transcendent, sentient in all sentient existence.”¹¹⁵ In their Christological view, though they were content, more or less, to declare that the Son was ‘like’ (ὅμοιος) the Father, their Christology was a radical subordination of the Son. In later development of the Homoian theology, they claim that the Son is a creature, that he was chosen and called by grace and not produced by nature.¹¹⁶ Actually, Hanson presents us the diverse development of Homoian thoughts but here we may not need to go that further. It would be enough to note, as far as the Homoian

¹¹⁴ J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (London: Longmans, 3rd ed., 1972), 293 – 194; both Greek text and English translation are given. *De Synod.* 30, ASWL, 1115. *Soc. Hist. eccl.* 2.41, NPNF 2/2, 185 – 6.

¹¹⁵ Hilary, *De Trinitate* 11.4, NPNF 2/9, 177.

¹¹⁶ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 562. cit. no. 19 and 20.

Creed confesses, that their theology, for the right moment, can hardly be considered a separate theological position from other Arian sects; rather we may fairly conclude that its theological position is one of the opposing strands of anti-Nicene positions. After all, it is fairly evident as Kelly concludes, “the creed asserts none of the articles of the old heresy, and its deliberate vagueness made it capable of being recited by Christians with very different sets of ideas.”¹¹⁷

Despite having Synods for a theological compromise at Seleucia and Rimini, since the emperor favored the formula of *homoios*, at the end all the bishops were forced to agree to that formula of *homoios*.¹¹⁸ At this point in history, Jerome wrote: “The world groaned and was astonished to find itself Arian.”¹¹⁹ Athanasius sent a letter to all his Egyptian bishops urging them not to agree to the *homoios* formula, and so the Egyptian bishops remained faithful to the Nicene Creed.¹²⁰

In 361, Constantius died and his cousin, Julian the Apostate became emperor and tried to restore pagan cults, and allowed the return of the exiled bishops to their sees. In fact, his permission of bishops’ return is highly tactical as a pagan historian Ammianus said, “The emperor knew that no wild beasts were so hostile to men as were Christians to one another.”¹²¹ Athanasius could return to his see in 362 and began his work for reconciliation of Semi-Arians and the orthodox party, holding a synod at

¹¹⁷ Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 295.

¹¹⁸ Hogan, *Dissent*, 94. See also Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 357 – 380. Constantius issued an imperial Letter aimed at Eudoxius and Aetius. See Sozomen, *HE* IV.13.4 – 6; 14.1 – 7 (the Letter).

¹¹⁹ Jerome, *Dialogue Against the Luciferians*, 19 in PL 23, 172.

¹²⁰ Hogan, *Dissent*, 95.

¹²¹ Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils*, 101.

Alexandria in the same year.¹²² Yet, Athanasius' reconciliation disappointed Julian who expected discord and dissension among the Christians; thus, Athanasius was again exiled by imperial order as a 'disturber of the peace and enemy of the gods.'¹²³ Julian died in 363, and Athanasius was able to return to his See. In 365, he was exiled for the fifth time by Valens, who became the ruler of the East (364 – 378); however, due to Alexandrians threat of revolt against Valens, he recalled their bishop, Athanasius. He then remained in his See till he died in 373.¹²⁴

¹²² Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 3, 21.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

3.4. Athanasius' Theology

The eminent German scholar Eduard Schwartz opines that Athanasius' theology was just to cover his desire for power, motivated purely by political considerations. R. P. C. Hanson rejects this kind of opinion, even though he admits that Athanasius had a desire for power.¹²⁵ Brendan Jones defends that Athanasius' interests were primarily theological, yet he also admit Athanasius' use of political machine to attain his objectives.¹²⁶ Hanson too acknowledges that Athanasius was a genuine theologian.¹²⁷ Yet, Johannes Quasten comments that he is not a scientific theologian but a defender of traditional Christianity.¹²⁸ Khale Anatolios praises Athanasius for his remarkable consistency in his theological vision and even vocabulary, albeit with some notable developments and variance of emphasis.¹²⁹ As early as his first works *Contra Gentes* and *De Incarnatione*, Athanasius had adopted the Origenistic concept of God's indivisibility, and eternal generation of the Son.¹³⁰ As he links the Incarnation and the redemption firmly, the soteriological vision is based on a particular conception of the relation between God and creation. Anatolios put it, "His conception of the relation between God and creation may be considered as the architectonic center of Athanasius' theological vision."¹³¹ Charles Kannengiesser recognizes Athanasius as the first

¹²⁵ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 421; Eduard Schwartz's opinion is cited here in Hanson's work.

¹²⁶ Jones, "The Arian Controversy," 66.

¹²⁷ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 422.

¹²⁸ Johannes Quasten, *Patrology: The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature*, vol. 3 (Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, Inc., 1986), 66.

¹²⁹ Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 31.

¹³⁰ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 422.

¹³¹ Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 32.

theologian who attempted to organize all Christian doctrine concerning the incarnation of God.¹³² The result is the doctrine of Trinity in Athanasius' theology, and Incarnation has become the heart of his soteriological vision. In order to communicate immortality to human race, the Savior must become man; Athanasius therefore linked the Father and the Son, and insisted continually that the Son was the Father's own (ἴδιος).¹³³ Thus, Hanson remarks that the relation of the Son to the Father was almost always at the center of Athanasius' concern.¹³⁴

Athanasius contends that it is useless to argue a priori about the divinity of the Son, or as a mere supposition of reason; instead, Athanasius enquires into Scripture and sees how it teaches us to discover the divinity of the Son starting from the concrete economy of salvation.¹³⁵ Indeed, the main and paramount source of his doctrine is the Bible as Hanson put it, "Thought Athanasius' thought is deeply indebted to philosophy... his philosophical language is all devoted to what was ultimate a Scriptural argument."¹³⁶ Influenced by his predecessor Alexander, he also holds that God is indeed transcendent, invisible and unapproachable to transitory (τὸς γεννητοῦς) things and particularly to human race.¹³⁷ Arius and the Arians have the same doctrine of God's soleness, transcendence and inaccessibility but when they deal with the Son, they come to have a huge problem to adapt their logical philosophy with the biblical message. The Arians read Proverbs 8:22 in a pure literary sense and

¹³² Charles Kannengiesser, "Athanasius of Alexandria and the Foundation of Traditional Christology," *TS* 34 (1973): 103 – 113; esp. 107.

¹³³ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 425.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ Kannengiesser, "Athanasius," 112.

¹³⁶ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 422.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.* 424.

interpret Wisdom, the Logos as created, and concludes that the Logos cannot be true God, and that the Logos enjoys his status as the Son of God either by participation in grace or by adoption.¹³⁸ In response to this Arian proposition, Athanasius replies that the terms of Proverbs 8:22 apply to the incarnate, not the pre-existence of Christ.¹³⁹ Athanasius placed the mediating function of the Son, not in his position within the Godhead, but in his becoming incarnate.¹⁴⁰ Hanson remarks it as a revolutionary theology which is consonant with the Scriptures.

In Arian Christology, Christ is believed to be a created being in status and any appearance found in scriptures was just merely titles of honor for Christ.¹⁴¹ Athanasius strongly refutes any inclination to say that Christ, the Logos is a created being. He explains that Christ can be said to be ‘created’ because the original Wisdom at creation manifested his own image in created things, but it does not mean that He himself was created.¹⁴² Indeed, the Son is the Father’s own offspring derived from His *ousia* (οὐσία).¹⁴³ According to Gwatkin, the Arian statement “Christ as a created being” comes as a solution to connect the unknown God with a material world; Christ is asserted as a created mediator like a demigod.¹⁴⁴ Anatolios has made a great analysis on Athanasius’ polemics against the Arian Christology. As mentioned in *De Synodis*

¹³⁸ Larry R. Helyer, “Arius Revisited: The First Born of All Creation (Col 1:15),” *JET* 31/1 (1988): 59 – 67; esp. 59. Proverbs 8:22 “The Lord created me at the beginning of his work.”

¹³⁹ *Or. con. Ar.* I2. 25, 26, ASWL, 915 - 6; I2.73, 74, ASWL, 963 -4. The whole of Book II deals specifically with confronting the heresy around Proverbs 8:22.

¹⁴⁰ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 424.

¹⁴¹ Arian Christ as created being differs from the creatures; He is not precisely a man; He is a pre-existent being who assumed a soma apsychon, a body without a human mind or soul. Cf. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 97 – 8.

¹⁴² *Or. con. Ar.* I2.80, 81, ASWL, 969 – 71. Cf. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 427.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.* 1.16, ASWL, 826. The expression ‘own offspring derived from his *ousia* (ἴδιον, ὁ ἴδιον γέννημα, τῆς οὐσίας) occurs several times. See *Ibid.* 1.20, 26; 2. 32; 3.6.

¹⁴⁴ Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism*, 21 & 27.

16 and *De Decretis* 7 & 8, the Arian Christ seems to work a mediating demiurgic activity; that is to say that only the Son was created directly by God, while the rest of creation was created indirectly, through the Son as by an underworker.¹⁴⁵ Logically, Athanasius argues that if creation requires a mediator to withstand the direct hand of God, and if this mediator is himself created, then precisely *qua* created, it must also stand in need of a further mediation.¹⁴⁶ Then, Athanasius rejects God's necessity of mediation for creation, yet the mediation, if necessary to speak, is only in reference to the condescension of the divine love which the manifestation of the Father's love: φιλανθρωπία πατρικῆ συγκαταβάς.¹⁴⁷ As a matter of fact, Athanasius in his *Contra Gentes* has expounded that while God's nature is invisible and incomprehensible and beyond all created being (ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατάληπτός ἐστι τῆν φύσιν, ἐπέκεινα πάσης); it does not mitigate against the positive and cataphatic characterization of God as "good and the lover of humanity (ἀγαθὸς γὰρ ὢν καὶ φιλάθρωπος)."¹⁴⁸ Athanasius believes that the mediatory bridge between creation and the Creator can only be located in the Son, in terms of divine love and condescension.¹⁴⁹ Significantly Athanasius interprets John 1:14 that the Logos became man, and did not enter into man in order to remind us that only God can save the fallen race as we ourselves were the motive of his Incarnation, the Savior must become man.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought* (London: Routledge, 2005), 112.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 113.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 115.

¹⁴⁸ Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 41. Athanasius, *CG* 35; 41. "ἵνα καὶ φιλανθρω- πεύεσθαι δύνηται."

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 115.

Athanasius teaches the full ontological unity of the Father and the Son as he was so convinced that the Son is the wholly revealer.¹⁵¹ Against the Arian proposition that the Son is changeable, Athanasius defends that the Son is eternal, uncreated (ἀγέννητος) and unchangeable, and that there is a unity of Divine Essence between the Father and the Son.¹⁵² For him, the Father and the Son are the One God, they both are Unoriginated, but only the Father is Unbegotten, while the Son is, eternally and unoriginately, begotten of the Father.¹⁵³ Hanson clearly put it, "...that it is possible to say of God 'Maker' without implying any specific thing made, but to say 'Father' implies the existence (ὑπαρξις) of the Son."¹⁵⁴ Hence, when God in the Scriptures is referred to as 'alone' or 'only,' this does not affect the status of the Son.¹⁵⁵ In fact, due to the lack of vocabulary, Hanson comments that he comes dangerously close to Sabellianism; however he insists that the right term is not "create" but "beget."¹⁵⁶

Athanasius accepts that the Father as the source of the Son (*pēgē*) but he rejects the Arian statement of the Father's pre-existence. In fact, he insists that the Father 'pre-dates' (προϋπαρχεῖν) everything, but the Son 'pre-dates' everything along with the Father.¹⁵⁷ The Son is indeed co-eternal with the Father as the only begotten Son, derived

¹⁵⁰ *Or. con. Ar.* 3. 30, ASWL, 1003. *De Incarn.* 4, trans. A Religious of C.S.M.V. (New York, NY: St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary, 1953, reprinted in 1993), 48 – 56. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine*, 284. Cf. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 425.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 428.

¹⁵² *Or. con. Ar.* 1, ASWL, 809 – 889.

¹⁵³ See Thomas Gerard Weinandy, *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007), 69.

¹⁵⁴ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 428.

¹⁵⁵ *Or. con. Ar.* 3.6, ASWL, 966 – 7. See the Scriptural passes that say of God as 'alone' or 'only': Exod 3:14; Deut 32:39; Isa 44:6; and John 17:33. See also Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 428.

¹⁵⁶ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 429.

from His *ousia* (οὐσία). Thus, the Son can be called an ‘offspring’ (γέννημα) but not ‘something made’ (ποίημα).¹⁵⁸ If the Son is not unbegotten (ἀγεννητος), then “there must be a time when he did not exist,” Arius argues. In response to this, Athanasius distinguishes ‘unbegotten’ (ἀγεννητος) and ‘without origin of existence’ (ἀγενητος). Then he explains three different meanings of *agenetos*, and Hanson put it:¹⁵⁹

(i) It can mean something which could come into existence but has not done so, like a tree which is not yet a boat.

(ii) It can mean something which has not come into existence and never could, like a four-sided triangle or an even odd number.

(iii) It can mean that which exists but has not come into existence from any source (ὐμὲν γενηθὲν δὲ ἔκ τινος); and he quotes Asterius as saying ‘that is agenton which is not made but has eternally existed.’¹⁶⁰

Athanasius criticizes the Arian for using non-Scripture term to argue about *agenetos* so they also should not blame the Nicene bishops for their use of non-Scriptural phrase.¹⁶¹ In his *De Decretis* 28.1 – 6, he repeats the argument about *agenetos* but he says only the third definition can apply to the Son; nevertheless, he prefers to use the Scriptural term “Father” and invokes argument from baptism.¹⁶² He says that *agenetos* is a term used by the Greeks, who do not know the Son.¹⁶³ For Athanasius, it is clear that while creation is of a different nature to the Father as Creator, the Son is of the same nature as the Father as Begetter.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁷ *De Decret.* 18, trans. Anatolios, 157. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 429.

¹⁵⁸ Athanasius, *De Synod.* 35.4.

¹⁵⁹ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 432.

¹⁶⁰ *Or. con. Ar.* I.30, ASWL, 842 – 3.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² *De Decret.* 5, trans. Anatolios, 147. Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 433.

¹⁶³ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 432.

¹⁶⁴ Weinandy, *Athanasius*, 69.

Hanson remarks that his several use of the expression of the Son as “own offspring derived from his *ousia*” leads Athanasius to promote the *homousios*.¹⁶⁵ The term *homousios* (ὁμούσιος) was inserted in the Nicene Creed in order to safeguard that the Son is “not from nothing” (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων) but from the *ousia* (οὐσίας) of the Father. Athanasius’ first reference to the word *homousios* (ὁμούσιος) is in his earlier work of *Orationes contra Arianos* as he describes the Son as ‘true God by origin (ὑπάρχων) consubstantial (ὁμοούσιος) with the Father.’¹⁶⁶ However, the word *homousios* (ὁμούσιος) from then on was completely silenced for twenty year till it was mentioned again in *De Decretis*, written in 356 or 357. Hanson opines that Athanasius probably thought no great need to use it in his earlier work as he had many words to express the ontological unity of the Father and the Son.¹⁶⁷ Eventually, Athanasius began to defend the Nicaea’s terminology in attempting to refute questions raised by associates of Acacius of Ceasarea about Nicaea’s use of *homousios* (ὁμούσιος) and of ‘the *ousia* of the Father.’¹⁶⁸ According to Lewis Ayres, Athanasius defends Nicaea’s ὁμοουσιος pursuing two basic strategies: first the term is defended as a necessary corollary of Nicaea’s controversial phrase ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρος; and second he defends both ὁμούσιος and ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρος.¹⁶⁹

As he always teaches that the Father and the Son share a common nature, Athanasius is so convinced that *homousios* (ὁμούσιος) in itself indicates some sort of

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 428.

¹⁶⁶ *Or. con. Ar.* 1.9, ASWL, 817 - 8. See Hanson, *Search for Christian Doctrine*, 436, with a useful footnote. no. 71.

¹⁶⁷ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 437.

¹⁶⁸ Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 140.

¹⁶⁹ Lewis Ayres, “Athanasius’ Initial Defense of the term Ὁμοουσιος: Rereading the *De Decretis*”, *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, vol. 12 (2004): 337 – 359; esp. 337.

equal ontological status and sharing of nature.¹⁷⁰ Before defending this Nicaea’s terminology, Athanasius has eloquently expressed the Son as *idios* (ἴδιος) to the Father: the Son is either “proper” to the Father’s substance (το ἴδιον τῆς οὐσίας) or from the Father’s “own proper” substance (ἄπαράλλακτος εἰκὼν τῆς οὐσίας). When the Arians said that the Son is from another *hypostasis* than the Father’s, he was shocked because he understood that they were saying that the Son is from another *ousia* since *hypostasis* and *ousia* were still synonymous for him.¹⁷¹ Athanasius strongly believes and teaches that the Son is from the *ousia* (οὐσίας) of the Father. As Ayres rightly analyzes, his defense of *homoousios* (ὁμούσιος) was expanded and developed from defending the Nicaea’s phrase “from the essence of the Father.”¹⁷² Though Athanasius had occasionally used the expressions like ὅμοιος κατὰ πάντα (like in all respects) and ὅμοιος κατ’ οὐσίαν (like in substance), he discarded them as unsatisfactory.¹⁷³ Nicene bishops were also first trying to declare the Son to be ‘like’ (ὅμοιον) the Father, and ‘exactly as the Father in all things (ἄπαράλλακτον κατὰ πάντα τῷ πατρὶ) and immutable (ἄτρεπτον) and always in the Father.¹⁷⁴ Still, it was unsatisfactory for them too. Therefore, Athanasius believes that *homoousios* (ὁμούσιος) renders the Scriptural images of the Son, and renders impossible description of the Son as created and rules out such phrase as “there was a time when

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 339.

¹⁷¹ Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 440.

¹⁷² Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 141.

¹⁷³ *Or. con. Ar.* 1.20, ASWL, 831; 3.26, ASWL, 916.

¹⁷⁴ *De Decret.* 20, trans. Anatolios, 159; *ad Afros.* 5, ASWL, 1161 – 2.

he was not.”¹⁷⁵ Later, he succeeded in pursuing the Homoiousians to the orthodox trend, opening the door for them to accepting the term *homoouios* as he said:

If now they admit that the Son is from the *ousia* of the Father and not of a different *hypostasis* and is not a creature nor something made, but an authentic and natural offspring and, as Logos and Wisdom he has eternally co-existed with the Father, they are not far off from accepting the term *homoousios*.¹⁷⁶

Thus, Quasten concludes that Athanasius defends *homoousios* (ὁμούσιος) not only against the Arians, but also against the Semi-Arians, to whom he makes overtures in order to gain them back to the Nicene formula.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ *De Decret.* 19, trans. Anatolios, 158. Cf. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 141.

¹⁷⁶ *De Synod.* 4, after consulted with ASWL, 1124, the text cited here is taken from Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine*, 440.

¹⁷⁷ Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 3, 70.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the entire fourth century, the Arian controversy definitely had a big impact in the Christian discourse. However, it is not accurate to describe it as “Arian” controversy since it was invented for a polemical purpose and was standardized in the ecclesiastical historiography and heresiology. As many of the scholars consulted consider that the term “Arian” controversy, created by Athanasius, tied the theological debates of the fourth century, to the person of Arius and the events that began with the 318 confrontation. Thus, Arianism has often been regarded as the product of Arius, and Arius himself as the arch-heretic. In fact, Arianism did not entirely originate with Arius; rather more people like bishops, theologians, and emperors involved and supported in this controversy which in reality was a series of controversies filled with theological and political interests. Henceforth, it should be clear that while the fourth-century doctrinal dispute is continuously described as the “Arian” controversies, one has to keep in mind at least three conditions, as suggested: first, Arius’ own role in the “Arian controversies” was comparatively small; second, fourth-century polemicists made vastly excessive use of the name “Arian” without doing justice to the motives and intentions of those so labeled; and third, “Arianism” was not merely a conceptual category, it can be understood only in its historical situation.

Among the authors consulted, we verified that many consider that after the conversion of Constantine, the political authorities had a massive contribution in the constitution of Christian faith. While it is unquestionable, we have to acknowledge that the constitution of orthodoxy in the Christian Church did not occur just recently after the conversion of Constantine, but it has been always taking place in the Christian Church since its very beginning while confronting heretical movements in the

development of its doctrines, particularly of Christological doctrines. The fact is that the doctrinal disputes in the Christian Church before the conversion of Constantine were really internal and “purely” theological; however, after receiving the imperial support and patronage, the Christian Church started inescapably confronting the challenges and demands of more maturity and development in its doctrines and disciplines on the surface of political and social complexities. This is the significance of the series of the Arian controversies in the formative epoch of Church-Empire partnership. In ecclesiastical history, it was indeed the climax of Christian formative stage and the beginning of formulating Christian orthodoxy with the standardized professions of faith.

Perhaps, as proposed by Joseph T. Lienhard, it would be fairly right to look at the Arian controversies in the context in which two theological traditions conflicted each other while answering to the theological problems raised when the theologians tried to express, in the language of speculation, on how Christian monotheism and the doctrine of Christ’s divinity could be reconciled; or how they could express what was singular and what was plural in God.¹ With the birth of speculative theology, Christian theologians had to be more conscious of the doctrinal content of their confessions of faith, especially with Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the *novum* of the Christian faith. They had to deal with a twofold demonstration of Christian theology: first that it was compatible with Jewish monotheism and, secondly, that it was different from pagan polytheism. The great theologians of the fourth century were well aware that they were

¹ Joseph T. Lienhard, “The “Arian Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered,” *TS* 48 (1987): 415 – 437; esp. 420.

trying to explain the most difficult task of their faith, the mystery of the triune God. In so doing, the terminological difficulty was at stake.

There are a number of different understandings to the concepts or different uses of the terms in Greek and Latin theologies such as the use of *ousia*, *hypostasis*, *physis*, *natura*, *essentia*, *proson* and many other terms. The terms were used to express in their speculative theology on the mystery of triune God and the relationship within the Godhead, especially the relationship of the Son to the Father. The Latin word *substantia* must be *hypostasis* in Greek, not *ousia*, not only because *hypostasis* is biblical, but because Origen elsewhere denied that the Son is from the *ousia* (οὐσίας) of the Father. Indeed *hypostasis* seemed more appropriate term to speak of God's substance. Nonetheless, *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) was introduced in the Council of Nicaea in order to speak of oneness and distinction in Godhead. The interesting thing here is the understanding of *hypostasis*, different in Latin and in Greek at that time. While in Greek *hypostasis* was flexibly used for either person or substance, in Latin it was retained only for substance. Therefore, the Greeks interpreted the Latin *persona* in the sense of *proson* (προσωπον) while the Latins in turn understood *hypostasis* to mean *substantia*. For example, in his manifesto, Ossius used *hypostasis* to mean 'substance' or 'nature.' Athanasius also used *hypostasis* to speak of common deity of all persons of the Trinity. As a result, from the terminological point of view, in the Creed of Nicaea, *hypostasis* and *ousia* were not yet well clarified; henceforth it is found that the term *hypostasis* was used as equivalent to *ousia*. Moreover, the other terms like *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) and *proson* (προσωπον) were understood differently by the different groups of theologians. Thus, when the Council chose to adopt the appropriate term in order to define Christ's relationship with God the Father, it is questionable whether they were aware of the full understanding of the terms as they were understood

by those who, like Arius and the so-called Arians, were condemned. Since the terms meant something different for him and the Arians, could they really accept the doctrine defined by the Council as the catholic orthodoxy?

As a matter of fact, “Arians” thought of themselves, naturally enough, as Catholics, the mainstream Christians, and regarded Athanasius and his allies as isolated extremists. Probably, the catholic orthodoxy could be reorganized by virtue of its triumph. If that is the case, the conflict of the fourth century could be seen as that of two theological alliances struggling to reach their triumphs of so-called “catholic orthodoxy.” Apparently Arianism in the middle of the fourth century seemed to have become for all time the only permissible Christian faith. For a short period, they won the imperial support from emperor Constantius, and thus Jerome wrote: “The world groaned and was astonished to find itself Arian.”² Nevertheless, the Arianism failed to reach its triumph to be regarded as the catholic Christian faith. Was it its failure that reversed it as heresy and that made the Arians placed into the heresiological category in the course of the development of Christian doctrine?

To many moderns, the word “heresy” sounds very uncomfortable and it connotes bygone and forgotten quarrels, and old prejudice against rational examination. However, to the early Christians, the battles on orthodoxy and heresy were vital and decisive for their own existence and identity. Apparently, it is not surprising that when one doctrine was declared to be orthodox, its rivals were condemned as heretical. The synods and councils became the most decisive ecclesiastical body for the declaration of orthodoxy and for the identification and condemnation of heresy. Was there any standard to testify what was orthodox and what was heretical? Definitely, catholicity

² Jerome, *Dialogue Against the Luciferians*, 19.

was the primary standard of orthodoxy. In another word, orthodoxy was defined in terms of whatever in any age is taught by the bishops as a college. Definitely, the early Christian theologians used the word in application to the sound doctrine opposed to unorthodox dissidents. When Arius asserted that the Son was *ex nihilo* and acclaimed that when there was a time when he was not, the Nicene Council's Fathers found his assertions unorthodox and failure to recognize the soteriological effects of Christ as God. On another word, Arius' assertions were seen incompatible with the teaching of the Apostolic tradition (catholicity). Since the Arian proposals were neither catholic nor orthodox, their rivals must be declared catholic and orthodox. If catholicity of orthodoxy was recognized by virtue of triumph, so did Athanasius reach to his triumph by developing his theology which became a standard theology for orthodoxy.

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