

## Articulating identity

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The purpose of this chapter is to explore some of the ways in which Christian belief and hence some key aspects of Christian identity were articulated and formed from around AD 300 to 451. This subject has far too many facets to be covered in just one chapter. This is especially so in the light of the many different approaches used in contemporary early Christian studies to consider the formation and nature of Christian identity. In this chapter, however, my focus will be fairly narrow: I will primarily consider how the various doctrinal disputes of the fourth and early fifth centuries unfolded and how they led to the development of a particular account of 'orthodox' belief as it is represented in the writings of Christians towards the end of this period. One might conceive of this exercise as exploring how some key aspects of the late antique Christian imagination were shaped through internal and external dispute.

At the turn of the fourth century two of the most important issues facing the Christian community were the place of Christianity in the Roman Empire and the nature of the Church as a unified body (both in terms of organization and teaching). The legitimization of Christianity did not suddenly effect a shift from a pluralistic Church that saw itself as clearly 'apart' from worldly authority and structure to a more monolithic body that was immediately willing to accommodate itself to and desire worldly power, as some older, mostly Protestant, narratives suggested. At the turn of the fourth century Christians already had a long history of *ad hoc* alliances with the Roman authorities, and we know of previous instances where Christians had attempted to involve those authorities in internal disputes. What we see in the fourth century is an increasingly broad interaction between Christian groups and the imperial authorities and an increasing desire by many Roman rulers to control and influence an increasingly important institution in the Roman world. We see this process through virtually all the disputes covered in this chapter. We can begin displaying the character of these interactions by considering two

disputes which demonstrate the internal problems caused by emergence from the threat of persecution.

The first dispute is the 'Melitian schism' in Egypt.<sup>1</sup> This dispute is sometimes presented as stemming from the refusal of Melitius, bishop of Lycopolis, and other rigorists to accept the leniency of conditions imposed on those Christians who had lapsed under persecution but now wanted to be readmitted. In fact, the situation appears to be much more complicated than this. During the persecution of 303–13 Melitius seems to have aroused the anger of some fellow bishops who were in prison because he ordained priests and interfered in various dioceses without consulting the official visitors, most notably annoying Peter of Alexandria. At the end of the persecution Melitius seems also to have taken offence at the leniency of Peter's regulations for readmittance and within a few years something of an alternative hierarchy of bishops existed in Egypt. The Council of Nicaea attempted to solve the dispute without success and Melitians became a major source of opposition to Athanasius.

Some scholars have tried to read the two sides in this controversy as revealing two opposed social groups or as ciphers for some sort of underlying political conflict. Such accounts appear increasingly unsustainable and the evidence that does exist seems to present a picture of two communities whose social structure and practice of Christianity were virtually indistinguishable. The conflict is thus extremely complex, and while Melitians seem to have narrated their own origins as an opposition to the leniency of Peter, it seems clear that the role of the bishop of Alexandria and the structure of the Church in Egypt were also at issue. Alexandria had a strong tradition of a powerful and independent priestly office with the bishop acting as an extremely influential *primus inter pares*. From the late third century we seem to see bishops of Alexandria trying to exercise a monarchical episcopacy of the type increasingly common around the Roman world. The struggle to shape such a model in the Egyptian context seems to have been interwoven with apparently distinct disputes there throughout the century. In a wider context a number of scholars have argued that a widely apparent episcopal struggle to control the growing monastic movement within diocesan structures reflects a broader move on the part of bishops to assert a more direct and consistent control over affairs within their diocese. This dispute is also seen in the Egyptian context and may well have helped to prolong the Melitian schism.<sup>2</sup>

Some similar issues are present in the case of Donatism further along the coast of North Africa in the area of modern-day Tunisia and Algeria.<sup>3</sup> Many bishops refused to accept the consecration of Caecilian of Carthage in 311 or

312 on the grounds that his consecrator had been a *traditor* (someone who had 'handed over' the Scriptures to the Roman authorities during persecution). In opposition to him Majorinus was consecrated as rival bishop, and Majorinus' successor was Donatus, after whom the movement was known by its enemies. Both Constantine and, later, his son Constans, intermittently tried coercion to force their submission, but to no avail. Donatists appear to have constituted the majority of the African Church through the late fourth century.

A significant turning point was the Emperor Honorius' equation of Donatists with heretics and his official confiscation of their property in 405. Nevertheless, attempts at reconciliation continued: in 411 a large Donatist and Catholic conference was held in Carthage under the aegis of Marcellinus, an imperial representative. Marcellinus (not surprisingly) declared for the Catholics and in 412 Donatism was banned again by imperial edict. The Catholics also found in Augustine and Aurelius of Carthage energetic partisans who were able to undertake a wide-ranging and sophisticated offensive. Although Donatism went into decline it still existed at Augustine's death in 430. When we try to trace the course of Donatism in the centuries that follow we find our information very scarce. It seems that despite the attempts of some (such as Gregory the Great) to assume the schism still retained its early contours even in the sixth century, the two communities (in Robert Markus' words) 'slowly and imperceptibly coalesced'.<sup>4</sup>

In the last century a number of attempts have been made to treat the dispute as a conflict between the provincial 'nationalism' or 'regionalism' of the Donatists, who were striving to preserve an indigenous form of Christianity, and the imperial authorities' desire to impose a universal form of Christianity under closer imperial control. For some scholars such a view is supplemented by also reading the Donatist controversy as reflecting an incipient class and social conflict. At times such interpretations have been rather reductionist: in recent writing a balance seems to have been achieved in which theological ideas are recognized as being a primary motivating factor in the dispute, but in which it is also recognized that the dispute also occurred in a specific and complex social context.

It seems highly likely that we should think of the Donatists as inheriting a tradition of Christianity that strongly emphasized the purity of the Church over against the world, a theology found clearly in such earlier writers as Tertullian and Cyprian, as well as the importance of staying faithful to those things for which the martyrs had died. For Donatists preserving the purity of the Church was a key issue, and inseparable from preserving the purity of its members. Once the Donatist Church had been in existence for a few decades

Augustine was able to attack them with some force for claiming that the purity of members was of paramount importance and yet for dealing with the moral lives of believers and office holders with (at times) even more leniency than Catholics. In many ways, Augustine offers a fundamentally different account of the Church as 'pure' from that implied by Donatism. For Augustine the Church is pure only because of Christ's presence in it and his union with it, not because of the purity of its members. Indeed, Augustine's developing thoughts on the impossibility of people meriting their own salvation and on the nature of original sin actually help to shape his anti-Donatist ecclesiology and vice versa. Disputes over one theological area thus come to inform and shape dispute in other areas and with other groups.

These two ecclesiological emphases also reflect shifting accounts of the Church within late antique society. Augustine's writing occurs in the context of the Church's greatly increased power and social significance in the Empire resulting over the century since Constantine's legitimization of Christianity. As many writers have noted, Augustine's ecclesiology attempts to combine faithfulness to the traditional vision of the Church as a community drawn out of the world, with a new focus on the Church as a mixed body, the faithful intermingled with those whose Christianity is frequently only inchoate. In this context Augustine's discussions of discipline and penitence are less concerned with securing purity, than with shaping a process of training and education that will encourage distinctive Christian identities and practices. Thus, Augustine's vision of the unity of the Church also reflects both a different theological outlook and the views of a cosmopolitan European-oriented late antique writer.

In the case of the Melitian and Donatist disputes, internal Christian debate was prompted by changing relations with the non-Christian world. Throughout the period covered by this chapter Christians engaged in a polemic against non-Christian traditional polytheistic religion, the religion(s) traditionally sanctioned by the Roman state. Traditionally Christians had written in defence of their faith, arguing for Christianity's antiquity and rationality against non-Christian charges.<sup>5</sup> Through the apologetic of the fourth and fifth centuries, however, we see not simply defence but a new line of attack against the non-Christian world. Eusebius of Caesarea,<sup>6</sup> Augustine and Arnobius present an argument for the failure of Roman traditional religion in the light of the Christian 'triumph' that begins with Constantine. In Augustine the argument is particularly clear. The seemingly ancient and venerable Roman tradition actually embodies a history of moral compromise and half-acknowledged paradox: for instance, he criticizes those classical authors who

both think animal sacrifices unnecessary and yet undertake them publicly. For Augustine the Romans could almost sense the failure of their tradition to provide an appropriate training ground in virtue and honesty and yet they continued to sustain its paradox and sinfulness.<sup>7</sup> This shift in polemic seems also to have gone hand in hand with a Christian triumphalism, the Emperors Constantine and Theodosius both attracting particular praise for having advanced the victory of Christianity (Augustine here actually stands almost alone in his eventual rejection of such an attitude).

The character of anti-‘pagan’ polemic during the fourth and fifth centuries was significantly shaped by the attack on Christianity by Plotinus’ disciple Porphyry (c. 230–c. 305).<sup>8</sup> In his now mostly lost work *Against the Christians*, Porphyry attempted to show up inconsistencies in the New Testament and the general moral turpitude and inconsistency of the Old. Porphyry also attacked allegorical interpretation as only a device to avoid the obvious problems of the text. Porphyry was one of a number of late antique philosophers (Iamblichus being the other major figure) who attempted to shape a vision of non-Christian philosophical and religious life as a unity encompassing an order of practice suitable for all levels of society. In such thinkers we see non-Christians, very probably in response to the rise of Christianity, articulating a new rationale for traditional Roman and Greek religion.<sup>9</sup> This shift began to take on an institutional and aggressively anti-Christian form in the reign of Julian (known to later Christian generations as ‘the Apostate’).

We should, however, be careful about assuming that we can in this period speak simply either of the ‘victory’ of Christianity or about the clear separation of ‘pagan’ and ‘Christian’. On the one hand, the rhetoric of Christian triumph is belied by a huge amount of evidence that throughout this period large areas of the countryside remained resolutely non-Christian, and that even many of the major towns and cities allowed traditional temples to exist. The death of public and civic Roman religion was thus a slow one; the death of non-Christian practice and piety was even slower and much more confused. On the other hand, Christian writers throughout the period bear witness to the existence of what they took to be non-Christian practices among their congregations (especially astrology and divination). The definition and then the instilling of a distinctively Christian and anti-‘pagan’ identity was thus a continuing task for early Christian leaders.<sup>10</sup>

Controversy over fundamental Christian beliefs about Christ and the nature of God is a central feature of developing Christian belief in the period covered in this chapter. One of the most important of these latter controversies concerned ‘Manichaeism’, a term that labels Manichees by their relation to their founder

Mani. Mani was born in 216 in northern Babylonia and was killed by the Parthian King Bahram I in 274. From the age of twelve he saw himself as a prophetic figure, revealing a cosmic struggle between light and darkness and a way of salvation. After his death his followers continued to grow quickly in number and eventually spread west through the Mediterranean and east into China. For Manichees the cosmos is constituted by a battle between light and dark, good and evil. Although the two principles originally existed in separation from each other, the Father of Greatness or Light was attacked by the Prince of Darkness. To save itself the good principle emanated a series of new divine 'aeons' or 'divine beings' who attempted to release the light that had become interwoven with darkness. The creation of our material world was a further part of a strategy by the Father of Light to save the light entrapped by darkness. The sun and the moon function as collectors of light from the world and transmitters of light back to the Father of Light. Human beings are the creation of the demons of darkness seeking a way to retain the light they have trapped from the work of the Father. Jesus was sent from the realm of light to reveal true saving knowledge to Adam and Eve and the rest of humanity.

Through connection to his true 'light' self, Mani revealed the path to salvation. Central to Manichaeism were the 'elect' or the 'saints' who were able to aid the release of light from its entrapment. They did so by the digestion of food and the breathing out of light. The elect were to eat only certain foods supposedly high in light content: certain vegetables, grains and fruits – and no meat. In order to separate themselves as far as possible from too much engagement with darkness, the elect were also expected to remain celibate and avoid all killing and lying. One of the key functions of the other Manichees, known as 'hearers', was to assist the elect in their mission. The hearers had to practise their own, less rigorous, asceticism, and were entrusted with the preparation of food for the elect. At death the elect were promised that the light within them would return to the realm of light, while hearers were promised reincarnation among the elect.

The most famous Christian to have had first-hand knowledge of Manichaeism and to have devoted considerable space to refuting its claims was Augustine. However, such detailed knowledge of Manichaeism was very rare. Without detailed knowledge of the group many writers used the label 'Manichee' against other Christians considered to have too strong a view of the body's sinfulness: it is so used, for example, in debates over the good of marriage in fourth-century Italy.<sup>11</sup> It is also used against some of the more subordinationist trends in the trinitarian disputes that we will shortly discuss. Here the term seems to be used not simply because of a supposed parallel

between the clearly subordinate status that the Manichaean Jesus (or Jesuses) held with respect to the Father of Light, but because of its sheer rhetorical power. Thus in the use of the label 'Manichaean' we see one facet of the ways in which the move towards a more clearly definable orthodoxy in Christian belief involved also the increasingly clear definition and use of labels for distinct and heretical groups. This move towards a more clearly defined orthodoxy was a key aspect of the fourth century,<sup>12</sup> but it involves *both* the definition of belief *and* the evolution of ways in which one can define as unacceptable those determined to be outside the bounds of the normative.

The most important doctrinal controversy of the fourth century concerned Christians' understanding of God, of the nature of Christ and of the very character of salvation. It is often, but problematically, called the 'Arian' controversy.<sup>13</sup> The story of this controversy used to be narrated in a manner whose basic plot I will summarize in this paragraph. In AD 318 a priest called Arius got into a dispute with the bishop of Alexandria, Alexander. Because Alexander insisted very strongly that the Son of God was always with, was co-eternal with, the Father, Arius accused him of teaching that there were 'two unbegottens': two principles in the universe. It also seemed to Arius that Alexander's account of the Son's generation implied that the Son had emanated from the Father almost as if God were a material substance. For Alexander Arius' own teaching was equally problematic: he appeared to be teaching that the Son was created out of nothing like all other created things. After a number of smaller councils and attempts to deal with the split which ensued in Alexandria, the Emperor Constantine intervened, calling a large council which met at Nicaea, near the imperial capital of Constantinople, in 325. This council condemned Arius and drew up a creed – the Nicene creed – which insisted that Father and Son were *ὁμοούσιος*, *homoousios*, of one being. This creed is then taken to constitute one of the major defining statements of early Christian belief. In the traditional story, Arius' supporters continued to intrigue on his behalf and against those who had supported Nicaea's creed. Eventually, Arius' supporters were able to influence imperial attitudes towards the Church and promote their 'Arian' theology. Resistance to this policy came largely from Western theologians who traditionally believed strongly in the unity of God and so were shocked by Arius' subordinationism, and from Alexander's successor as bishop of Alexandria, Athanasius. Athanasius was the chief theologian of the Nicene party and he endured many exiles as a result of his uncompromising faithfulness to Nicaea. The three 'Cappadocian' theologians, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory Nazianzen and Gregory of Nyssa, were influenced by Athanasius' efforts and were also key figures in preserving and promoting Nicene orthodoxy,

especially after Athanasius' death in 373. Eventually, after the death of the 'Arian' Emperor Valens in 378 and the accession of Theodosius, the Nicene cause triumphed. At the Council of Constantinople in 381 the Nicene creed was reaffirmed with a few changes and orthodoxy was clearly defined.

This standard narrative of the story is inaccurate in a number of important ways. In order for us to understand better how this dispute shaped the character of Christian understanding and identity we need to begin again and tell the story afresh. In retelling the story we cannot begin with Arius; we have to outline a broader account of the different theological traditions current at the beginning of the fourth century. What we will see is a variety of theologies, existing in some tension (almost all drawing on different aspects of Origen's legacy): out of this context came both Arius' own theology and the impetus for the controversy that was to continue for the rest of the century.

Let us begin by outlining four broad theological traditions that can be identified in the period 300–30:

1. A first theological tradition or grouping consists of 'Eusebian' theologies (in either sense: supporters of both Eusebius of Nicomedia and Eusebius of Caesarea).<sup>14</sup> Take Eusebius of Nicomedia: writing in defence of Arius himself, he describes God and his Word as the

one, the unoriginated, [and] one produced by him truly and not from his substance, not participating at all in the unoriginated nature nor in his substance, but produced as altogether distinct in his nature and in his power . . .<sup>15</sup>

Eusebius thinks of the Father as the source of all in a way that both places him far 'above' all else and regards him as the one true subject of adjectives describing God. Eusebius does not think of the Son as created simply like other things; rather, the Son is the first of all created things, the Lord of everything created and the image of the Father's will and power. He does not in any way share the Father's being but is his perfect likeness. Language of image and likeness here serves to illustrate both the Son's distinction from the Father and his unique status.

Even this last brief paragraph reveals the importance of not falling into the trap of imagining that at the turn of the third century the different theological traditions could be grouped as if they stood on either side of a clear question phrased thus: is the Word of God a creature just like any other or an equal sharer in the one divine nature? Rather, one of the key factors in the development of such a complex dispute stems from the fact that there was not yet an agreed clarity about whether one could speak about degrees of divine beings, degrees by which Christ could be 'close' to God while yet not being the one God.

Eusebius of Caesarea, however, presented the Son in a slightly more complex manner. He emphasized more strongly ways in which the Son is a likeness of the Father that somehow qualify his status as inferior. Eusebius wrote of the Son as 'God from God', being generated in a way beyond our capacity to understand; the Son is also described as a 'ray of light' (*ETh.* 1.8.3). Eusebius also spoke of the Son as coming into being (before all time) through the Father's will. Talk of 'will' here (talk destined to have a long history through the fourth century) emphasized that the Son is clearly distinct in authority. Lastly, but very importantly, in Eusebius' theology the *Logos* or Son comes into being at the Father's will for the particular purpose of being the foundation of the whole creation.

A third 'Eusebian' who deserves mention is Asterius, a key early supporter of Arius. At the core of Asterius' theology was his account of the two powers and wisdoms in God.<sup>16</sup> Asterius spoke first of God's own power and wisdom which is the source of Christ and of all things (it is God's own power and wisdom that Paul describes as being seen in the creation at Rom. 1:20). Christ manifests a different power and wisdom, the first and 'only begotten' of the many powers created by the Father. Asterius insists also that Father, Son and Spirit are three *hypostases*.

Arius himself is also best seen as a particular sort of 'Eusebian', one whose personal theological emphases made him particularly controversial to some non-Eusebians. In his *Thalia* ('The Banquet') Arius not only insists on the Son's subordination in a way either Eusebius would have recognized, but he also seems to rule out many of the ways in which the two Eusebii present the Son as sharing the Father's power and attributes in an incomprehensible way. He writes:

The one without beginning established the Son as the beginning of all creatures . . . He [the Son] possesses nothing proper to God . . . for he is not equal to God, nor yet is he of the same substance . . . there exists a Trinity in unequal glories, for their *hypostases* are not mixed with each other . . .<sup>17</sup>

Arius' sources and motives are unclear: one suggestion stems from noting the parallel between his thought and contemporary developments in Platonism which insisted ever more strongly on the ways in which the One was transcendent and in which lower realities participated in the activity, but not the essence, of higher realities.<sup>18</sup> For our purposes here it is also important to note that Arius' own theology was of little influence during the rest of the century. While it seems to have been known to some in Alexandria and to a larger

group who read Athanasius' summaries of it and compilations from it, outside that milieu it does not seem to have been widely known (for example among the 'Cappadocians').

The Eusebian trajectory thus incorporated a number of conflicting emphases. The emphasis in some Eusebians on continuity of being between Father and Son was so significant that many eventually found themselves alienated by the highly subordinationist theologies that developed during the century and came to form a considerable part of the alliance of theologies that I eventually describe as 'pro-Nicene'. Thus this trajectory is a fascinating combination of theologies that will eventually find themselves on very different sides of these trinitarian controversies.

2. A second theological trajectory we need to note is that apparent in Arius' first major opponent, Alexander of Alexandria, and in Alexander's successor, Athanasius. Both of these theologians spoke very strongly of the eternal correlativity of Father and Son: the Father is eternally Father and hence the Son must eternally be with the Father. Athanasius wrote,

... He is the unchanging image of his own Father. For men, composed of parts and made out of nothing, have their discourse composite and divisible. But God possesses true existence and is not composite, wherefore his Word also has true existence and is not composite, but is the one and only begotten God, who proceeds in his goodness from the Father as from a good fountain . . .

(CG 41.1)

Athanasius here thinks of the one God as encompassing both the Father *and* the Father's Word: the language of image and the language of the Son being from the Father as from a fountain are shaped by his overall insistence that these terminologies are commensurate with both together being the one God. Athanasius' argument of course *assumes* the principle that Word and God are both God and that there can be no degrees of deity.<sup>19</sup> It is important to note that Athanasius does not really have any terminology (other than the names themselves) for identifying the individual realities of Father and Son.<sup>20</sup>

We find many of the same themes mirrored in the thought of his predecessor Alexander. Alexander insisted that the Father is called the Father because of the ever-present Son and that the Power and Word of God must always have been with God. He adds that if the brightness of the archetype is not present then we will have to admit that the light itself was not present. At the same time he has a very strong image theology in which the Son is the unchangeable

image, alike in all ways to the Father and able to express and reveal the Father. He speaks of the Father and Son as one *hypostasis*, although by this he seems to mean that they share the same nature in some sense. Athanasius and Alexander seem to have been able to claim with some veracity that their theology found traditional precedent in Alexandria, as could their opponents. We can also note links between this theology and some traditions in Antioch and many parts of the Greek-speaking world.

3. A third theological trajectory is apparent in the controversial figure of Marcellus of Ancyra. Marcellus was an important figure in the ecclesiastical politics of the Church around the time of Nicaea (Ancyra was probably the initially proposed site for the Council of Nicaea<sup>21</sup>), but his theology became increasingly controversial. Marcellus' theology appears to be closest to the theologies that we call monarchian, modalist or Sabellian in the third century and to some themes found in the 'Apologists' in the second century. Marcellus spoke of God and God's Word as being parallel to a man and his word.<sup>22</sup> The man and his word are not separate realities and the word has distinct existence only when spoken: the word exists in the man's 'power' and may become distinct in 'activity'.<sup>23</sup> Marcellus seems to have conceived of the eternally inherent and existing (but not distinct) Word as 'spoken' for the work of creation, and as returning to that pre-spoken state when the Son's Kingdom is subjected to the Father (1 Cor. 15:28). Note that saying that the Word exists in a pre-spoken state is distinct from saying that he did not exist: Marcellus himself saw this distinction as enabling his own critique of Sabellianism. Marcellus is also insistent that God is only one *hypostasis*, being and power (ὑπόστασις, οὐσία, δύναμις). Marcellan theologies could make common cause with theologies such as that of Athanasius, as we shall see, but they seemed particularly objectionable to Eusebians of all stripes.

4. All of the trajectories considered so far are Eastern Greek-speaking trajectories. The question of how we should understand Western theology is complicated by a great shortage of evidence. It has become commonplace to say that Western theology showed a consistent preference for God's unity over the diversity of the persons and owed much to Tertullian (*fl.* 200). Tertullian's own Trinitarianism, however, evolved *against* monarchian theologies (theologies which emphasized the unity of God above all and in some cases saw the Son as only a manifestation of the Father). In this context Tertullian began to evolve a terminology for speaking of the unity and yet real distinction between Father, Son and Spirit. The order of generation ensures that the Son may share the Father's being, but that the Father is always the source:

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. . . the tree is not severed from the root, nor the river from the fountain, nor the ray from the sun; nor indeed is the Word separated from God. Following, therefore the form of these analogies, I confess that I call God and his Word – the Father and His Son – two. For the root and the tree are distinctly two things but correlatively joined . . . the Trinity flowing down from the Father through intertwined and connected steps does not at all disturb the monarchy, whilst it at the same time guards the state of the economy. (Prax. 8)

Tertullian also insisted that the Son was in some sense always in the Father (Prax. 5). Thus while it is correct to point to Tertullian's insistence on the closeness of Father and Son, we need also to note that the desire to highlight the *distinction* between Father and Son – by focusing on the generation of another through the sharing of the Father's being – is a fundamental driving force of his theology.

We can compare Tertullian with two later Latin writers: Novatian (fl. c. 250) and Lactantius (c. 250–c. 325). Chapter 31 of Novatian's *On the Trinity* (c. 250) offers a brief summary of his theology. The Son is the Word, '[but] not as a sound that strikes the air nor the tone of the voice forced from the lungs, but rather . . . in the substance of a power proceeding from God' (Trin. 31). The Father, who has no origin, necessarily precedes the Son, and the Son, who is also God, receives his being only from the Father who is the one God (Trin. 4.6). The Son receives his being in a manner that does not compromise the divine unity. Novatian writes: 'Owing his origin to the Father, he could not cause any disunion in the Godhead by making two Gods' (Trin. 31). For Lactantius, the Word's role is closely linked with creation, but the speaking of the Word creates a Word that is then necessarily eternal. When Lactantius asks how it is that we speak of two – God the Father and God the Son – but do not speak of different Gods, he writes: '. . . the one is as though an overflowing fount or source, the other as though a stream flowing from that, the one a sun, the other a direct ray from the sun' (Inst. 4.29).

Both of these theologians continue the basic dynamics of Tertullian's scheme, but worries about adoptionism (the doctrine that Christ was a man like others given special powers or adopted by God at some point in his ministry) seem to have prompted these third-century Latin writers to emphasize even more clearly that the Son possesses the Father's power. We seem to find the same anti-adoptionist adaptation of previous Latin theology in the early work of Hilary of Poitiers and in some other fragments from the early decades of the fourth century in the West.<sup>24</sup> Hence, while it is inaccurate to talk of Latin theology at the beginning of the fourth century as just being focused on the 'unity' of God, it seems plausible to say that Western theologies tended

to emphasize the Son's dependence on the Father and his 'flowing' from the Father's being in ways that were profoundly different from the concerns of contemporary Eusebian theologies in the East.

While I have concentrated on doctrinal distinctions between these four trajectories, we should remember that disputes over these are also disputes between what we might term different imaginative universes.<sup>25</sup> Different accounts of the relationship between Father and Son, and different accounts of the Son's role, implied different conceptions of the cosmos, of the human and Christian condition, of the structure of history. Having laid out something of the complex theological scene in the first decades of the fourth century we can now return to the story of the trinitarian controversies. Against the background of this complex situation, and against the background of widespread existing tensions between these different trajectories, a local dispute between Arius and his bishop set off a controversy of far greater proportions. Although Arius was condemned by local synods in Alexandria, he was able to appeal to supporters (including Eusebius of Nicomedia) in nearby provinces of the Empire and ensure that his cause was not forgotten. These supporters were not necessarily committed to all of Arius' theological positions so much as to opposing common enemies. Finally Constantine summoned a council of bishops which eventually met at Nicaea.

The council drew up a creed ('N') that is of great significance:

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 being of the Father (ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρὸς), God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial (ὁμοούσιος) with the Father, through whom all things came into existence, both things in heaven and things on earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate and became man, suffered and rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens, and 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 ὑπόστασις or οὐσία, or is alterable or changeable, these the Catholic and Apostolic Church condemns.<sup>26</sup>

What those at the council intended the terminology used in the creed to mean is notoriously unclear, other than the fact that they intended to produce a terminology that would exclude their perceptions of Arius' theology. The

very idea of a council producing a creed as part of its judgments was relatively new (we know of only two previous occurrences<sup>27</sup>) and it was thus, and not surprisingly, unclear what status this creed had. As yet it had no place in the liturgy or in catechesis, nor, as we shall see below, was a particular credal wording yet seen as a precise and unalterable statement.

At crucial points the creed deploys what appears to be fairly precise philosophical terminology. The terms *ousia* and *hypostasis* were to be the subject of a great deal of discussion and, importantly, *confusion* during the fourth century.<sup>28</sup> At the beginning of the century, however, the two were frequently treated as interchangeable terms for describing God's being or reality or essence and occasionally even for designating the distinctness of Father, Son and Spirit. It is only during the course of the fourth-century disputes that a clearer division becomes apparent. In N it is thus difficult to understand exactly what is being indicated by the use of *ousia*, *hypostasis* and the phrase 'from the Father's essence' (not to mention *homoousios*, discussed in the next paragraph). It seems to make most sense to attribute to N's signatories a desire to state clearly that the Son was derived from the Father's being or existence. Both Athanasius and Eusebius of Caesarea seem to understand the basic function of N's terminology as asserting that the Son is truly from God: Athanasius sees 'from the Father's essence' as the fundamental phrase which secures the true sense of 'from God' and hence of phrases such as 'light from light'. The seemingly precise terminology was thus actually used without agreement on its sense and in order to shape a position that could secure agreement while excluding Arius.

The intention of the framers of N in deploying the term *homoousios* is equally difficult to interpret. In the early fourth century the term was not, as was once thought, used to indicate identity, to indicate that two *homoousioi* were more truly one than two. Rather, the term seems to mean something like 'of the same kind/class'. The term seems to have been used in a number of contexts with meanings in this wide general range. From its usage in religious thought the term also seems to have acquired the sense that two or more things shared a common substance because of a relationship of origin to the first in a series. In this last sense the term might easily seem to have material connotations, to be most applicable in discussing processes of generation among material beings. As with N's other terminology, much discussion and development were to be necessary before the term had a clearly defined sense.

The development and evolution of what is later thought of as Nicene orthodoxy took many decades after Nicaea itself. In what follows let us divide up this period, the years between 325 and 381, into three sections.

## 1. Towards a controversy: 325–350

The first thing to note about this initial period is that our sources for the period immediately after Nicaea are sparse. We can, however, make two general observations. On the one hand, it seems at least possible that Constantine and some of his supporters promoted an interpretation of N's phrases 'of the essence of the Father' and *homoousios* against those who were worried that these expressions were too materialistic to be used of God. That these phrases were already seen as requiring this sort of clarification indicates very clearly the perceived problem with N: this text seemed to many to imply or at least permit a materialism about God's being and the Son's generation and a semi-modalist conception of God.

On the other hand, in the years immediately following Nicaea, some of N's strongest supporters seemed to many to be advocating theologies which failed to preserve the distinct existence of the Son and which seemed to offer far too materialistic an account of God. Nicaea offered no clear resources for arguing against these theologians, chief among whom was Marcellus of Ancyra. Marcellus' semi-modalist theology was strongly attacked by those (such as Eusebius of Caesarea) who had been able to sign up to N but who were insistent that they did so believing it was compatible with a strong insistence on the distinction between Father and Son. Eventually, Marcellus was deposed in 336. Thus, in part because Marcellus had been a strong supporter of N, and in part because of its uselessness as a tool against him, the creed disappears from our historical record for around fifteen years.

At the same time, after considerable negotiation, Arius was readmitted to communion. In retrospect it is difficult for many modern readers to understand how this last move could have been made in the face of Nicaea's creed. However, it is precisely at this point that the fourth century demonstrates itself to be so fundamental for later Christian self-definition. The very idea of one universal creed, the terminology of which – itself understood as susceptible to a clearly restricted range of interpretation – could function as a binding statement of faith, evolved *during* this century and should not be read into its early decades. The creed of Nicaea seems to have been understood not simply as an independent part of the council's work but as an integral part and expression of one of its key judgments or decisions, and preserving the spirit of the judgment seems to have been far more important than the particular wording of the creed in which it was expressed. Thus, at later meetings of bishops over the next twenty-five years a variety of other creeds were drawn up, some

probably in an attempt to ignore and move beyond N's formulations, some as an attempt to improve on its wording. In all cases credal supplementation and adaptation was an accepted mode of proceeding for all sides in the dispute. It is only during the 350s that we can clearly detect a wide shift in understandings of credal function taking hold.

Alexander of Alexandria's successor, Athanasius, remained an implacable opponent of Arius and refused to accept him back into communion. Eventually Athanasius was deposed in 335 and sent into exile. For the rest of his life Athanasius maintained that he was exiled for theological reasons, while his opponents insisted that his exile had occurred because of maladministration and his violence towards certain opponents. Both were probably partially right. Athanasius and Marcellus were both in exile in Rome in 339. Over the next year Athanasius developed into a fully fledged form earlier lines of polemic against Arius and his supporters, including Eusebius of Nicomedia. Some of this material came from Alexander, some from Marcellus, some from Eustathius and some from earlier texts of Athanasius himself.<sup>29</sup> Athanasius' account can be seen for the first time clearly in his *First Oration Against the Arians* (c. 340). Arius is cast as the originator of a heresy, of a group centred around Arius who is likened to Mani as the originator of the Manichaeans. Athanasius' strategy depended on convincing others that the basic motive of those who opposed him was the creation of a sect based on the texts of one (Arius) condemned fifteen years before.

Although Athanasius' Eastern opponents seem to have been unimpressed by what they saw as a diversionary tactic, Athanasius did manage to convince Julius, the bishop of Rome, and some other Western bishops. At this point we might well ask if it makes any sense at all to speak of a 'Nicene' theology in the period 325 to 340. It does, but we must be very careful in definition. It is probably helpful to call some key themes in the theology of Alexander of Alexandria and his supporters, the young Athanasius and Marcellus, 'Nicene', because these were the men who shaped the decisions of Nicaea and found a common interest in their opposition to Arius. But these themes were not embraced by all those who signed up at Nicaea (we know there must have been many who could sign, but did not fully share the creed's emphases), nor do they amount to a clearly uniform theology. Thus, if we speak here of an original 'Nicene' theology, we must recognize that it was as yet ill-defined.

Julius of Rome wrote to his Eastern colleagues complaining that they had unfairly condemned Athanasius and Marcellus, and complaining that they were ignoring the significance of Nicaea by readmitting 'Arians' (*Apol. II* 21ff.).

In response to this challenge by Julius, a group of bishops meeting for the dedication of a new church in Antioch in 341 issued a letter and creed stating their faith. The creed (known as the 'Dedication creed') is long and contains some very significant terminology. Most importantly it describes the Son as the 'exact image of the Godhead and the substance and will and power and glory of the Father'. This phrase appears to be a quotation from Asterius<sup>30</sup> and seems also to echo the sort of theology found in Eusebius of Caesarea.

For Athanasius this creed is to be simply labelled 'Arian', but that is unhelpful. In the later 350s we will see a number of figures claiming it as a source for very different positions, some of them direct precursors of late fourth-century Nicene orthodoxy. It may well be best to see it as one of the finest summaries of 'Eusebian' theology before the various theological strands of this broad tradition began to unravel in the 350s. The exchange between Julius and 'those around Eusebius' helped to turn the initial phase of this controversy into a dispute between those bishops who were most influential in the East and those most influential in the West. This large-scale misunderstanding seems further to have drawn in the imperial authorities, an especially dangerous result as Constantine's different sons ruled different parts of the Empire and resented each other's interference.

An attempt to relieve the tension between East and West was made in 343 when the Western Emperor Constans called a council at Serdica (modern Sofia). This council was a disaster: the two sides never met as one. The 'Western' bishops (including many from Greece and the Balkans but very few from France and Spain) issued a text from Serdica including a long profession of faith insisting that Father, Son and Spirit have one *ousia* or *hypostasis* and exist eternally (Theodoret, *HE* 2.8). The letter does say that 'somehow' the Father must be greater than the Son but offers no terminology for distinguishing the three. Almost any theology which speaks of more than one *hypostasis* is defied. The remainder of the 340s saw a series of attempts at rapprochement between the parties. Athanasius was allowed back to Alexandria, and in the same year we find a party of easterners heading west with a statement of faith and (unsuccessfully) presenting it to a council in Milan. This initial period of the controversy is thus marked by the confused interactions and mutual antipathy between existing theological traditions, the failure of Nicaea to relieve those tensions, and the interweaving of political and theological issues. It was not yet clear that the controversy was basically theological and few thought that the point at issue was the acceptance or rejection of a clearly expressed 'Nicene' theology.

## 2. The controversy emerges clearly: 350–360

The second of these three periods, 350–360, saw great shifts in the structure of the controversy. During this decade new theological options appeared; the creed of Nicaea and the term *homoousios* began to be significant points of debate; the idea that one creed with a fairly fixed wording should serve as a universal standard of faith emerged – in part through the policies of Constantius and the bishops he supported. These theological shifts need also to be understood in the context of shifts in the Roman Empire. Over the period 351–3 Constantius, originally ruler in the East, achieved control of the whole Empire.<sup>31</sup> Constantius has received a bad press from later history as a ruthless and brutal ruler and as an ‘Arian’ emperor. In fact the picture is much more complex; a case can be made that, within the fourth-century context, he was a fairly mild ruler.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, Constantius did generally promote a subordinationist theology during this decade; this had a great effect on the course of the controversy until his sudden death in 361.

Throughout the 350s a series of councils prolonged earlier Eusebian emphases, but there was an increasingly active antipathy to N’s terminology and an increasing willingness to argue for an account of the Son’s generation that excludes any ontological continuity between Father and Son. The defence of Nicaea by Athanasius and others may have helped to stimulate this, while continuing antipathy to Marcellus and now to his disciple Photinus also helped to push many in this direction. Two key meetings illustrate the shifts that occurred. The first was the Council of Sirmium in 351, which met while Constantius himself was present in the city (modern Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia). The focus of this council was the examination and condemnation of Photinus, bishop of Sirmium. As the most visible representative of a Marcellan type of theology, Photinus had already been condemned at a number of councils during the latter half of the 340s in the West and East. The creed has attached to it a series of anathemas. Two of these offer a strong condemnation of some different uses of *ousia* language. From these anathemas it seems that the signatories to the creed were particularly worried that linking the Son and Father in terms of *ousia* implies that the Father’s being is understood to be ‘extended’ in the generation of the Son. There are also a number of attacks on the idea that Father and Son are co-eternal or two (equal) Gods.<sup>33</sup> This council in 351 set the trend for a series of subsequent Western councils in which Constantius seems to have attempted to get a clearly subordinationist theology (together with the condemnation of Athanasius) gradually accepted throughout the Empire.

Secondly, there is the meeting of bishops convened, also at Sirmium, in 357. This small meeting (probably not a formal council) produced a summary confession designed to establish a position that was being articulated with growing clarity. This document also demonstrates the increasingly clear views of those who opposed *ousia* language in any form:

But as for the fact that some, or many, are concerned about substance (*substantia*) which is called *ousia* in Greek, that is, to speak more explicitly, *homoousion* or *homoiousion*, as it is called, there should be no mention of it whatever, nor should anyone preach it.<sup>34</sup>

At this point strong ambivalence regarding Nicaea, or a wish just to ignore its terms, has turned to clear and direct opposition. The clarity of this text in turn provoked a number of responses from bishops who found the direction taken here simply unacceptable. The splits between those who had come to argue for a subordinationist theology envisaging a clear ontological break between Father and Son and those whose theology and imaginative worlds will not allow such a break or at least a break of such clarity is now becoming unavoidable. At Sirmium 357 there emerges a growing confidence among those who can, from around this time, be termed 'homoian'.<sup>35</sup>

Homoian theologians come in distinct varieties but are united in their strong resistance to any theologies that see community of essence between Father and Son. Homoians were willing to talk of the Son being 'like' (*ὅμοιος*) the Father, or 'like according to the Scriptures', but further description appeared to them blasphemous. Acacius of Caesarea, the successor of Eusebius of Caesarea, was one of the major organizers of this alliance, and for a while had influence with Constantius. This alliance seems to have emerged slowly in the course of Constantius' concerted campaign against Athanasius and initially seems to have focused on the attempt to find a compromise position that would rule out theologies with any Marcellan and Western emphases. These bishops had come to see N and indeed all language about shared *ousia* as problematic. Constantius' support for this theological trajectory and ultimately for a creed to which all bishops should subscribe encouraged its partisans to push a subordinationist agenda with increasing clarity. But, at the same time, the same imperial support for this theology seems to have encouraged a variety of opponents to turn to N as the only possible universally binding standard of faith. Thus, the clarity of the homoian option set the stage for the emergence of the groups amongst whom there would soon develop the solution to the controversies as a whole.

One feature of the decade that provoked many whom I have termed 'Eusebians' into opposition to the emergent homoian theology was the gradual appearance of the theologies of Aetius and Eunomius (whom I shall refer to as 'heterousian' – for such theologies emphasized the difference in essence between Father and Son).<sup>36</sup> Aetius' theology is highly dense in argumentation. In his one surviving work, the *Syntagmation* ('little book'), he refers to those who are willing to countenance either *homoousios* or *homoios kat'ousian* as *chronittoi*, 'temporists', i.e., those who speak about God in temporal terms.<sup>37</sup> For Aetius, if God is truly 'not generated' then no logical sense can be given to an act of generation that results in one who is either *homoousios* or *homoiousios* with God; the 'not generated' cannot logically generate one who shares the quality of being 'not generated'. Thus one strong theme in Aetius' work is detailed reflection on the term 'ingenerate' (ἀγέννητος, *agennetos*). Eunomius was probably twenty-five years younger than Aetius and functioned for some years as a secretary or assistant to him (from about 355).

Initially Aetius and Eunomius are perhaps best viewed as radical homoians, whose radicalism distanced them more and more from other homoians. In his *Apology* (c. 361), Eunomius argues that Father and Son must be distinct because the mere fact of the Son being 'begotten' signifies that his essence cannot share the Father's absolute simplicity. There can be no sense given to a theology that alleges a similarity in essence because God's essence is unchangeable and indivisible. Eunomius also speaks of the Son's being given existence by the Father's will, a terminology designed to emphasize the dependence of the Son on the Father and the failure of shared substance language to reflect this basic point. But in this work it is also noticeable that Eunomius gives great weight to 'ingenerate' as a term summing up the character of God's essence, a term present in earlier subordinationist theology but here receiving new force and significance in Aetius' thought.<sup>38</sup>

Elsewhere in the *Apology* we find doctrines shared between Aetius and Eunomius, which, however, appear to have received increasing treatment as Eunomius' position became more radical. Most importantly, Eunomius deploys a particular philosophical understanding of causality to explain the character of divine generation.<sup>39</sup> Eunomius sees something's causal capacity to be distinct from its essence and sees the act of causing something to result in a product that continues in existence only so long as the causal activity exists. Applying this model of causality to divine generation provides a basis on which Eunomius can insist that the Son must be a product which reflects God's activity, not his essence, and that he may be rightly called 'creation' and 'product'.

The radicalism of these two figures seems to have prompted much disquiet, and the fact that they initially received support from leading homoians began, in some eyes, to make it look as if the logical direction of homoian theology was Eunomian.

During this decade we also see Athanasius' theology develop through increasing focus on Nicaea and on the term *homoousios* itself.<sup>40</sup> We see Athanasius turn to a detailed defence of Nicaea for the first time in his long letter entitled *On the Decrees of Nicaea* (usually known simply by the Latin *De Decretis*). This work attempts to refute questions raised by associates of the key homoian bishop Acacius of Caesarea about the non-scriptural terms *homoousios* and 'of the *ousia* of the Father' used at Nicaea. Athanasius begins by arguing (correctly) that Acacius' predecessor Eusebius of Caesarea had signed the creed and was able to interpret its language in a non-modalist, non-materialist sense. The text also directly defends Nicene usage of the language of *ousia* in an argument that possibly draws on Eusebius of Caesarea's own defence of the language (*Dec.* 19–23). Athanasius' main strategy is to present *ousia* language as necessary if the sense of scriptural titles for the Son such as Power, Wisdom and Word and of traditional analogies such as a light and its radiance is to be safeguarded. Athanasius goes on to argue that *homoousios* serves only to safeguard the distinction between Creator and creation and what Athanasius frequently describes as the Son's status as 'true offspring'.

Having seen these developments in Athanasius' theology, we need now to consider another set of reactions to emerging homoian theology, a reaction from *within* the camp of those who had supported Constantius' policies. Some time in the winter of 358 a small council met at Ancyra. Most immediately the meeting seems to have been prompted by the teaching of Aetius in Antioch. From this gathering an extensive letter survives, probably written by Basil of Ancyra.<sup>41</sup> Basil attaches great weight to the language of Father and Son in his doctrine of God. This pairing indicates something distinct from the language of Creator and creature, but not something that we can directly grasp. When we remove the corporeal connotations of the Father–Son relationship as we know it then we can say 'there remains only the generation of a living being similar in essence'. Thus, confessing the likeness of Father and Son must, if it is to be attentive to the implications of this unique relationship, involve confessing that the two are *like according to essence* (ὅμοιος κατ' οὐσίαν). Basil also argues that, if the Father gives the Son to have life in himself (John 5:26), then the Son must have the same life and thus have 'everything according to essence and absolutely as does the Father'. There is here a certain subordinationism, but also a deep commitment to a unique and incomprehensible sharing of the Son

in the very life of God. Thus, at the very time when Constantius seemed to be increasingly interested in imposing the theological perspective of the homoian alliance around Acacius, Basil and his associates were growing in the perception that this very theology failed to do justice to the tradition they saw as central to Eastern theology. In these developments we see beginning a process of gradual convergence of theologians coming from the broad traditions that existed at the beginning of the controversy towards a new broad consensus or tradition that will come to constitute pro-Nicene 'orthodoxy' in the 360 to 380 period.

Returning to our chronological survey, the trajectory of the 350s now reached its culmination. In AD 359 Constantius decided on a further attempt to enforce his theological perspective throughout the Empire by holding a council to which all would be called. Eventually he decided to hold twin councils in East and West. The two councils met in 359: the Eastern council at Seleucia in Cilicia (near Antioch), the Western at Ariminum in Northern Italy (modern Rimini).<sup>42</sup> In Italy, the Western council initially appears to have had a majority in favour of retaining the creed of Nicaea and not introducing any new creed; another smaller party seems to have been in favour of something like the 'dated creed'. This appeal to Nicaea probably reflects growing Western antipathy to the conciliar activity of the 350s, to Constantius and to much of the Eastern conciliar activity of the 340s. In the face of these challenges many Western bishops seem to have turned to Nicaea as the only obvious alternative. Nevertheless, as we shall see, in a few months almost all of those in this majority agreed to a creed worded very differently from N. At that stage they seem to have been mollified by anti-'Arian' public confessions on the part of those whom they most suspected. Thus, a commitment to Nicaea did not yet mean a firm commitment to its wording: the character of that commitment was still evolving.

The Eastern council was divided between those around Acacius, and a larger party who seem to have been in some ways sympathetic to those bishops who had recently sided with Basil of Ancyra. Nothing unified came of this Eastern meeting, and both sides sent delegations to the emperor. At Niké in Thrace (now called Ustodizo), Constantius eventually forced delegations from East and West to sign a creed, closely based on the 'dated creed', except that it missed out 'in all respects' after 'like', and said openly that one should not teach that the Father, Son and Spirit were one *hypostasis* (thus directly contradicting the 'Western' council of Serdica in 343). For about a year after the twin councils Constantius seems to have been strongly influenced by Acacius and many supporters of alternative theologies were deposed and exiled. In 360 a council was convened in Constantinople and presided over by Acacius at which Basil

of Ancyra and many of his supporters were deposed. But then Constantius died suddenly in November 361 and many things changed.

### 3. The emergence of pro-Nicene theology: 360–380

Although much changed with Constantius' death, the pattern of the controversy through the next two decades was in place even before his death. During the later 350s and, now, during the early 360s, we begin to see an increasing number of theologians willing to adopt Nicaea as a standard. At the same time we also see some new emphases in theology and the emergence of theological arguments and principles within which this adoption of Nicaea can be articulated, while the charges of Marcellan modalism can be more strongly warded off. Against this background the 360s and 370s saw a gradual process of rapprochement between groups who had previously been opposed to or deeply suspicious of each other.

With these developments we see the emergence of what we may term 'pro-Nicene' theologies. By 'pro-Nicene' theologies I mean to indicate theologies that:

- (a) see the creed of Nicaea as the key standard of belief;
- (b) soon come to think that this creed should be supplemented with a confession that the Spirit is equal in glory and power to Father and Son;
- (c) offer a supplementary terminology which insists on the unitary power, glory, nature and activity of the three and on the irreducibility of the three distinct persons (and which forms the context for the appropriation and adaptation of traditional considerations of the roles of the divine persons);
- (d) share a set of common themes in theological anthropology and Christology that shape a particular approach to the interpretation of Scripture, to the nature of theological speech and to the character of the Christian life.

In watching the emergence of fully fledged pro-Nicene theologies we are seeing the creation of a theological 'culture', not simply the development of a particular set of theological propositions. Pro-Nicene theology offered both a theological world-view, a particular cast to the Christian imagination, and an account of the practices and modes of thinking that would sustain and nurture it.<sup>43</sup>

Brief mention of the imperial succession following Constantius' death is necessary if we are to understand these two decades. On his deathbed Constantius bequeathed the Empire to his cousin Julian, against whose revolt he had been marching when he died. As emperor (361–3) Julian became an

active non-Christian. After Julian's own sudden death in war against Persia in 363 (and the further sudden death of his immediate successor Jovian who briefly seemed to many to support the pro-Nicene cause), Constantius' most powerful successors emerged: in the East the Emperor Valens (364–79), in the west the Emperor Valentinian (364–75).<sup>44</sup> While Valens supported a broadly homoian position, Valentinian appears to have had much greater sympathy for the Nicene position, but took a much more light-handed approach to the Church, refusing to support strongly even the party he favoured. However, although Valens has gone down in history as an 'Arian' emperor, he was, like Constantius, largely pragmatic in his support for the homoian cause. During these years the creed of 360 remained the official creed, although only in the East do we really find official support for it.

The realignment of these two decades also involved the transformation of some previously important forces, most importantly the homoiousians. After their political failure in 359, and after the exile of many of their most prominent members in 360, the homoiousian grouping ceased to be an influential force. Many of its key members subscribed to Nicaea as the only obvious alternative to the Niké/Constantinople creed. Others, including some who had made this move to the pro-Nicene side, retained a subordinationist theology of the Spirit and eventually followed a course which led them away from pro-Nicene theology and eventually towards a distinct hierarchy. Some must have decided to accept the homoian line. Despite this realignment among the homoiousians, the attractiveness of their theology, and perhaps their traditional-sounding commitment to a tradition going back to the Dedication creed of 341, continued to draw supporters, and we hear of people proposing their solution to the conflict right to the end of the 370s.

One of the most important attempts at rapprochement in these years occurred under Athanasius' guidance at a council in Alexandria in 362. Coming directly from the council is a text known as the 'Catholic Epistle', which sets out some basic rules for re-establishing communion with bishops who had subscribed to the decision of Ariminum and Seleucia.<sup>45</sup> The council took the pragmatic decision to set fairly minimum conditions centred on subscription to Nicaea, in the realization that many had subscribed to the events of 359–60 with little conviction. Immediately after the council Athanasius and others wrote a letter to the church in Antioch that is usually known more formally as the 'Antiochene Tome'. In this text Athanasius makes a significant move beyond that found in the *De Synodis*. He accepts that not all those who teach three *hypostases* also teach three hierarchically ranked beings, of which only one is 'true' God. Thus, Athanasius admits that *hypostasis* might primarily indicate a

logical distinction: indicating only that the persons are truly and eternally distinct, and doing so in the context of a belief that whatever is God is immaterial and simply God. In many ways the pragmatism of the text is evident in its *failure* to produce a theological solution to these differences. Athanasius had found a way in which both sides could recognize each other's views, using Nicaea as a point of reference but without trying to seek unanimity in terminology. This tactic seems to have been copied by design or serendipity throughout much of the Christian world during the next two decades to help shape a common front from among a variety of theological positions and traditions.

Athanasius' letter to the Antiochenes was almost certainly designed to reconcile two parties in Antioch. On the one hand, Athanasius was concerned with the party of Meletius (who spoke of three *hypostases*). Meletius was the bishop of Antioch appointed by homoians, but who soon revealed himself to be far more sympathetic to the homoiousians and eventually to Nicaea. Meletius became one of the key pro-Nicene leaders during the 370s. Athanasius never fully recognized him despite his increasing influence among pro-Nicenes. On the other hand Athanasius was writing to the party of 'Eustathians' (who insisted, in ways parallel to Athanasius, on the terminology of one *hypostasis*). This group traced their ancestry to Eustathius of Antioch, deposed in 327. Athanasius' attempt at reconciliation was not immediately successful, thus demonstrating not simply that the process of rapprochement had now begun but also that this process might, in some cases, take many decades.

At this point we need to observe the emergence of a figure who will play a key role in the next twenty years: Basil of Caesarea (in Cappadocia: modern Kayseri in central Turkey, not Caesarea in Palestine). Basil's early theological allegiances are hard to fathom, but he seems to have been close to homoiousians such as Basil of Ancyra. When we first hear his actual voice, very soon after the events of 359–60, we find Basil in transition: he prefers the key homoiousian phrase ὁμοιος κατ' οὐσίαν with the adverb ἀπαραλλάκτως ('undeviatingly'), but considers this to mean the same as ὁμοούσιος (*Ep.* 9). Early on he seems to have had some problems with *homoousios*, worrying that it seemed to make very difficult appropriate distinctions between Father and Son, but these soon passed.<sup>46</sup>

We see Basil's mature theology beginning to emerge in the course of his *Against Eunomius* (c. 364). Basil argues that biblical material such as Colossians 1:15, Hebrews 1:3 and Philippians 2:6 points to a community of essence (τὸ κοινὸν τῆς οὐσίας) between the one who generates and the one generated. Basil then explains that this community of essence is the core of his teaching and writes:

## Articulating identity

According to this, divinity (θεότης) is one. That is to say, it is according to the rationale (λόγος) of the substance (οὐσία) that the unity is thought, but, as in number (ἄριθμος), the difference of each rests in the particular properties and in the particular characteristics. (Eun. 1.19)

We know that there must be a unity of *ousia* between Father and Son, although what it is remains unknown: we know that there is an essence, but not what it is. At the same time we know the *idioma* or *idiotes* of Father and Son as distinct individuals.

A few sentences later, after explaining that God's image must co-exist before all time, and commenting on Hebrews 1:3, Basil writes,

And thus, because of this, 'radiance' is said, so that we know what is signified, and 'image of substance', so that *homoousios* is understood. (Eun. 1.20)

This text is in some ways unrepresentative, as it is the *only* application of *homoousios* to the relationship of Father and Son in *Against Eunomius*. Nevertheless we see Basil here arguing that the traditional language of the Son's closeness to the Father is best expressed by the terminology of *homoousios*. One further stage in Basil's account appears at *Against Eunomius* 3.3 where he argues that when the Seraphim at Isaiah 6:3 cry 'Holy' three times we see that 'the holiness according to nature (*physis*) is contemplated in the three *hypostases*'. Basil does not yet use *hypostasis* as a standard term for the three persons – sometimes he actually uses *hypostasis* as a synonym for *ousia* or *physis* – but he is beginning to reflect deeply on the need for a vocabulary to distinguish what in God is one from what is three.<sup>47</sup>

The development of a terminology for discussion of divine existence that could allow for the real differentiation of persons within the clearly unitary and indivisible divine existence was fundamental to pro-Nicene theology. Within this new theological context it could gradually become clear in new ways that the relationship of Father and Son was intrinsic to the one divine existence, that the divine 'persons' were in many senses of ontologically equal status, and that this unique mode of existence was the context for all discussion of generation and division. We do not know who first offered a clearly argued version of such a terminology in a pro-Nicene context during these years, although the importance of making these divisions seems to have been recognized by many in quick succession. Basil most certainly is the earliest surviving writer to reflect at length on a terminological distinction central to pro-Nicene theology. In Basil, as in so many writers over the next twenty years, a wide variety of terms are treated as synonymous, as long as the logical distinction is clearly made.

As we have just seen, one feature of Basil's *Against Eunomius* is an increasing willingness to talk about the Spirit's status in parallel terms to that of Father and Son. Basil's language (still in some ways reticent) reflects a widespread pro-Nicene shift. This shift may be seen as the logical conclusion of the pro-Nicene position. Traditional scriptural and liturgical language had long been taken by many to imply that the Spirit's work was inseparable from that of the Son and thus part of the divine activity; but once the activity of Father and Son was treated as unitary, and as theologians asserted with increasing clarity that there was one simple divine nature, then it should not cause surprise that the Spirit was increasingly spoken of as the third *hypostasis* in the divine nature. Nevertheless, however inevitable this shift may seem to us, it was not universally accepted.

We first find clear opposition in a group against whom Athanasius writes c. 358–61. One of his Egyptian supporters, Serapion, bishop of Thmuis in the Nile delta, reported a group that was 'Nicene' concerning the divinity of the Son, but seemed to regard the Spirit as a created and superior angel (quoting 1 Tim. 5:21).<sup>48</sup> Against this position Athanasius deploys arguments he had earlier used in the case of the Son. Just as the Son's coming forth from the Father is only logically comprehensible as an immaterial generation within the Godhead, not as the generation of an intermediate being who shares partially in divinity, so the Spirit proceeds from the Father, fully within the Godhead. At the same time, just as the Son shares the Father's being with us and so must be true God, so the Spirit draws us to the Son and brings us gifts from heaven. The Spirit must also be God.

In Cappadocia, possibly beginning in 368, and clearly evident in the early 370s, we find a number of references to those who deny the divinity of the Spirit. During the late 370s and 380s a specific group is frequently mentioned called Macedonians (after Macedonius the bishop of Constantinople) or *Pneumatomachoi* ('Spirit fighters'). Many of those being described in this way during the 370s were former homoiousians. Many or most of these figures seem to have believed in the divinity of the Son in ways that satisfied pro-Nicene commentators, but they seem to have been worried that pro-Nicene insistence on according an equal position to the Spirit reflected either a non-scriptural modalism or a confession of three equal Gods. In the second case these thinkers seem to have grasped how one might speak of the Son sharing the Father's nature, but they were unhappy with the next step of speaking clearly and simply of one divine nature encompassing three still distinct beings. Against them Basil explains that pro-Nicenes are not in the business of adding further divine beings to a list of divine beings, but of providing an account

of irreducible simplicity and unity within which all talk of God must occur (*SpS* 16). Basil's opponents had, in many ways, missed the context within which emerging pro-Nicene theology made this assertion. One of the most fundamental moves of pro-Nicene theology was to articulate this context *without* making the persons reducible to a prior essence.

It is time now to turn again to events in the Western half of the Empire, which have not been mentioned since describing the Council of Ariminum in 359. During the second half of the 350s some westerners had already begun to see Nicaea as the obvious alternative standard of faith to the emerging homoian theology, and as a rallying point against the decisions forced on westerners as Constantius' power increased westwards. This response was particularly strong after 357, one of the key figures being Hilary of Poitiers. Hilary was a bishop who had been sent into exile in 356 by order of Constantius, for his opposition to Constantius' main ecclesiastical supporter and agent in Gaul.<sup>49</sup> Hilary is clear that until the mid-350s he had never heard the creed of Nicaea used publicly at a council, although he soon came to grant it great significance. In exile, Hilary went to the region of Phrygia in Asia Minor where he made the acquaintance of a number of key figures, including Basil of Ancyra. In 359, after attending the council at Seleucia, he was allowed back to Gaul and played a major role in opposing Constantius' homoian settlement. Hilary's theology provides a fascinating example of how someone with what we might term a traditional Latin interest in language that emphasizes the shared being between God and his Word gradually offers a more distinctly pro-Nicene account that overcomes the ambiguities of earlier Nicene theology. We find Hilary treating the ineffable generation of one who is truly God from God as the core of the Christian account of God, but we also see him increasingly offering a sophisticated and clearly pro-Nicene account of the Father and Son as distinct from each other, but sharing one nature and power – specifically the power that is creative activity. Hilary was active at a number of councils, trying to rally people behind Nicaea as the only alternative standard comparable to the Ariminum creed. One feature of these pro-Nicene campaigns in the West during the 360s and 370s was the importance of conducting them cautiously, without creating the impression with the imperial authorities that there would be large-scale public disorder. In particular, while it was possible for small synods to meet and articulate a common adherence to Nicaea, we have no evidence during this period that pro-Nicenes had the means to depose (rather than just censure or excommunicate) homoian bishops. Rarely did pro-Nicenes attempt to incite the direct removal of their opponents.

For much of these two decades the West was under the control of Valentinian I (366–75). Valentinian has gone down in history as a ‘Nicene’ emperor; in fact his public policy was one of pragmatic non-interference in ecclesiastical affairs (whatever his private sympathies). This public policy allowed the pro-Nicene campaigns gradually to have a serious effect even while certain avenues for change remained closed. Valentinian’s young successor Gratian was a far more open supporter of the pro-Nicene cause, especially after the accession of Theodosius in the East.

One other Western figure from the 370s and 380s demands brief mention: Ambrose, bishop of Milan 374–97. Ambrose was a provincial governor and an unbaptized layman when he was chosen as successor to the important homoian bishop of Milan, Auxentius, in 374.<sup>50</sup> His appointment probably reflects the imperial authorities’ intention of ensuring that Milan would henceforth have as bishop a less controversial figure than Auxentius. For the first few years of his episcopate, despite apparently having pro-Nicene leanings, he appears to have taken little action against homoians. However, by 378 there appears to have been considerable pressure on Ambrose from homoians in Milan, aided by an influx of refugees from Illyricum following the Gothic invasion. Ambrose gradually evolved a sophisticated theological response to these opponents, incorporating much contemporary Greek pro-Nicene theology.<sup>51</sup>

Ambrose became increasingly influential over Gratian, and under this influence, as well as the influence of Theodosius’ policies in the East, Gratian began to pursue a much more directly pro-Nicene line. In many ways the highpoint of this new policy was the small council held at Aquileia (at the very top of the Adriatic) in 381. At this council a number of the key remaining homoians were deposed at Ambrose’s instigation. This council does not, as it has sometimes been presented, mark the end of the homoians in the West, but it does mark an important juncture. After this homoians seem to have begun the process of becoming a clearly distinct group, although their theology continued to develop.

We are now in a position to narrate the institutional victory of the emergent pro-Nicene theology. Events in the Eastern half of the Empire during the years 378–82, both secular and ecclesiastical, take their cue from the disastrous battle of Adrianople in 378. At this battle against the Goths, the Emperor Valens was among those killed. A general called Theodosius was eventually summoned from retirement in Spain by the remaining Emperor Gratian and commissioned as co-emperor to take charge of the problem. In 379 Meletius called a council in Antioch after returning from the last of a series of exiles

under Valens (365–6, 371–8). The uncertainty following the battle of Adrianople and the change in imperial administration provided an opportunity to change the status quo that was not missed by pro-Nicenes. Meletius' council (which probably met with at least the tacit approval of the new emperor) indicated that many in both East and West favoured the pro-Nicene cause. Within months Theodosius declared for the pro-Nicenes. In 380 Theodosius issued an edict which insisted on the profession of 'Nicene' faith, defined as that taught by Damasus, bishop of Rome, and Peter, Athanasius' successor in Alexandria. Then, in 381, Theodosius summoned a council to meet in Constantinople.<sup>52</sup>

It is important to realize that our knowledge of this famous council is surprisingly patchy. The council seems not to have been large – around 150 bishops attended – and to have been drawn from areas under Meletius' influence. We have no surviving copy of the theological definition that followed the council's creed, and most surprisingly there is no certain account of the creed until the Council of Chalcedon. However, there are enough hints to make it fairly certain that this council did actually issue the creed later associated with it.<sup>53</sup> That creed probably read as follows:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten by his Father before all ages, Light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things came into existence, who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens and became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became a man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and suffered and was buried and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures and ascended into the heavens and is seated at the right hand of the Father and will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and there will be no end to his kingdom; and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life-giver, who proceeds from the Father, who is worshipped and glorified together with the Father and the Son, who spoke by the prophets; and in one holy catholic and apostolic Church; we confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins; we wait for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the coming age.<sup>54</sup>

The creed of this council makes a number of adjustments to the Nicene creed, subtly changing the wording of the central accounts of the Son's generation and extending the clause on the Spirit to insist on the Spirit's being worshipped with Father and Son. This last change is somewhat ambiguously worded and the creed does not say directly that the Spirit is God or that the Spirit is *homoousios*. This may well reflect something of a compromise at the council,

and very possibly the personal influence of Gregory of Nyssa, although from Theodosius' subsequent decree the basic intention of those setting the theological pace was very clear.

Theodosius issued a decree in 382 known as *Episcopiis tradi* that is of considerable significance because of the manner in which it attempts to define orthodoxy. The beginning of the text says,

[W]e order that all the churches now be handed over to bishops who confess the Father, Son and Spirit to be of one majesty and power and glory and splendour, making no discordance by profane division, but with a declaration of the order of the persons of the Trinity and in the unity of the divinity . . .

The significance of this decree lies in its attempt to define pro-Nicene orthodoxy without trying to impose one particular terminology. Rather, the text attempts to define the logic of the relationship between persons and essence. This strategy reflects the reality that different pro-Nicene theologies had become able to recognize a variety of terminologies as compatible because they could identify the logical overlap in the deep structures of their theologies. It is also noteworthy that the text does not define orthodoxy by reference to the term *homoousios* or the terms of Nicaea, but by a trinitarian formula: this was now clearly the focus of Christian doctrine, the articulating principle behind other doctrinal themes.

Two other key figures in the development of pro-Nicene theology were Gregory Nazianzen, a long-term friend and close associate of Basil's, and Gregory of Nyssa, Basil's younger brother. Their theology represents a less cautious approach (at least with respect to the Spirit) than their contemporary Basil. Basil's work during the 360s seems to have prepared the way for them, but it is their writing through into the 380s that stands as the full flowering of pro-Nicene thought. After Basil's death Gregory of Nyssa in particular seems to have taken up his role as chief pro-Nicene opponent of Eunomius.

When we consider pro-Nicene theologies in general, instead of attempting to define pro-Nicene orthodoxy by reference simply to particular propositions, we should perhaps speak of the development of a pro-Nicene theological 'culture'. In this way we will better understand how these theological developments came to have such a fundamental role in shaping Christian identity. The use of 'culture' here is one that stems from discussions in cultural anthropology, and a brief definition might perhaps be 'a system of learned patterns of behaviour (including thought, speech and human action), ideas and products that together shape conceptions of the order of existence'. Two other observations are needed to complement this definition. First, 'cultures', in

this sense, do not necessarily have clearly defined boundaries. Boundaries between different cultures may be fluid; while one can define their core attributes and point to those who exhibit them well, it may be very difficult to identify clear boundaries. Secondly, one may belong to a variety of cultures simultaneously and be in a continual process of negotiating the boundaries between them.<sup>55</sup>

To define pro-Nicene culture thoroughly we would need to look at a variety of intellectual, social, political and ritual practices and attitudes to see the concrete forms of these patterns of behaviour. Here, where there is space only for a summary account, I shall focus on some of the key ideas that shaped pro-Nicene theologies. We might begin to indicate the structure of this culture by identifying three broad sets of themes found between different pro-Nicene theologies. Together these themes – although still developing – were central to shaping the mainstream Christian imagination and identity at the end of the fourth century.

First, and seemingly most specifically concerned with trinitarian theology, pro-Nicenes insisted that God was one simple power, glory, majesty and nature. The unity of God is also reflected in the central pro-Nicene tenet that the persons of the Trinity are inseparable in their activity. It is important to understand that this insistence provides the basic context within which pro-Nicenes situate *all* talk about the persons and their irreducibility. However, arguing that the divine unity and simplicity are right at the heart of pro-Nicene theology is not intended to constitute a suggestion that pro-Nicenes somehow thought of the divine unity as more important than the differences between the persons. This is so *only insofar as* they thought that the indivisibility and simplicity of the divine being was the context within which we should speak about division or hierarchical ordering within God. Within this context pro-Nicenes insisted on the irreducibility of the divine persons. Although it is still commonplace to speak as if the terminology of *ousia* and *hypostasis* was the central terminology of pro-Nicene theology, it is actually the case that a variety of logically compatible terminologies were used, and not simply within different pro-Nicene traditions, but even within the same writer.<sup>56</sup>

The second major set of themes in pro-Nicene theology follows directly on from the first and focuses on an overlapping set of principles concerning human speech about God, its nature and possibility. For all pro-Nicenes whose work survives at any length, discussions of trinitarian theology are interwoven with questions of anthropology, psychology and epistemology. On the one hand, pro-Nicenes insist that the divine nature exceeds our intellectual grasp. If one asks in what precise sense God is incomprehensible, pro-Nicenes rarely

provide clear answers, insisting that we cannot know in what ways the divine exceeds our grasp precisely because God is the Creator of all and the Lord of all who is truly distinct from the created order. Some, such as Augustine, articulate clearly the principle that no formal analogies are possible; others, such as Gregory of Nyssa, use the language of 'analogy' more openly but simultaneously insist on the impossibility of fully understanding the God to whom we apply the analogies. On the other hand, pro-Nicenes link their accounts of divine incomprehensibility very clearly to their accounts of how human beings in need of redemption fail even to comprehend what they should, and how the search for knowledge of God must be accompanied by practices that purify soul and mind. Thus, developed psychologies and anthropologies become key parts of good trinitarian theology. In a more extended investigation it might also be possible to show how pro-Nicenes link these presumptions to accounts of bodily ascetic practice. This collection of themes must also be seen as including pro-Nicene accounts of Scripture. For pro-Nicenes Scripture is the focal resource in our attempts to speak of God and our attempts to learn how to go on speaking meaningfully. Figural reading practices enable Scripture to function as a resource for the purification of the soul and the constant advance of the human understanding within the context of pro-Nicene anthropologies and psychologies.<sup>57</sup>

The third and last major set of pro-Nicene themes is Christological, and again follows closely on from the last. On the one hand, pro-Nicene theologies do not so much abandon but rather transform traditional accounts of the Son's intermediary role. The role of the incarnate *Logos* in drawing us together before the Father, through the incorporation of our existence within that of the *Logos*, becomes perhaps more prominent. The work of Son and Spirit can thus now shape new accounts of the ways in which Christians conceive of themselves as being encompassed within the life of the three divine persons.

This account has referred to pro-Nicenes in the plural. It is important to realize that there were different groups of pro-Nicene theologians who could certainly recognize each other's theologies as mutually compatible. Much scholarly work remains to be done on identifying the different groups and their characteristic emphases. Contrary to some common presentations, it is more and more clear that an East *versus* West distinction is not a primary dividing mark between different pro-Nicene theologies. These overlapping theologies were also themselves in a state of flux; over the course of the emergence of pro-Nicene orthodoxy and through the decades that followed, various terminologies and emphases came to spread more and more widely, and distinct traditions changed and evolved.

Having discussed at some length the course of the trinitarian controversies of the fourth century we need now to outline the course of the Christological controversies that occupied much energy over the seventy years from 380 to 450. However, it is important to note that the previous sentence is problematic in its assumptions. In many textbook presentations the 'Christological' disputes are treated as a separate and subsequent theological controversy occurring once the trinitarian controversies of the fourth century were over. This account is problematic, first, because it does not take account of the fact that the divergent Christologies with which we are concerned emerged in the context of the trinitarian debates. Secondly, the assumption that one can easily separate these disputes leads one to neglect ways in which the trinitarian controversy shaped the fundamental assumptions of all the protagonists in the later disputes between 380 and 450.

The first stage in the Christological debates was controversy around the figure of Apollinaris of Laodicea in the 370s and 380s.<sup>58</sup> Apollinaris (c. 315–92) was the son of a priest and rhetor also called Apollinaris, and like his father was highly trained in classical literature and literary style. He was a friend and ally of Athanasius, sided with the Eustathian Bishop Paulinus in Antioch against Meletius, and wrote strongly in defence of pro-Nicene theology in the mid 360s. Even at this stage he seems to have possessed a distinctive Christology, which eventually became the subject of strong censure and criticism. However serious Apollinaris' theological errors seemed, his decision to ordain his own supporter Vitalis bishop in Antioch against Meletius in 378 and then to allow other supporters to establish an alternative hierarchy in some other bishoprics greatly increased the anger of many in the East towards him.

Traditionally Apollinaris' theology has been described through reference to his supposed insistence that Christ did not have a human soul, the *Logos* 'ensouling' the human person of Christ. Paradoxically, Apollinaris' doctrine, if this it was, found much support in third- and fourth-century writing, even among some of those who had been strong supporters of Nicaea. For a number of earlier Nicene writers a concern to show that the truly divine *Logos* was directly at work in Christ led them to show little interest in whether Christ possessed a human soul, and in some cases to deny it directly. However, rather than assuming that Apollinaris imagined Christ simply without a human soul, it seems much more likely that Apollinaris held to a trichotomous understanding of the human being. That is, he seems to have envisaged the soul as divided into two levels, there being an animating soul controlling the functions of the body, and a rational soul which 'contained' the will and self-governing rational power of human existence: in this scheme the *Logos* replaced the higher level

or division of the soul. For Apollinaris this was the only way of preserving the true presence of the *Logos* in the incarnate Christ; the idea that the human Christ possessed both a rational soul and the presence of the *Logos* implied to him that the full depth of union between man and *Logos* was being avoided.

Apollinaris' account of the soul of Christ needs also to be set in the context of one other key theme in his theology. Apollinaris makes significant use of Paul's terminology of the 'heavenly man' for Christ and seems in some sense to speak of Christ's flesh as having existed before the incarnation. Apollinaris perhaps conceived of the Word as existing before the ages in a form that prefigured the flesh of Christ, a spiritual form of Christ's glorified body that was already in some sense the mediating union between God and creation that would appear through a human birth. Brian Daley has recently argued that this theme of Apollinaris' theology seemed to imply to Gregory of Nyssa that Apollinaris misunderstood the true narrative of the incarnation.<sup>59</sup> For Nyssa, Daley argues, Apollinaris fails to give sufficient weight to the *Logos*' status both as one in the divine nature (by envisaging the *Logos* as somehow eternally enfleshed) and as freely descending to become incarnate in Christ. Once we have seen Apollinaris' views on the soul and on the Word's eternal enfleshment it becomes easier to understand one of the most important of his ideas, and one that prefigures and even influences Christological debate over the next seventy years. Apollinaris speaks famously of 'the one enfleshed nature of God the *Logos*' (μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη). While Apollinaris does at times speak of or imply two different aspects to Christ, his two natures, his main focus is on ensuring that we understand Christ to be a unity, constituted by the saving presence of the *Logos*.

Dispute over Apollinaris continued for some decades. For the purposes of understanding the Christological controversies of the fifth century it is important to understand that the dispute with Apollinaris established a polemical terminology: those throughout the next few decades who wished to insist that the incarnate Christ was one unified reality, constituted by the presence of the *Logos*, could always be accused of Apollinarianism. Questions concerning Christ's soul also now received new focus: to offer a theology in which Christ's soul seemed dispensable could now be accused of being 'Apollinarian'. Thus, dispute over Apollinaris' theology was in many ways the opening salvo in a Christological battle that was to run for many centuries, the initial skirmish of which might be said to end at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

One of the targets (and opponents) of Apollinaris was the Christology associated with Diodore of Tarsus. Diodore was bishop of Tarsus only from 378, but he had already had a long career in the pro-Nicene cause, having become a

supporter of Meletius of Antioch in the 360s. His work has tended to be seen as one of the early examples of what is frequently called the 'Antiochene' school, exhibiting a Christology and a style of reading scriptural texts that stand as one of two key theological traditions of the early fifth century. While it does seem fair to talk of an Antiochene tradition in the fifth century, it is not the case that 'Antioch' and 'Alexandria' represent two traditions equally long-standing and all-encompassing in Christian thought.<sup>60</sup> The Antiochene tradition in terms of Christology is limited in scope, largely from Diodore to Nestorius. The Alexandrian tradition of Cyril (discussed below) is in many ways a particular version of a style of Christology found in many places in the fourth- and fifth-century Christian world. Treating them as two equal traditions can easily give one a distorted sense of their relative size.

Despite the state of Diodore's remaining corpus, the basic lines of his position are clear: he insisted that in Christ there is a clear separation between the *Logos*, 'the Son of God', and 'the one born of Mary' or 'the son of David'. Diodore insisted on distinguishing the two subjects of talk about Christ for a sound pro-Nicene reason: the divine, impassible and omniscient *Logos* could not in any way be subject to change or suffering. At every stage his animus against Apollinaris stemmed from his worry that Apollinaris envisaged Christ as a mixture and thus compromised the truly divine status of the *Logos*. We can say, then, that pro-Nicene theology shaped the early stages of this dispute in two ways: first, one side insisted that our descriptions of Christ must constantly bear in mind the immutability and impassibility of the divine *Logos*; secondly, both sides insisted that salvation comes through the presence of the *Logos* in Christ, but for Apollinaris, as earlier for Athanasius and later for Cyril of Alexandria, this conception implies that the *Logos* must somehow have become truly one with Christ's humanity, transforming it into the unitary locus of salvation.

Diodore died around 390, but his theology and teaching lived on, especially in the Theodore who became bishop of Mopsuestia in 392.<sup>61</sup> Theodore's main Christological concern, like Diodore's, was with preserving the *Logos* as immutable and hence with not confusing the two different subjects of talk about the incarnate Christ. Theodore clearly argues that Christ had a human soul: 'the man assumed' must be a fully human being. When he spoke of the incarnation, Theodore sometimes used phrases that easily seemed problematic to those outside his particular tradition: he spoke of the *Logos* becoming flesh only κατὰ τὸ δοκεῖν, a Greek phrase we might gloss as 'seemingly' or 'metaphorically'. However, we misinterpret Theodore unless we notice that he does also have a sophisticated account of the union that is the incarnate

Christ. God is present in all things and everywhere, but by a specific act of love or grace he chooses to be specially present, or present for particular purposes. In the Son, the *Logos* is present 'as in a Son' so that there is one person (πρόσωπον) to which all the actions of the Saviour can be referred. This union enabled the participation of Christ's human nature in the divine life and was eternal. The union that occurs in the incarnate Christ is then the model for our own adoption as sons of God.

Although it is difficult to narrate the course of events with certainty, it seems that the work of Diodore and Theodore was well known, and had created a context in which differing pro-Nicene Christologies were in an increasingly tense relationship. It is against this background that the next stage of the controversy erupted. In 428 Nestorius, a disciple of Theodore, became bishop of Constantinople.<sup>62</sup> Nestorius' theology offered another version of the 'Antiochene' tradition as we have seen it in Diodore and Theodore, but his personality appears also to have been a factor in the events that followed. Within a year of his consecration controversy with Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, erupted. It is important to note that both of the protagonists in this controversy were well-known and established figures. Two events were key in the public emergence of this controversy. First, Nestorius preached in Constantinople arguing that Mary should not be addressed by the title Θεοτόκος ('one who gave birth to God'). Secondly, Cyril wrote to Nestorius (in 429) claiming that the Nicene creed implies the necessity of the title *Theotokos*. Nestorius' reply to Cyril avoided the issues, and Cyril wrote again: his *Second Letter to Nestorius* became a document that was eventually identified by the Council of Chalcedon as a standard of orthodoxy.<sup>63</sup>

Nestorius' theology in many ways followed clearly on from Theodore's. Nestorius insisted that Christ may be spoken of as both one and two realities, but at different levels. The incarnate Christ is indivisible as Christ, as the person (πρόσωπον) of Christ – and πρόσωπον for Nestorius seems to have specifically indicated the person as a concrete manifestation. However, Christ is also two in the sense that the two natures of divinity and humanity are distinct. Christ is made up of two sorts of realities, which cannot lose or change their essential features. Although Nestorius tries hard to insist that the one *prosopon* of the incarnate Christ means that we can attribute saying and actions of Christ, not simply to his human or his divine nature, but to the incarnate *prosopon* as a unity, at other times his language is looser, and he even speaks of two *prosopa* in Christ.

For Nestorius Cyril's language was dangerous because it seemed to envisage a change in the nature of the *Logos*, the two natures for him being always the

unchangeable grounds from which Christ is constituted. After he had lost his battle with Cyril, Nestorius composed a long text called *The Book of Heraclides of Damascus* (known at times as the *Bazaar of Heraclides*), in which he seems to have moved much more closely towards admitting that in the union of incarnation the two natures interpenetrate in some sense. Many modern scholars have argued that Nestorius was not a 'Nestorian', that he is not at all fairly represented by his opponents and by the caricature condemned under his name.

Cyril's own theology found its early bearings in reinterpreting Athanasius' anti-'Arian' themes.<sup>64</sup> In his early works on the Trinity and in his commentary on John Cyril defends strongly the status of the *Logos* as divine, and he emphasizes the Word's *kenosis*, self-emptying, in the incarnation. Cyril does not (again unsurprisingly) imagine that the Word voluntarily ceases to possess those qualities intrinsic to being divine; rather, in a mysterious and ineffable way the *Logos* chose to unite himself to a human nature and to take the flesh and soul *as his own*. At times this leads to descriptions (not unlike some Athanasian themes) in which the human actions and sufferings of Christ seem to be the *Logos*' performance of human suffering rather than actual suffering. One helpful way of explaining the core of Cyril's thought is, Richard Norris suggests, to think about the narrative Cyril wishes to tell. Cyril's fundamental Christological narrative takes its form from Philippians 2. The *Logos* remains in the form of God and yet descends, not assuming a person who might potentially have existed independently, but becoming one subject with a human nature so that a human life and death (and resurrection) would be his eternally. The concern in this narrative is not to offer a metaphysical analysis of the constitution of Christ's person, but to describe how the *Logos*, as the one subject of the story, assumes flesh for our salvation.

At times Cyril faced accusations of Apollinarianism, the earlier controversy having shaped what one might term the polemical imagination of the early fifth century. His strong talk of the union between the two natures gave rise to charges that he believed the flesh to have come down from heaven. Cyril denies these charges directly in his letter to John of Antioch, but there is a fascinating twist to his denial of Apollinarianism. As the controversy progressed, Cyril's account of Christ came to focus more and more clearly on language that emphasized the unity of the person of Christ, and one of the tools that enabled this shift was the discovery of phraseology and texts that were Apollinarian, but which had survived under the name of Athanasius and Didymus the Blind. In particular Apollinarian terminology of 'the one enfleshed nature of the *Logos*' seems to have helped Cyril develop his increasing insistence on there being one nature in Christ.

We left the story of the controversy with Cyril and Nestorius starting a war by correspondence in 429. Cyril's tactics were masterly: at the same time as his correspondence campaign he also won over Celestine the bishop of Rome. Cyril was able to persuade Celestine to hold a synod (August 430) at which Nestorius was to be condemned if he did not recant. However, these moves were forestalled by the imperial summoning of a council to meet in the following year. The Council of Ephesus was, to say the least, problematic. Cyril orchestrated the proceedings: Nestorius was condemned; Mary proclaimed Theotokos; John of Antioch and the bishops of the dioceses of the East, amongst whom Nestorius might have expected support, arrived in Ephesus late, after Cyril had already concluded the council with those already present.

There were those, John of Antioch and Theodoret of Cyrrhus among them, who found unacceptable the council's simple proclamation that Cyril was right. Something of a rapprochement came in 433 when a document known as the Formula of Reunion and composed in Antioch was signed by both Cyril and John of Antioch. Nestorius remained deposed, Cyril conceded that in matters of exegesis one might attribute sayings to either of the two natures or to the one person of Christ, and the Antiochenes confessed Mary as Theotokos. The text also speaks of an 'unconfused union' of two natures, the divine '*homoousios* with the Father' (as Nicaea had affirmed), and the human, which includes a rational soul, '*homoousios* with us', in the 'One Christ, one Son, one Lord'. This agreement seems to have angered some of Cyril's supporters, but he held to it until he died in 444.

Although the treatment of individual writers in this volume stops with the death of Cyril, it is important to continue the narrative briefly through to 451. In the late 440s the controversy erupted again, and two issues were central, the case of Eutyches in Constantinople and the theology of Theodoret of Cyrrhus. Theodoret emerged as a fundamental defender of Nestorius and is clearly dependent on the themes found in Diodore and Theodore, but, like Nestorius, he was trying to deal with the ambiguities inherited from them.<sup>65</sup> After much reluctance Theodoret eventually accepted the Formula of Reunion but he refused to condemn Nestorius. Eutyches, an aged and much respected archimandrite in Constantinople, was condemned for his insistence that in the incarnation one must speak of only one nature, and indeed a nature not 'consubstantial with us'.

In 449 a synod was held in Ephesus under the control of Dioscorus, Cyril's successor. Eutyches was declared orthodox and Flavian was deposed, as was Theodoret of Cyrrhus. Dioscorus used imperial troops to harass those who

opposed him. Among those whose views were not heard was Leo, the bishop of Rome. Leo was deeply offended and termed the meeting the 'robber council'. In 451, under a new emperor, the Council of Chalcedon met.<sup>66</sup> Three aspects of its work need to be noted here. First, and at imperial insistence, Dioscorus and some of his key supporters were deposed. Secondly, the council defined a series of works as embodying Christological orthodoxy. The creeds of Nicaea and Constantinople were reaffirmed, but the council also accepted as standards of orthodoxy Leo's Letter to Flavian (ignored in 449; known as Leo's 'Tome' from the Latin *tomus* for letter), Cyril's *Second Letter to Nestorius*, and Cyril's letter to John of Antioch which contained the Formula of Reunion. Thirdly, the council drew up a famous definition of Christological faith. This definition affirms that the 'mystery of the dispensation' should not be split 'into a duality of sons'; at the same time it rejects any 'mixture or confusion' of the two natures, and rejects any language of one nature after the union. The central part of the definition is closely related to the Formula of Reunion. It insists that 'one and the same Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ' is to be acknowledged 'in two natures' (a modification of the theology avowed by Cyril and Dioscorus insisted on by the papal legates), adding the adverbs unconfusedly, unalterably, undividedly and inseparably. Finally, the text insists that the natures come together 'in one person or *hypostasis*'. The four adverbs have been the subject of much debate ever since. Our narrative ends with Chalcedon, but the dispute did not. From the many debates over Chalcedon splits occurred in the Church in the East, which continue today.

The bulk of this chapter has been concerned with debates over trinitarian and Christological issues, and these were indeed fundamental in shaping Christian belief and imagination during these years. But interwoven with these disputes was a series of other controversies centred on the nature of humanity and the origins and powers of the soul. In discussing the origins of the trinitarian controversies we have already encountered third-century controversy over Origen's work: towards the end of the fourth century controversy over Origen again became prominent. As Elizabeth Clark makes clear in her recent study of this controversy, we need almost to speak of controversies in the plural here, different participants having different views about what was actually at stake, and a number of highly personal disputes becoming foci of the debate.<sup>67</sup> One of the earliest stages in the dispute began with Epiphanius of Salamis' strong denunciation of Origen in the 370s. For Epiphanius, Origen's teaching on the fall of souls into the body and the possibility that the devil would be saved were unacceptable. Epiphanius also treated Origen as the ultimate source of 'Arianism' because of his subordinationism.

Epiphanius' attacks seem to have reflected debate about Origen's works that was already prominent, especially in ascetic circles in Egypt. The debate over Origen in Egypt would soon take centre stage in the debate, but here subtly different issues seem to have been at stake. The strong spiritualizing tendencies in Origen's exegesis of scriptural material concerning the nature of the Word seemed to some Egyptian ascetics to run against the scriptural tendency to speak of God in anthropomorphic terms. Some also thought that asserting God's incorporeality and incomprehensibility failed to acknowledge the implications of the doctrine that human beings are created in God's image. Lastly, some also seem to have understood the Son as possessing a visible form or glory, possibly in connection with exegesis of Daniel 7 and Ezekiel 1:<sup>68</sup> a theme that has a long pre-Nicene pedigree in Christian thought and which may well be connected with the account of Christ's glorified body found in Apollinarian circles.

Eventually, in the 380s, Epiphanius convinced Jerome in Palestine that these charges were just (particularly interesting as Jerome had long been virtually a copier of Origen in his biblical commentaries). In 395 Epiphanius visited Jerusalem and effectively charged John of Jerusalem with Origenism. He was able to enlist Jerome on his side against both John and Jerome's erstwhile friend Rufinus. Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, had been dismissive of Epiphanius' views in the mid-390s. However, his position soon changed. In his Easter Letter of 399 Theophilus argued strongly in favour of God's incorporeality and the invisibility of the *Logos*, but then he abruptly changed course and took the side of Jerome and Epiphanius. He also expelled from Egypt some of the leading Origenist monks to whom he had formerly been close. When these were to some extent sheltered, pending further investigation, by John the bishop of Constantinople (who became known as Chrysostom), Theophilus engineered the removal of John from his bishopric in 403. At this point Theophilus appears to have again changed his mind and returned to a qualified support for and study of Origen, claiming that one simply had to choose what in Origen one studied.

These debates also were heard and followed in the Western half of the Empire, Rufinus acting as a principal conduit for transferring ideas and translations to the West. Of particular importance here were debates over the origin of the soul and to what extent one could hold to any version of an Origenist cosmic scheme in which souls are created separate from bodies and are then give a chance to work towards salvation through being born in material bodies. Some issues concerning free will and the origin of the soul appear in a transmuted form in debate over 'Pelagianism'.

As remarked above, in the West some aspects of the Origenist controversy came to affect disputes over what became known as 'Pelagianism', a dispute particularly associated with the figure of Augustine of Hippo.<sup>69</sup> However, this dispute, which had such an impact on defining Western Christian identity for future centuries, involved many other thinkers than Augustine and Pelagius. Pelagius himself had had a long career before the controversy and we should beware lest the name 'Pelagianism' make us forget that a host of related thinkers were involved. The precise origins of the dispute are, as with so many such disputes, unclear. At the turn of the fourth century there seems to have been a growing debate in Rome over the nature of sin, death and human nature. One issue in debate was the question of whether infants were baptized not because of their own sin but because of the results of Adam's sin. Also in debate at this time were a variety of questions about the value of the body and the relative virtues of chastity and marriage. These latter questions are particularly associated with debate over Jovinian, who died c. 406.<sup>70</sup>

Pelagius, who was the leader of a group of ascetics in Rome, had already been involved in controversy with Jerome in 394. Pelagius' writing was primarily practical, exhorting his disciples and readers to strive for moral perfection and sinlessness. For Pelagius, baptism removes the punishment due to our sins and restores our original abilities to know and do the good. The grace of baptism, one might say, provides a new law for us to follow. Thus it is not surprising that Pelagius places much emphasis on obedience to law and on the baptized possessing the ability to obey what has been commanded. This theology seems to have found a willing audience among some social groups in late fourth-century Rome. In particular, there seems to have been a willing lay aristocratic audience, for whom Pelagius' exhortations accorded with their own ascetic desires, while his emphasis on the human ability to act well encouraged them to continue their traditional function as benefactors (some other 'Pelagian' supporters, especially in Sicily, took a much stronger line against all human clinging to riches).<sup>71</sup>

Although we are not certain, one or other of Pelagius' associates or Pelagius himself may well have begun to react to Augustine around 400, in response to his growing emphasis on grace and human inability to act by itself towards the good, which is apparent both in the second book of Augustine's *Ad Simplicianum* and in the *Confessions*. However, the controversy with Augustine came clearly into the open only in 412. Pelagius and Caelestius arrived in North Africa in 411 following increasing barbarian incursion into Italy and the sack of Rome the year before. Pelagius himself travelled on to Palestine but Caelestius stayed and was immediately criticized for teaching that Adam would have died naturally

and that babies are born into the same state as Adam. He was condemned at a council in Carthage in 412 and left for Ephesus. Pelagius himself had mixed fortunes in the East, finding both much more sympathy for his views and some strong opponents. Indeed, the term 'Pelagian' and the assumption that Pelagius was the author of a uniform heretical grouping appeared in Palestine in 415, first being used by Jerome.

Augustine was not present at the council in Carthage that condemned Caelestius in 412 but, being informed of the proceedings, he wrote his *On Merit and the Forgiveness of Sins* in response to Caelestius. A little later, in 415, Augustine also wrote his *On Nature and Grace* in response to Pelagius' own *On Nature*. Pelagius and Caelestius were both exonerated by a synod in Palestine, which stimulated Augustine and the African bishops to launch a strong campaign for the reversal of this decision. After a complex series of events the Africans managed to persuade the Western imperial authorities to condemn Pelagius as a heretic in 418. Zosimus, bishop of Rome, who had previously been opposed to this move, acquiesced and even excommunicated the few bishops in Italy who refused to agree with his official condemnation, including Julian, bishop of Eclanum, who now came to assume a key role in the dispute.

At this point we can see that this conflict also reflects emerging issues and regional conflicts in church authority and structure. On the one hand the African bishops were keen to enlist Rome's support, and yet at the same time they were happy to press their case in the face of Roman lack of interest, to the extent of simultaneously trying to court the emperor. We should not speak simply of the Africans acknowledging Rome as their superior; they seem to have treated Rome as an appropriate appellate court but were simultaneously keen to assert their traditional independence.<sup>72</sup> At the same time Roman bishops were keen to expand their power and exert authority where possible, whether in defence of Pelagius or Augustine. Eastern bishops were traditionally very wary of Rome's seeking to assert a right to interfere in the actual jurisdiction of the East. So once Pelagius had been condemned in the West his case had been caught up in a continuing struggle over power in the Church and the structure of authority.

From 418 until Augustine's death in 430 Julian and Augustine waged a fierce literary battle. Augustine's own position continued to develop, with an increasingly clear account of the human race's family unity in Adam, of the almost inevitably sinful character of fallen sexual desire, and of the irresistible draw of divine grace within the human will. During this debate Julian presents Augustine's teaching as having a Manichaean tendency, denigrating the

natural human condition, marriage and the purpose of human desire. Julian found himself both repeatedly condemned after 418 and caught up in the results of other controversies. He seems to have spent a good deal of the 420s in the East with Theodore of Mopsuestia, and appealed to Nestorius for reinstatement in 428. These connections probably did him no good and he was again condemned at Ephesus in 431. He died around 454. Late in Augustine's life aspects of the same controversy also appear in North Africa with some monks from Hadrumetum writing to Augustine asking if their ascetic struggle is in vain. And again after Augustine's death, the same issues reappear in southern Gaul, with some trying to claim that grace becomes operative only after the will has made its free choice. The frequency with which these ideas recur shows the extent to which they got to the heart of some key questions about Christian identity in the late fourth century.<sup>73</sup>

One last movement that illustrates debates about the nature of human activity within the Church needs to be discussed here. However, 'Messalianism' as a movement or set of ideas is notoriously difficult to define and as a discrete group of people very difficult to identify.<sup>74</sup> Messalianism seems to have originated in Syriac-speaking areas of the Eastern Christian world. Unfortunately, little literature survives that we can definitely associate with this movement or set of movements. During the 380s and through the early fifth century a number of writers speak of a group with a distinctive set of doctrines focused on the place of prayer in the Christian life, the presence of demons and the Spirit in the human soul, and the necessity or otherwise of participation in the sacraments. Although the course of events remains in dispute, Messalians are first mentioned in the mid- and late-370s by Epiphanius, who was particularly concerned with their 'idleness', holding that they taught that the work which constituted a normal part of a monastic lifestyle is only a distraction from prayer.

At some point towards the end of the fourth century Flavian the bishop of Antioch held a synod to condemn a Messalian leader called Adelphius, and we know also of a related synod at Side in Pamphylia (on the southern coast of modern Turkey). Messalians were specifically condemned by the Council of Ephesus, but it is noteworthy that Cyril of Alexandria himself suggests that they should only be required to abjure the name 'Messalian' in order to be reconciled to the Church. This perhaps reflects a contemporary sense that they were a very diffuse movement with little interest in separating themselves from the rest of the Church, and that some of the themes they held dear were common (in some form) among ascetics.

When we try to understand what those termed 'Messalians' actually taught we have some clues and can make some reasonable conjectures. It is likely that those concerned placed great emphasis on fervent prayer and on the importance of giving this activity complete priority within one's ascetic life, and hence had less interest in shaping ascetic lives around monastic work. 'Messalians' also appear to have possessed a complex demonology and doctrine of evil in which each person was indwelt by a demon who was an active power within the soul. Only the practice of prayer and the indwelling of the Spirit could drive out this demon. The Spirit's presence seems to have been described in very strong terms, often using the language of mixture and of being joined to the Spirit. Those accused of 'Messalianism' seem to have sat lightly to the need for normal ecclesiastical ritual practice. Thus, it is probably also the case that accusations of disobedience to ecclesiastical authorities and lack of interest in the established life of the Church reflect the response of bishops to a group whose asceticism originated in a context very different from the increasingly clearly defined episcopal hierarchies of the imperial Church.

Throughout the period covered here developments and controversies over Christian beliefs served to shape accounts of God, salvation, Church and cosmos that provided fundamental building blocks for the Christian imagination, or, better, imaginations. This period was a pivotal one in shaping such imaginations, but the themes the emergence or refinement of which we have explored here continued to develop and arguments about their consequences continued to rage in the centuries that followed.

#### Notes

- 1 For the best recent discussion of the complex beginnings of this dispute see R. Williams, *Arius. Heresy and Tradition*, 32ff.
- 2 Brakke, *Athanasius*, esp. 83ff.
- 3 On Donatism see W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church*; B. Kriegbaum, *Kirche der Traditoren oder kirche der Martyrer?: die vorgeschichte des Donatismus*; R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine*; R. A. Markus, 'Christianity and Dissent in Roman Africa: changing perspectives in recent work'.
- 4 R. A. Markus, 'Donatus, Donatism', 285.
- 5 On this traditional polemic see U. Simon, *Verus Israel. A study of the relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (AD 135-425)*; S. Benko, 'Pagan Criticism of Christianity During the First Two Centuries AD'; Daniélou, *Gospel Message*; Edwards, *Apologetics in the Roman Empire*.

- 6 On Eusebius especially see A. Kofsky, *Eusebius of Caesarea against Paganism*.
- 7 On Augustine's polemic see Markus, *Saeculum*, J.-C. Guy, *Unité et structure logique de la «Cité de Dieu» de Saint Augustin* and the bibliography; D. F. Donnelly, *Augustine's 'De civitate Dei': An Annotated Bibliography of Modern Criticism, 1960–1990*. On Arnobius see M. B. Simmons, *Arnobius of Sicca: Religious Conflict and Competition in the Age of Diocletian*.
- 8 On late antique Roman religion in this phase see G. Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes*, and his summary treatment in *CAH*, XIII, 538–60. On Porphyry and his attack on Christianity see R. R. L. Wilken, *The Christians as Romans Saw Them*; *CHLG*, 272ff; A. Smith, *Porphyry's Place in the Neoplatonic Tradition*. Much useful introductory material on the character of late antique non-Christian religion (and especially Platonism) is to be found in A. H. Armstrong, ed., *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman*.
- 9 See P. Athanassiadi and M. Frede, *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity*.
- 10 Salzman, *On Roman Time*.
- 11 See ch. 27.
- 12 On the difficulty and possibility of speaking of 'orthodoxy' before this period see R. Williams, 'Does It Make Sense To Speak of Pre-Nicene Orthodoxy?'. On the ways in which a set of related religious groups might simply not opt for one normative definition see the discussion of 'gnosticism' in B. A. Pearson, *Gnosticism, Judaism and Egyptian Christianity*.
- 13 See L. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*; M. R. Barnes, 'The Fourth Century as Trinitarian Canon', in L. Ayres and G. Jones, eds, *Christian Origins. Theology, Rhetoric and Community*; J. T. Lienhard, 'The "Arian" Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered' for treatments which strongly question the use of 'Arianism' as a useful category for historical description. For other key treatments of this controversy see M. Simonetti, *La Crisi ariana nel IV secolo* and R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy 318–381*.
- 14 Thus following the usage of J. T. Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum: Marcellus of Ancyra and Fourth-Century Theology*.
- 15 Eusebius in Theodoret, *HE* 1.6.1.
- 16 For Asterius' theology see Hanson, *Search*, 32–8; Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, 89–98; Vinzent, *Asterius von Kappadokien: Die Theologische Fragmente. Einleitung, Kritischer Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*.
- 17 Arius ap. Athanasius, *Syn.* 15.
- 18 See Williams, *Arius* and 'Does It Make Sense To Speak of Pre-Nicene Orthodoxy?'
- 19 See K. Anatolios, *Athanasius. The Coherence of His Thought*.
- 20 Thus, for instance, Athanasius only ever uses *hypostasis* in his *Contra Arianos* in connection with exegesis of Heb. 1:3; it does not function as an independent piece of theological terminology.

- 21 See A. H. B. Logan, 'Marcellus of Ancyra and the Councils of 325: Antioch, Ancyra, and Nicaea'; A. H. B. Logan 'Marcellus of Ancyra, Defender of the Faith against Heretics – and Pagans'.
- 22 Marcellus, frg. 52 and 61. The fragments are available with German translation in the recent edition of Vinzent: *Asterius von Kappadokien*.
- 23 Marcellus appears to make strong use of the terminology, but it is not found exclusively in Marcellus' work, cf. Eusebius of Caesarea's *Letter to the People of His Diocese*, 10.
- 24 See Williams, *Arius*.
- 25 R. P. Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* attempts to explore the conflict in this way, arguing that the widespread nature of the controversy and the seemingly frequent involvement of non-elite Christians is explained by this clash of world-views. Vaggione, however, presents the conflict as between two imaginative universes, Nicene and non-Nicene: it is not at all clear that such a division can be made this easily given the complexity of the different trajectories and parties.
- 26 This translation is Hanson's: *Search*, 163.
- 27 Both in Antioch, the first in 268 in the case of Paul of Samosata, the second in early 325.
- 28 For a discussion of and bibliographical notes on this complex question see Stead, *Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, chs 14–15; Hanson, *Search*, ch. 7.
- 29 On the creation of 'Arianism' see Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, ch. 5.
- 30 Asterius, ap. Eusebius, *Marc.* I.4.
- 31 For a brief summary see *CAH*, XIII, ch. 1.
- 32 On the character of Constantius' reign see R. Klein, *Constantius II. und die christliche kirche* and Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*.
- 33 For the text of the creed and anathemas see Athanasius, *Syn.* 27; Socrates, *HE* 2.30.
- 34 The text is preserved at Hilary, *Syn.* 11. On this text see Hanson, *Search*, 343–5, whose translation I follow.
- 35 Hanson, *Search*, 557–97, offers an account of homoean theology. See also R. Gryson, ed., *Scolies ariennes sur le Concile d'Aquilée*, 173–200; Brennecke, *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer. Der Osten bis zum Ende der homöischen Reichskirche*. Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*, 243ff. offers a very useful list of surviving Latin homoian credal texts.
- 36 On heterousian theology see M. R. Barnes, *The Power of God: Dunamis in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology*, ch. 5; J. Daniélou, 'Eunome l'arien et l'exégèse néo-platonicienne du «Cratyle»'; T. A. Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism*; R. Mortley, *From Word to Silence*, II, ch. 8; Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus*.
- 37 L. R. Wickham, 'The Syntagmation of Aetius the Anomean', *JTS* 19 (1968), 540–1.
- 38 It has been suggested that one stimulus for this focus was Athanasius' own discussion of the term in his *Contra Arianos* in the 340s.
- 39 On this question see Barnes, 'The Fourth Century as Trinitarian Canon'.

- 40 For the sake of clarity it may be helpful to summarize Athanasius' movements and exiles here. Athanasius had first been in exile (mostly in what is now the city of Trier in Germany) between 335 and the end of 337, and was also in exile between 339 and 346. He had probably been allowed back to Alexandria in 346, but once Constantius was in sole charge of the Empire Athanasius' fortunes turned again, and he may well have been formally deposed both at a small council in Antioch in 349 and at the Sirmium council in 351. However, it was not until 356 that Constantius sent troops to Alexandria to have him actually removed. From the beginning of 356 to the end of 361 Athanasius could not openly occupy his see, though he spent most of these years in hiding in Egypt.
- 41 The text is preserved in Epiphanius' *Panarion*, 73.2.1ff.
- 42 For an account of these complex events see Hanson, *Search*, 371–86.
- 43 On the meaning of 'pro-Nicene' and the history of parallel terminologies see Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, ch. 8.
- 44 For a useful introduction to Valens and Valentinian, focusing on political and military issues, see *CAH*, XIII, 80–101.
- 45 A critical edition and German translation of this text are provided in M. Tetz, 'Ein enzyklisches Schreiben der Synode von Alexandrien (362)'.
- 46 See Basil, *Epp.* 361–4.
- 47 See B. Sesboüé, *Saint Basile et La Trinité. Un acte théologique au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 130–7, for Basil's developing use of this term.
- 48 For a brief summary of recent scholarship on these letters see M. A. G. Haykin, *The Spirit of God. The Exegesis of 1 & 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century*, 59–61.
- 49 On Hilary's role see Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*, ch. 2; Brennecke, *Hilarius von Poitiers*.
- 50 See Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*, chs 4ff.; N. McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan. Church and Court in a Christian Capital*.
- 51 On Ambrose's development see Barnes, *The Power of God*, 167ff.; Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*.
- 52 *CTheod.* 16.1.2, 16.1.3. Hanson, *Search*, 791ff. provides a very useful account. See also the seminal text, A. M. Ritter, *Das Konzil von Constantinopel und sein Symbol. Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des 2. Ökumenischen Konzils*.
- 53 On this particular question see the account in J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (1972<sup>3</sup>), ch. 10, which takes account of Ritter's research.
- 54 Hanson's translation: *Search*, 816.
- 55 For a good discussion of this terminology see K. Tanner, *Theories of Culture: a New Agenda for Theology*, chs 2 and 3.
- 56 See esp. J. T. Lienhard, 'Ousia and Hypostasis: The Cappadocian Settlement and the Theology of "One Hypostasis"'. It is, however, the case that over the decades that followed the 380s the terminology of *ousia* and *hypostasis* became increasingly prominent.

- 57 On the term 'figural reading' see Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, D. Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading and the Shaping of Christian Identity*; Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, ch. 1.
- 58 For more detailed introduction to Apollinaris and the other figures discussed in this section of this chapter see F. M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*. On Apollinaris see also the fundamental study of E. Muhlenberg, *Apollinarius von Laodicea*. See also the very helpful J. O'Keefe, 'Impassible Suffering? Divine Passion and Fifth-Century Christology'.
- 59 B. E. Daley, 'Nature and the "Mode of Union": Late Patristic Models for the Personal Unity of Christ'.
- 60 Fourth-century disputes in Antioch demonstrate the existence of a variety of Antiochene traditions, while the Alexandrian context gave rise to both Arius and Athanasius.
- 61 See R. A. Greer, *Theodore of Mopsuestia. Exegete and Theologian*; R. A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ. A Study in the Theology of Theodore of Mopsuestia*.
- 62 On Nestorius' understanding of the incarnate Christ see M. V. Anastos, 'Nestorius was Orthodox'; Greer, 'The Image of God and the Prosopic Union in Nestorius' *Bazaar of Heraclides*'; R. C. Chesnut, 'The Two *Prosopa* in Nestorius' *Bazaar of Heraclides*'.
- 63 Many of the relevant texts can be found in translation in *DEC*.
- 64 For Cyril's theology see M.-O. Boulnois, *La paradoxe trinitaire chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie*; J. Liébaert, *La doctrine christologique de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie avant la querelle nestorienne*; J. McGuckin, *St Cyril of Alexandria: The Christological Controversy*; R. V. Sellers, *Two Ancient Christologies*. An excellent brief account and further bibliography are to be found in N. Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (with a very useful collection of translations).
- 65 For a longer introduction and bibliography see Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 265ff.
- 66 On Chalcedon itself R. V. Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon* is still useful. See also A. Grillmeier SJ and H. Bacht SJ, eds, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*.
- 67 Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*.
- 68 *Ibid.*, ch. 2 gives a useful summary of these themes, without mentioning this last.
- 69 For studies of the Pelagian controversy as a whole see B. R. Rees, *Pelagius: a Reluctant Heretic*; G. Greshake, *Gnade als konkrete Freiheit. Eine Untersuchung zur Gnadenlehre des Pelagius*; F. G. Nuvolone and A. Solignac, 'Pelage et Pelagianisme'.
- 70 Here see D. Hunter, 'Resistance to the Virginal Ideal in Late Fourth-Century Rome: The Case of Jovinian'; and ch. 27.
- 71 See P. Brown, 'The Patrons of Pelagius: The Roman Aristocracy between East and West'; B. R. Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius and His Followers, 147-298*, for the texts known as the 'Caspari Corpus' relating to Sicily.

## Articulating identity

- 72 Most recently on this theme see J. E. Merdinger, *Rome and the African Church in the Time of Augustine*.
- 73 There is still much debate about whether Augustine's theology of free will and grace is directly mirrored in late fourth-century and early fifth-century Greek contexts. For a taste of this debate see L. R. Wickham, 'Pelagianism in the East'; E. Muhlenberg, *Das Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa*.
- 74 On Messalianism see C. Stewart OSB, 'Working the Earth of the Heart': *The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts and Language to AD 341*; R. Staats, *Gregor von Nyssa und die Messalianer*; A. Louth, 'Messalianism and Pelagianism', *SP* 17 (1982), 127–35; J. Gribomont, 'Le dossier des origines du messalianisme'; K. Fitschen, *Messalianismus und Antimessalianismus. Ein Beispiel ostkirchliche Ketzergeschichte*.