

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Publication date 2006 (this edition)

Print ISBN-10: 0-19-928013-4

Print ISBN-13: 978-0-19-928013-1

doi: 10.1093/0199280134.001.0001



**Abstract:** In the recent explosion of scholarship on the Arian controversy, the years immediately after Nicaea have been comparatively neglected. This is partly because the prevailing view in the English-speaking world is that either there was no real theological controversy at all during the years 325-345, merely a general distaste for the activities of Athanasius of Alexandria, or that there was a general fear throughout the East of the theology of Marcellus of Ancyra, uniting Eastern bishops against him. This book argues that neither of these positions can be sustained on the basis of the available evidence. It examines closely the evidence for episcopal attendance at the important councils of these years, and shows that all were demonstrably partial; that there was never a majority of politically active Eastern bishops against Marcellus, Athanasius, or their fellow supporter of Alexander, Eustathius of Antioch; and that Marcellus was deposed for theological opinions which he did not hold in the manner attributed to him. These years are best made sense of by returning to the idea of two theological and political alliances at war with one another before, during, and long after Nicaea, which only began to fragment in the early 340s after the death of Eusebius of Nicomedia and the falling-out of Marcellus and Athanasius over the so-called 'Western Creed of Serdica'.

**Keywords:** Marcellus of Ancyra, Arian controversy, Nicaea, Serdica, Athanasius of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, Eusebius of Nicomedia, council

 E-mail

### Table of Contents

#### Preface

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### Introduction

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### 1. Marcellus

This chapter presents Marcellus as the ambitious and capable young canon law-maker responsible for the 314 Synod of Ancyra, with its 25 canons on penance, the recent persecution, and other subjects. He emerges as a compassionate and level-headed pastor, even-handed in his treatment of women and men, in contrast to the makers of the Canons of Iliberris (Elvira). The theology of his major work, *Against Asterius*, is also briefly sketched.

[ABSTRACT](#)

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### 2. Nicaea

This chapter examines the evidence for membership of the two alliances which squared up against one another before Nicaea, including the names and numbers on both sides, and the degree to which nameable individuals committed themselves politically. The theological affinities and differences of Alexander of Alexandria's allies are studied, particularly those of Marcellus with each of the rest. The significance of the initial calling of the 'great and priestly synod' for Ancyra rather than Nicaea is considered. It is argued that the synod was not originally called by Constantine but by the pro-Alexander alliance, and moved by him to his own palace to promote peace. The Synod of Antioch is discussed and dated to 324. It is argued that Marcellus had little influence on the Nicene Creed, which was not characteristic of his theology and which he never defended, but probably rather more on the canons of Nicaea.

[ABSTRACT](#)

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### 3. From Nicaea to the Death of Constantine

This chapter argues that Eustathius of Antioch's deposition took place in autumn 327 as a result of

real or faked evidence of sexual misdemeanour, triggering a reversal by Constantine of his previous ecclesiastical policy. It is suggested that Marcellus wrote his *Against Asterius* partly in response to this event and to the subsequent return of Eusebius of Nicomedia. It is argued that Marcellus, like Athanasius, was trapped by a summons to the Synod of Tyre in 335 when he refused to accept Arius' reception back into communion at Jerusalem, despite Constantine's orders. Marcellus' trial is examined from the accounts of Sozomen and Eusebius of Caesarea, and his innocence established of the theological charges brought.

[ABSTRACT](#)

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### **4. From the Exiles' Return to the Dedication Synod of Antioch**

This chapter examines the complex events of 337-341, arguing that the returning exiles were probably not re-deposed on the basis of new synods, but of the earlier ones. The Dedication Synod of 341 was, if not the voice of the 'moderate majority' of Eastern bishops, at least a breath of fresh air on the Eastern ecclesiastical scene, allowing new voices to be heard such as that of Basil of Ancyra. The synod's creeds and its reply to the letter of Julius of Rome are examined and given a context. It is argued that the synod found its unity in condemning the theology of Marcellus of Ancyra, lampooned in a speech by Acacius of Caesarea, though on somewhat different grounds from those on which Marcellus had originally been deposed.

[ABSTRACT](#)

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### **5. Rome and Serdica**

This chapter examines the moves toward a second Ecumenical Council in the years after the second depositions of Athanasius and Marcellus. Constantius' brother, Constans, is presented as a central figure in the negotiations, perhaps from as early as 340. It is argued that the decisions of the Synod of Rome, here dated to Spring 341, were not intended to be binding on the East in the absence of any Eastern bishops, but merely addressed the local problem of whether or not to continue to treat Athanasius and Marcellus as bishops in the absence of convincing evidence that they had been validly deposed. The works written by Athanasius and Marcellus in Rome at this time, the First Oration against the Arians, the Letter to Julius, and probably *On the Holy Church* (*De Sancta Ecclesia*), are examined. It is argued that all draw on a statement agreed between the two concerning a heresy, which Athanasius calls the Arian heresy and Marcellus calls Ariomania. The signatories and documents of the Eastern and Western synods of Serdica are minutely examined, and argued to show that the two alliances were now in a process of realignment. Marcellus and Athanasius were in fundamental disagreement over whether or not to issue a statement adding to the Nicene Creed, and most of the Easterners were not in as intransigent a mood as the letter written in their name might suggest. Marcellus withdrew from public engagement with the controversy shortly afterwards to obviate the need to choose between a breach with Athanasius or with his own pupil Photinus of Sirmium. He died nearly 30 years later in communion with the former, without ever having condemned the latter.

[ABSTRACT](#)

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### **Appendix**

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### **Bibliography**

[FULL TEXT](#)

#### **Index**

[FULL TEXT](#)

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## **Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [v]

---

### ***Preface***

THIS study began life as a doctoral thesis at the University of Edinburgh under the supervision of Professor David Wright. It has been completed during a three-year British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship at the same university, in the intervals of researching and preparing a full edition of the works of Marcellus of Ancyra.

This latter exercise necessitates some explanation of the way in which I have cited the fragments of Marcellus' major work, *Against Asterius*. I am aware that Marcellus scholars will be so horrified to discover that I am about to propose yet a fourth numbering of these fragments, that they will likely feel that it necessitates an apology as well. I hope that the care I have taken to ensure that users of all of the editions of the fragments can easily find the references given will slightly mitigate their dismay.

The fragments were first collected and edited separately from the texts of Eusebius and Epiphanius in which they occur by C. H. G. Rettberg in 1794. Rettberg ignored many of the indications of Eusebius as to their original order, and arranged them instead in the sequence which he found most theologically appropriate, beginning with the name of Jesus and ending with the eschaton (followed by some miscellaneous fragments). Erich Klostermann followed Rettberg's order exactly, but improved on Rettberg's numbering, redividing according to Eusebius' text fragments which Rettberg had run together, and renumbering doublets with a single number. For some reason, however, Klostermann printed only Rettberg's numbers rather than his own in his continuous text of Eusebius' two anti-Marcellan works, giving his own only in the separate text of the Marcellan fragments themselves which follows Eusebius' works in his edition. The subsequent second edition by G. C. Hansen did not change this method of citation. For this reason, it has to date been impossible to retire even Rettberg's original numbers, since they are still the only way of easily locating the Marcellan fragments in their Eusebian context, even though they are simply a less clear version of Klostermann's and hence their continued use has otherwise nothing but confusion to add to Marcellan studies. These numberings are cited here in the form 'Re 1' and 'K 1'.

Klaus Seibt, in his 1992 Tübingen doctoral dissertation and subsequent book, took the important step of returning to the indications in Eusebius' text as to the order in which the fragments he cites originally appeared. On

end p.v

---

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [vi]

---

the basis of these, he produced a new and much better order, together with textual commentary and German translation. Markus Vinzent published in 1997 an edition with a different German translation of the fragments in this order (with one very slight change). For this reason I have cited these fragments in the form 'S/V 1' (I have not cited either of the fragments Vinzent renumbered).

My own reordering of the fragments seeks to combine the virtues of both previous arrangements. Seibt's approach to the problem, to take cognizance of Eusebius' indications on the original order of the work, is unquestionably the correct one, but his analysis of Eusebius' habitual techniques of citation can be taken further. In particular, there are three decisions of Seibt's which I think should be reversed. This is not the place to discuss these in detail, but when this is done, Marcellus' exegesis of John 1: 1-3 can be restored to a single location (as it was in Rettberg's ordering) near the beginning of the work, his attacks on other bishops no longer end the work, but come in the middle, and the eschatological material comes at the end. I have cited my own order in the form 'P 1'.

Translations, including citations from Scripture, are for the most part my own. There are two exceptions: I have generally made use of J. H. Newman's translation of Athanasius' *On the Synods*, and of Hall and Cameron's translation of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Life of Constantine*.

I should like to thank the following for their contributions to this work or their support of me while I was writing it: Professor David Wright, my doctoral supervisor, from whose wisdom and kindness I have greatly benefited; Professor Timothy Barnes, the thesis' external examiner, who has shown me great generosity, scholarly and otherwise, in the face of my habit of alternately heavily relying on and violently disagreeing with various aspects of his work; Professor John Richardson; Dr Roger Rees; Dr Jane Dawson; Professor S. J. Brown; Dr Denis Minns OP; Dr Alexandra Riebe. Dr Kelley McCarthy Spoerl not only generously gave up in my favour her own longer-standing project of translating Marcellus' works for publication, but also read and commented on the thesis manuscript, and has since been willing to argue endlessly with me on all matters Marcellan.

My thanks are due to the British Academy, for generously supporting my work on Marcellus over the past three years, to the School of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh, for support including a three-year scholarship during the writing of the original thesis, and to the Evangelisches Stift, Tübingen, for supporting me over a semester there as the thesis was completed. I should also like to thank the Library staff of New College Library, the University of Edinburgh Library, the Evangelisches Stift library, the various libraries of Eberhard Karls Universität, the Bodleian, and the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice. I should like to thank, too, the Early Christian Studies series editors, Professors Andrew Louth and Gillian Clark, the anonymous



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

**Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [vii]

---

Marcellus expert who commented on the manuscript, and all those at Oxford University Press who have been involved in the various stages of publication of this book, particularly Lucy Qureshi, Amanda Greenley, and John Cordy.

Finally, my thanks are due to my family: to Owen and Bonnie Dudley Edwards, the late Betty Lee, Drs Leila and Tony Prescott and Michael Edwards, and also Owen and Rosie Prescott, without whose charming and welcome presence this book would have been finished slightly earlier. Above all, I want to thank my husband, Dr Paul Parvis, whose knowledge of Patristics, copy-editing skills, unfailing support, friendship, love, cooking, and very large library have all made unmatched contributions to the progress and completion of this book.

Sara Parvis

*Edinburgh, 14 September 2005*

end p.vii

---

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## **Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [ix]

---

### ***Contents***

- Abbreviations xi
- Introduction 1
- 1 Marcellus 8
  - 1 The 314 Synod of Ancyra 11
    - Figure 1. The Bishops of Ancyra 314 13
  - 2. Marcellus the Theologian 30
- 2 Nicaea 38
  - 1. The Two Alliances 39
  - 2. The Great and Priestly Synod 68
- 3 From Nicaea to the Death of Constantine 96
  - 1. Eustathius' Deposition and Eusebius' Return 101
  - 2. Reactions to the Reversal 107
  - 3. The Writing of *Against Asterius* 118
  - 4. The Synod of Tyre 123
  - 5. The Synod of Constantinople 127
  - 6. The Death of Arius 132
  - 7. Conclusion 133
- 4 From the Exiles' Return to the Dedication Synod of Antioch 134
  - 1. The Return of the Anti-Eusebian Alliance 134
  - 2. The Events of 337–341 146
  - 3. The Dedication Synod of Antioch 162
  - 4. Conclusion 177
- 5 Rome and Serdica 179
  - 1. Marcellus and Athanasius in Rome 180
  - 2. The Synod of Rome 192
  - 3. The Road to Serdica 200
  - 4. Serdica 210
  - 5. After Serdica 245

end p.ix

---

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## **Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [x]

---

Appendix: The Synodal Bishop-lists 253

Table 1. The Bishops at Antioch 324 253

Table 2. Provinces and Significant Bishops at Nicaea 325 255

Table 3. The Bishops at Antioch 328 257

Table 4. The Bishops at Tyre 335 258

Table 5. The Bishops at Constantinople 336 259

Table 6. Known Bishops at the Dedication Synod of Antioch 341 260

Table 7. The Bishops at the 'Eastern' Synod of Serdica 343 261

Table 8. The Bishops at the 'Western' Synod of Serdica 343 263

Bibliography 265

Index 277

end p.x

---



---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [xi]

---

### Abbreviations

Details of works marked with an asterisk may be found in the Bibliography under the name of author or editor

- AW \* *Athanasius Werke*, ed. H.-G. Opitz *et al.*  
CCSL Corpus Christianorum Series Latina  
CPG *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, ed. Mauritius Geerard, 6 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1974–2003)  
CSEL Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum  
EOMIA \* *Ecclesiae Occidentalis Monumenta Iuris Antiquissima*, ed. C. H. Turner  
FH \* Hilary, *Fragmenta Historica*, ed. A. L. Feder  
GS \* E. Schwartz, *Gesammelte Schriften*  
JTS *Journal of Theological Studies*  
LSJ H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th edn. with revised supplement, rev. Henry Stuart Jones; supplement ed. P. G. W. Glare (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996)  
PG *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne  
PGL *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. G. W. H. Lampe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961)  
PL *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne  
PLRE, i A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, and J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, i, A.D. 260–395 (Cambridge: University Press, 1971)  
SCh Sources chrétiennes  
St Pat *Studia Patristica*  
Urk \* *Athanasius Werke*, iii.1–2, *Urkunden zur Geschichte des arianischen Streites*, ed. Hans-Georg Opitz  
Vig Chr *Vigiliae Christianae*  
ZKG *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*  
ZNW *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*

The fragments of Marcellus are cited according to the numerations of Rettberg (Re), Klostermann (K), Seibt/Vincent (S/V), and Parvis (**P**). See above, pp v–vi.

---

end p.xi

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [xii]-[4]

---

end p.xii

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

## Introduction

---

### Sara Parvis

Marcellus of Ancyra has been memorably described as 'a dark and burned-out star, itself invisible but deflecting the orbit of anything that comes near it'.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Lienhard, 'Did Athanasius Reject Marcellus?', in Michel R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams (eds.), *Arianism After Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 65–80.

Scholars of the later Arian controversy can feel his powerful pull, but unless they venture into the years before 345 he is not directly visible to them. His powerful influence can still be felt in the movements of other theologians who are attracted or, more usually, repelled by him, throughout the 350s and 360s and beyond. But it is only by looking back to the years between 325 and 345 that we can see the brilliance that star once had before darkness obscured it.

The years immediately after Nicaea have also often been thought of as dark. The fifth-century historian Socrates characterizes their theological debates as a battle by night, while more than one modern commentator has designated them a 'period of confusion'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Socrates, *HE*, I.23. R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318–381* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988) designates the whole period from Nicaea to 361 'Part II: Period of Confusion' (p. x); Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), designates 325–340 as years of 'Confusion and Controversy' (p. xi).

Modern patristic scholarship, particularly in the English-speaking world, has paid them comparatively little attention, despite the explosion of interest over the past twenty-five years in the events surrounding both Nicaea itself and the later years of the controversy.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This can be illustrated from the same two studies: Hanson devotes some eighty pages of an 875-page book to the years 326–340, which are nearly a quarter of the sixty-three years he covers, while Lewis Ayres' *Nicaea and its Legacy* devotes five pages of a 435-page book to the history of the same period, supplemented by eight pages on the theology of Marcellus of Ancyra and one and a half on that of Asterius.

What interest has been shown in the years from Nicaea to 345 has tended to focus on Athanasius. Most of the extant theological works and fragments

written by other authors during these years, for example, have never been published in English translation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Those which have not include Eusebius' *Against Marcellus* and *Concerning Ecclesiastical Theology*, the fragments of Eustathius of Antioch, Asterius the sophist, and Marcellus of Ancyra, and Marcellus' *Letter to Julius* of Rome. Dr Kelley McCarthy Spørli is currently preparing a translation of the two works of Eusebius for publication.

The burned-out star, Marcellus, and the now obscured period in which he originally blazed, the years between Nicaea and 345, have their subsequent

end p. 1

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

darkness in common.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> This point has been noted by Michel R. Barnes ('The Fourth Century as Trinitarian Canon', in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, ed. Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 47–67, at 52): 'In this century historians of dogma have had trouble explaining the way that Nicaea disappeared so quickly from the theological stage after 325. There is an odd doubling here—for there has been a similar lack of awareness of the significance of Marcellus.' So far I agree with him, though it will soon become apparent that I think his explanation—that Marcellus' promotion of the creed of Nicaea after 325 frightened the horses—has some major problems, not least that Marcellus never did promote the creed of Nicaea, so far as we can tell.

This book is built on the premise that the subsequent darkness of both has also a common cause. By the time the controversy came to be settled, Marcellus' theology, perfectly mainstream in its day, looked unbearably strange. The pro-Nicene theologians of the 360s and 370s had no desire to acknowledge, if they were even aware, how important he had been in the twenty years after Nicaea. As a result, they systematically underestimated both his role and the importance of the events of these years, and where they did acknowledge Marcellus' influence on events then or afterwards, they viewed it as entirely baleful. It is striking how far this is still the picture of Marcellus that emerges from modern scholarship.

The exception is modern German scholarship, which has for the last century and a half taken an altogether more positive view of Marcellus. Theodor Zahn's still unsurpassed 1867 study, *Marcellus von Ancyra: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Theologie*, presented Marcellus as the theological heir to Irenaeus and his earthy, creation-affirming system, identifying Marcellus as a key proponent of a major early church tradition, 'Asia Minor theology', which can be traced back to Ignatius of Antioch and beyond.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Theodor Zahn, *Marcellus von Ancyra: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Theologie* (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1867).

This is still, I would argue, the most fruitful context in which to view the theology of Marcellus. Such a tradition, with its emphasis (to differing degrees among different authors) on bodily resurrection, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh, the goodness of creation, and a material reign of Christ on earth is witnessed to in Asia Minor by the Apocalypse/Revelation, Ignatius of Antioch, Papias, Irenaeus, Melito of Sardis, the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, the Montanists, and Methodius of Olympus. It was clearly loathed by Eusebius of Caesarea, among others, who systematically wrote it out of early church history.

Friedrich Loofs took up Zahn's portrait of Marcellus and reworked it over a number of years in publications which appeared between 1902 and 1924, eventually replacing 'Asia Minor theology' with 'Antiochene theology', adding Paul of Samosata and Eustathius of Antioch to the mix, and concluding that Marcellus did share some aspects of 'Alexandrian' theology.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Friedrich Loofs, 'Die Trinitätslehre Marcell's von Ancyra und ihr Verhältnis zur älteren Tradition', *Sitzungsberichte der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Phil.-hist. Klasse (1902), 764–81; *Paulus von Samosata: Eine Untersuchung zur altkirchlichen Literatur- und Dogmengeschichte*, Texte und Untersuchungen 44.5 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1924).

Though these parallels are clearly important, he rather lost a sense of Marcellus'

end p.2

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

theological distinctiveness in the process. But his work and Zahn's have been enough to make Marcellus a recognizably mainstream figure in German theology, whose theological claims have since been taken up enthusiastically by Loofs's disciple Wolfgang Gericke (writing in 1940), Athanasius editor Martin Tetz (in a series of articles published between 1964 and 1989), and Luise Abramowski's doctoral student Klaus Seibt (in a monograph published in 1994), as well as discussed more warily by writers who are ultimately rather more interested in his opponents, such as Gerhard Feige and Markus Vinzent.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Wolfgang Gericke, *Marcell von Ancyra, Der Logos-Christologe und Biblizist: Sein Verhältnis zur antiochenischen Theologie und zum Neuen Testament*, Theologischen Arbeiten zur Bibel-, Kirchen- und Geistesgeschichte 10 (Halle: Akademischer Verlag, 1940); Martin Tetz, 'Zur Theologie des Markell von Ankyra I. Eine Markellische Schrift "De incarnatione et contra Arianos"', *ZKG* 75 (1964), 217–70 and subsequent articles; Klaus Seibt, *Die Theologie des Markell von Ankyra*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 59 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994); Gerhard Feige, *Die Lehre Markells von Ankyra in der Darstellung seiner Gegner*, Erfurter theologische Studien 58 (Leipzig: Benno Verlag, 1991); Markus Vinzent, *Markell von Ankyra: Die Fragmente und der Brief an Julius von Rom*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 39 (Leiden: Brill, 1997). Feige, Seibt, and Vinzent have also written important articles on the theology of Marcellus.

The major writer in English on Marcellus, Joseph Lienhard, can himself be considered as coming out of this tradition, since his seminal work *Contra Marcellum: Marcellus of Ancyra and Fourth-Century Theology* is based on a Habilitationsschrift which he wrote for Albert-Ludwigs-Universität in Freiburg im Breisgau.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Joseph T. Lienhard, S. J., *Contra Marcellum: Marcellus of Ancyra and Fourth-Century Theology* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1999)

Otherwise, English-speaking scholarship has been rather more immune to Marcellus' theological charms: it is striking that, while many have made use of Lienhard's picture of the relations between Athanasius and Marcellus, or joined him in working on the anti-Marcellan tradition, few have followed him in accepting Marcellus' thought as essentially mainstream; an honourable exception is Alastair Logan.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Alastair H. B. Logan has argued in a series of articles over the past fifteen years for Marcellus' place at the heart of the first half of the Arian controversy.

This difference of treatment is surely ultimately ideological. German scholarship, so often ineluctably Hegelian, has tended to see the 'Arian controversy' in terms of two opposing forces. Marcellus, with his strongly held and vigorously defended views, generally comes out well in such accounts: he emerges as a worthy champion of one side, however it is defined, challenging the overconfident doctrines of the other. Anglophone scholarship, meanwhile, tends to view the history of doctrine in terms of a voyage between Scylla and Charybdis, seeking a *via media* between two supposed extremes. Marcellus suffered from this habit in different ways both in the nineteenth and in the twentieth centuries. In the nineteenth century, for writers such as Newman and Gwatkin, Arius was Scylla and Marcellus Charybdis, while Athanasius was

end p.3

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

the *via media*;<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> John Henry Newman, *Select Treatises of St. Athanasius in Controversy with the Arians, Freely Translated*, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (London: Pickering and Co., 1881); H. M. Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell and Co., 1882 (2nd edn., 1900) ).

in the twentieth century, in the course of which Arius was increasingly relegated to a more minor role in the controversy, Marcellus and Eustathius became the Scylla, with Aetius and Eunomius as Charybdis, while the *via media* was represented by a mythical 'majority of moderate Origenists' supposed to have populated the East throughout the period. The size of the boats making the dangerous journey is all that has changed: the nineteenth century's one-man barque '*Athanasius Against the World*' has become a twentieth-century ocean liner full of anxious Eastern bishops fleeing Sabellianism, who, guided by the Cappadocian lighthouse, have a relatively smooth and easy passage past anomoianism into the safe harbour of Constantinople.

Such an approach has resulted in the peculiar current situation that, while Arius has been thoroughly rehabilitated, and Eunomius and Aetius are at least now given the benefit of the doubt, Marcellus, who was never formally condemned in his lifetime by any writer whose theology is today considered normative, is still implicitly considered to be a heretic. The exoneration of Arius in the last twenty-five years has, if anything, had a detrimental effect on Marcellus' reputation, since if Arius is exculpated his original supporters must also be exculpated, and if they are innocent, so the argument seems to run, then those they and their later fellow-travellers played a leading role in deposing and refusing to readmit to the episcopacy over the years 327–343, including Marcellus, must be guilty.

Those who seek to defend the supporters of Arius after Nicaea generally do so by attacking in different ways their main opponents of the years 325–345: Eustathius, Athanasius, Marcellus, Julius, Ossius and Protogenes (Alexander, as a good Origenist who died quickly, usually escapes, though he must have used no less violence than Athanasius in originally expelling Arius from his church). The narrative offered (most clearly set out by Richard Hanson) goes as follows. Eustathius of Antioch is unsurprisingly condemned early on for Sabellianism. Athanasius is rightly condemned at Tyre in 335 for his violent activities against the Melitians, which are well documented.

Marcellus is, also unsurprisingly, condemned for Sabellianism—the problems of his system are patent. Julius is an opportunist, seeking by his involvement in the dispute to widen Roman claims to supremacy. Ossius and Protogenes are ill-informed and naïve in backing the theology of Marcellus at Serdica.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Hanson, *Search*, 216, 228, 254–5, 273, 303–5.

Hanson himself allowed that Marcellus modified his theology in later years, but Marcellus emerges from more than one modern account as an isolated, sad figure, an embarrassment to his allies, repeatedly condemned by the whole of the East, and while able to persuade some Western bishops to take his part for a time, ultimately dropped, though not condemned, by them when they realize what a liability he is.

end p.4

---



---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [5]-[9]

---

It is the object of the present book to take apart this narrative piece by piece on entirely historical grounds, leaving aside theology, for the most part, except where it contributes to making sense of the narrative. I begin by examining Marcellus' first known act, his presidency of the Synod of Ancyra of 314, and the implications that this has for his status and influence and that of the city of Ancyra at the time, as well as the indications of his character and legislative ability that can be gleaned from the canons of the synod.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Alastair H. B. Logan pointed out the importance of Marcellus' presidency of the synod in an article entitled 'Marcellus of Ancyra and the Councils of 325: Antioch, Ancyra, and Nicaea', *JTS* 43 (1992), 428–46.

I proceed to examine in some detail the parties that formed in the years immediately before Nicaea, including as far as possible the degree of commitment shown to either side by nameable individuals, and the geographical spreads of the two sets of supporters. I look at the manoeuvres before Nicaea, and what they tell us of the relative size of the two parties, as well as at the roles of the leaders of each outside Alexandria, particularly the two Eusebii, Philogonius of Antioch, and Marcellus himself. I argue that Nicaea itself was not a triumph but a failure as far as the pro-Alexander alliance was concerned, since they had the overwhelming superiority of numbers and had hoped to condemn definitively their episcopal opponents as well as Arius, and that Eustathius and Marcellus were particularly disappointed by it. I also argue that Marcellus had little if anything to do with the writing of the Nicene Creed in general, which he never either uses or defends, which does not employ any of his characteristic vocabulary, and which he apparently did not even sign; and in particular, that he had nothing to do with the introduction into it of the word *homoousios*.

In the case of the deposition of Eustathius of Antioch, my arguments are inevitably speculative. This crucial event is one of the darkest of the years 325–345: we know more about the deposition of Paul of Samosata from the see of Antioch than we do about that of Eustathius. The proposal given here is that a sexual misdemeanour of Eustathius' (real or trumped-up) caused Constantine to reverse completely the policy agreed at Nicaea and recall Arius from exile, while demanding that the deposition itself be dealt with in absolute secrecy to protect the sanctity of the episcopal office. In the case of the depositions of Athanasius and Marcellus, I argue with rather more confidence that careful study of the accounts of both synods given by Eusebius of Caesarea shows that neither received a fair trial.

Julius of Rome, I argue, had no choice as to whether or not to become involved in the controversy: he had to decide whose letters of congratulation to respond to, and how, when he became bishop in 337, and whether or not to communicate with Athanasius as soon as the latter turned up in Rome. Examination of the bishop-list of the Eastern Synod of Sardica, meanwhile, shows that there was almost no overlap between the bishops who attended

that synod and those who attended the synod of Nicaea, other than among known supporters of Arius. Although we have no list of provinces, far less of bishops, for the Dedication Synod of Antioch, I argue that its decisions cannot be considered those of a 'majority of moderate Eastern bishops' either, strictly because it represented fewer than half of the politically active sees of the East at the time, and more generally because analogy with the bishops at the synods of Tyre and Eastern Serdica suggests a sample which has been purged of Nicene supporters.

I argue, following Klaus Seibt, that the 'Western Creed of Serdica' must be by Marcellus or written in deliberate imitation of his theology; the Western synod of Serdica therefore represents an endorsement of Marcellus' theology by a group which contained more Greek-speaking than Latin-speaking theologians. Its doing so cannot therefore simply be considered the action of Latins ignorant of Origen's terminology. Nonetheless, after Eusebius of Nicomedia/Constantinople's death in late 341, the political plates had shifted, and after Serdica some members of both parties began to move closer together. Marcellus' former deacon Photinus was condemned at a synod in Milan in 345, in anticipation of which Marcellus, now over 60, made the decision to retire from the controversy in preference to a formal break with either Photinus or Athanasius.

Such is the narrative offered in the following pages. Marcellus emerges, not as a marginal figure during these years but as the key to them, and not simply passively, as an object of theological concern to his enemies, but actively, as the theologian who took the initiative in attacking the supporters of Arius after the fall of Eustathius and the return of Eusebius of Nicomedia; whose considerable stature prevented any successful attack on him for a number of years; who lost his see ultimately because he would not accept the restoration of Arius at Jerusalem at the emperor's behest; who was fêted by the Western synod of Serdica; who may himself have made the choice not to risk the lives of his friends and supporters by a premature return to Ancyra in 345; and who at the end of his life can be found living quietly once again in Ancyra with a congregation and clergy, having returned there presumably under Julian's amnesty in 361.

The evidence discussed on the following pages gives strong reasons for thinking, with the majority of German scholars, that there *were* two parties ranged against one another in the years from Nicaea to 344, not simply one tightly knit group and a collection of individuals who fell foul of them and subsequently made common cause of their grievance. The situation changed somewhat in 345, but the consequences of the events of those years would continue into the 370s and beyond. Above all, the evidence cited here shows that scholars cannot reasonably continue to think or speak of a 'moderate majority of Origenist bishops' guiding events during this period, who voted with Alexander at Nicaea to avoid the extremes of Arius' views, and then



against Eustathius, Athanasius, and Marcellus to avoid the theological and political extremes of each. The evidence of the bishop-lists shows that they were largely different sets of people who made these decisions, apart from those who had been forced at Nicaea to vote against their inclinations.

I have claimed that the obstacles to a proper assessment of Marcellus' historical importance are both theological and ideological. Ideology can never be entirely put aside (what fun would one's reviewers have otherwise?), but I have not dealt here in the main with debates on Marcellus' theology, which are in themselves considerably tangled. Readers who want to know something about these should consult Joseph Lienhard or Klaus Seibt. It is a historical re-evaluation of both Marcellus and the years 325–345 that I seek at this stage. Since in the course of doing so I have disagreed with some of the greatest patristic historians living and dead, it seems not unreasonable to leave the theologians for another occasion.

end p.7

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

## 1 *Marcellus*

---

### Sara Parvis

**Abstract:** This chapter presents Marcellus as the ambitious and capable young canon law-maker responsible for the 314 Synod of Ancyra, with its 25 canons on penance, the recent persecution, and other subjects. He emerges as a compassionate and level-headed pastor, even-handed in his treatment of women and men, in contrast to the makers of the Canons of Iliberris (Elvira). The theology of his major work, *Against Asterius*, is also briefly sketched.

**Keywords:** Synod of Ancyra, canon law, canons, persecution, penance, women, Iliberris, Elvira, Against Asterius

A fourth-century traveller making the journey by land from Constantinople or Nicomedia to Antioch on the Orontes would initially have had a pleasant enough route to follow. The road from Nicomedia to Nicaea, only two days' journey even by foot, skirted first the eastern edge of the Sea of Marmara and then the lake of Nicaea itself; at most times of the year the breezes from both would have been very welcome on the hot and dusty highway. The landscape round both cities, relatively well watered, would have been comparatively fertile and attractive to the eye. All too soon, however, our traveller would have had to turn his or her back on such advantages and head out across the vast arid plains of central Anatolia.

The countryside then became unnervingly treeless, and except in the spring farming season relatively bare. The route itself was a well-travelled one, and the region by this period comparatively well populated with villages and agricultural settlements, but the overall impression must still have been one of emptiness, as it is today. Larger towns and cities were relatively scarce: the needs of travellers were met instead by sizeable inns at regular intervals. A traveller who was not afraid of such a landscape might enjoy its sense of space, and the beauty of its dawns and sunsets. But a traveller who was simply seeking to make the journey back to civilization as quickly as possible would have breathed a sigh of relief some ten to twelve days' walk from Nicaea (perhaps seven by good-quality wheeled vehicle) on entering the

route's next really substantial oasis of city life, Ancyra.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the landscape and its habitation and cultivation, see Stephen Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), i. 143–58. For the city of Ancyra, see Clive Foss, 'Late Antique and Byzantine Ankara', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977), 27–87. For the roads through Ancyra in our period, see the late third-century Antonine Itinerary (in Otto Cuntz, *Itineraria Romana*, i. *Itineraria Antonini Augusti et Burdigalense* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1929), 18, 20, and end map, and the fourth-century Peutinger Table: Konrad Miller, *Itineraria Romana: Römische Reisewege an der Hand der Tabula Peutingeriana* (Stuttgart: Strecker und Schröder, 1916), Strecke 92 (cols. 655–67) and the reproduction of the Asia Minor section of the map at cols. 631–4. On the Peutinger Table the importance of Ancyra is marked by the fact that it is represented as a walled city with six towers: Miller, col. 632. The only other cities to be so represented in the whole of the Empire are Ravenna, Aquileia, Thessalonica, Nicomedia, and Nicaea. On the symbols used in the Peutinger Table, see O. A. W. Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps*, Aspects of Greek and Roman Life (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 114–17.

end p.8

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Once in Ancyra, our traveller could forget the arid plains for a while, as they disappeared behind the hills which ring the city, and feel safe in a proper metropolis, with its ancient fort standing proud on a rugged crag, its old town crowding down the hill's gentler back, and its regular, properly-planned new town spread out below, with its imposing architecture and grand monuments to distant monarchs. Here our traveller could find culture, entertainment, and good hotels, could bathe in a decent-sized baths, find shops selling a decent variety of food, and look up friends. Travellers who were Christian might also go and visit the tombs of the local martyrs from the recent persecutions, Clement and Plato, and perhaps call on the bishop bearing letters of introduction from their parish at home. If they called between 314 and 336, or in the year or so after the summer of 337, the bishop they would have found there would have been the first one in the city whose name has come down to us—Marcellus of Ancyra.

Modern scholars of the Arian controversy may envy these putative visitors, because they could instantly have discovered many things about this bishop which we would love to know, both about his socio-cultural background and about his character—things which would very quickly have become clear to anyone who spoke to him face to face, or about him to others in his parish, but of which hardly a trace survives in the documents which have come down to us written either by or about him. What was his background? Was he local, either from the city itself or the surrounding estates? What were his connections within the city? Did he have any links with the local aristocracy, with the city council and the local power-brokers? How did he come to be elected bishop? Did he have a large support base within the Ancyran church? Was he a popular prelate, and with which sections of his congregation? What kind of a pastor did he make? We have these pieces of information about various other fourth-century bishops, and they would be invaluable in giving us some kind of context for Marcellus, but in his case we can only guess at them. About his looks (was he Celtic, Phrygian, Persian, Latin in colouring and feature?) we can hardly even guess, so great was the racial diversity both of large cities in the later Roman empire and of the inhabitants of Anatolia in general. We do not even know whether Greek was Marcellus' first language, whether he could speak Galatian, or how good his Latin was,

although all this is potentially important for understanding the network of allegiances on which he could draw.

There are a few observations about Marcellus' background that can be gleaned or guessed from his writings, however. The level of his written

end p.9

---

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [10]-[14]

---

Greek shows that he had had a reasonable education, but his prose style suggests it to have been adequate rather than top-drawer: his writing is workmanlike and clear, without the rhetorical flourishes of Eustathius of Antioch or the flowery allusiveness of Eusebius of Caesarea. But he is never accused by his enemies of being lowly or ill-educated, as Athanasius and others are—the worst personal insult Eusebius of Caesarea can throw at him in his *Against Marcellus* is that at the time of his trial in 336 (when he would have been about fifty), he looks like an old man, which presumably means he went grey or bald or both rather early.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, *De Ecclesiastica Theologia* II.22.4. Athanasius also describes Marcellus at about the same period as 'the old man': *Historia Arianorum* 6.1 (p. 186.3 Opitz).

We might guess his parents were Christians rather than pagans, since he explains the flaws he sees in Origen's theology as the misunderstandings of the new convert,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Marcellus, Fragment Re 78 Kl 88 S/V 22 P 11.

but we know nothing at all about them. We might also imagine he or some of his connections had administrative experience, since as we shall see, he has an unusually high degree of both talent and ambition in such matters from very early in his career.

In the matter of Marcellus' character there is more evidence, both from his own writings and those of others. Some points are clear: it would be hard for anyone who studied Marcellus carefully to deny that he was a man of considerable intellect, great ambition, and powerful emotions. Others are very much disputed, particularly his integrity, his theological understanding, and the extent of his ability to direct the events in which he took part. Was he the sort of person we could plausibly imagine as a central player, a respected theologian, a leader inspiring trust and support? Or was he the sort of figure who was always bound to be at the mercy of events, whose aspirations were not matched by his abilities, who was unable to construct a coherent theology or inspire widespread or lasting loyalty?

These questions will, of course, be addressed in the chapters which follow. But by way of giving the reader some purchase on them in advance, I offer here two initial snapshots of Marcellus, one as pastor and administrator, the other as theologian and polemicist, which may help to bring his abilities and character into focus. The first sees him in repose, as it were, as a young bishop at the head of one of the most interesting synods of the early fourth century. The other draws on the surviving fragments of his longest known work, *Against Asterius*, to show him in full theological and polemical flight. The two together will, I hope, give a sense of Marcellus' characteristic strengths and flaws, and allow the reader to begin to form a judgement on them which can be tested against the portrait which will emerge from subsequent chapters.

## 1. The 314 Synod of Ancyra

After the death of Maximin Daia, emperor of the East, in 313, and the repeal by Maximinus' victorious successor Licinius, like his Western co-emperor Constantine, of the anti-Christian legislation of the previous decade, Eusebius of Caesarea tells us:

There was established the vision prayed for and longed for by us all: festivals of consecration from city to city and dedications of the newly-built places of prayer, gatherings-together of bishops, comings-together of those from foreign lands far off, acts of kindness between congregation and congregation, unity of the members of the body of Christ meeting together in one concord.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* X.3.1.

Eusebius' narrative is mainly interested in a gathering at which he was one of the star attractions, the 315 synod at Tyre at which he gave the encomium of Paulinus which takes up most of Book Ten of the *Ecclesiastical History*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For the inferred date, see Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 162 and note.

Another such gathering, however, took place the previous year at Ancyra. Eleven bishops from across Asia Minor, together with Vitalis, bishop of Antioch on the Orontes, joined Marcellus there, perhaps for a festival of dedication similar to that of Tyre, but certainly to agree on a series of ecclesiastical canons fixing appropriate penances for some difficult cases arising from the Great Persecution.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Hamilton Hess's excellent study *The Early Development of Canon Law and the Council of Sardica*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) is nonetheless misleading in claiming that the names and provinces of the bishops at Ancyra 314 are still in doubt (cf. p. 45): C. H. Turner long ago resolved the problem of the apparent disparity in the number attending the synod (*Ecclesiae Occidentalis Monumenta Iuris Antiquissima*, 2 vols. in 7 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899–1939), ii.1, 51, initial note), and the Syriac version which gives provinces shows that, with the exception of Antioch, the ambiguous sees are all those of Asia Minor (F. Schulthess, *Die syrischen Kanones der Synode von Nicaea bis Chalcedon. nebst einigen zugehörigen Dokumenten*, Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Kl. NF 10 (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1908), 29–50).

Twenty-five canons were produced in all, the first canons from the East to survive with the names of the synod which passed them and the bishops who signed them. In the West, only those of the synod of Iliberris—often known as Elvira—predate them.

This synod is generally dated to the Eastertide of 314,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See e.g. K.-J. Hefele and H. Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, i (Paris: Letouzey, 1907), 298–9.

because a penance given in Canon 6 counts the time until the next Easter as one year, and because so many of the canons deal with matters arising from the recent persecution. If this date is correct, Marcellus must have been a

very young bishop at the time, because he lived until about 375.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Epiphanius, writing in 376 or 377, says that Marcellus died 'about two years ago' (*Panarion* 72.1.2).

It is conceivable that he was even younger than the usual 29 years, but had been ordained notwithstanding because of the ravages of the persecution; the next Eastern synod to bequeath

end p.11

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

us canonical legislation, the synod of Neocaesarea, stresses that in future younger candidates are not to be ordained bishop under any circumstances.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> 'Let a presbyter not be ordained before the age of thirty, even if the man is extremely worthy' (Neocaesarea, canon 11): Périclès-Pierre Joannou, *Discipline Générale Antique (IVe–IXe s.)*, Fonti IX, 2 vols. in 3 (Grottaferrata (Rome): Tipografia Italo-Orientale 'S. Nilo' 1962–5), i.2, 80.

This synod's importance in the history of canon law is indubitable—together with the fifteen canons of the synod of Neocaesarea, and the twenty of Nicaea, its legislation formed the heart of the late fourth-century 'Antioch collection' of canons, which in turn provided the foundation-stone for canon law in Syriac, Latin, Armenian, and Coptic.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> On the Antioch Collection, see G. Bardy, 'Antioch (Concile et canons d')', *Dictionnaire de Droit Canonique*, i, 689–98; for an alternative view of its compilation, see J. Gaudemet, *Les Sources du droit de l'Église en Occident* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1985). On the integrity of the canons of Ancyra, see Sara Parvis, 'The Canons of Ancyra and Caesarea (314): Lebon's Thesis Revisited', *JTSNS* 52 (2001), 625–36.

Ancyra's canons also stand out among other legislation of the period, as we shall see, for their consistency, their coherence, and their leniency.

Unfortunately, no letter of invitation and no *acta* with the names of the proponent of each question survive for the synod of Ancyra, simply the canons themselves and the thirteen names attached to them. But these, if studied carefully, can tell us a great deal about Marcellus' place in the Asia Minor churches immediately after the persecution.

The names of the bishops who attended the synod of Ancyra, in the order in which they are given by the earliest witness,<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The list given here is that of *Isidori vulgata*, edited by C. H. Turner, *EOMIA* ii.1, 50. For a discussion of the various lists of Ancyran bishops, see Sara Parvis, 'Marcellus or Vitalis: who presided at Ancyra 314?', *St Pat XXXIV* (2001), 197–203.

are these:

Marcellus of Ancyra

Agricolaus of Caesarea

Lupus of Tarsus

Vitalis of Antioch

Basil of Amaseia

Philadelphus of Iuliopolis

Eustolus of Nicomedia

Heraclius of Zela

Peter of Iconium

Nunechius of Laodicea

Sergianus of Pisidian Antioch

[Epidaurus of Perge]

Narcissus of Neronias

This is an interesting list in various ways. First of all, the area represented by the episcopal sees is a coherent one, essentially Strabo's Asia Minor, bounded by an imaginary line from the mouth of the river Issus in the south to the city of Amisus in the north,<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Strabo, *Geography* XIV.5.22 (677 Casaubon).

with only Vitalis, bishop of the great city of

end p.12

---

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---



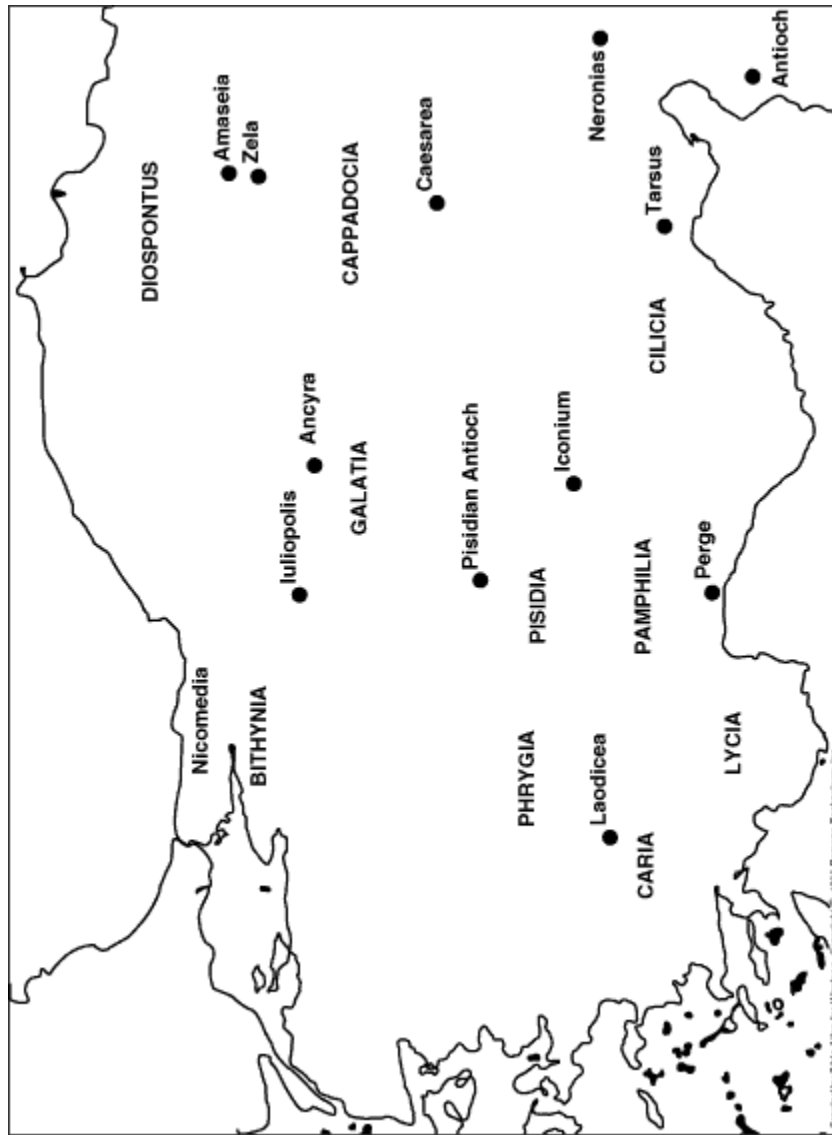


FIGURE 1. The Bishops of Ancyra 314

end p.13

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

Antioch, coming from outside this region. This seems to have been the first time the whole of this area was represented at a single synod. Among the various synods we know of which took place in Asia Minor prior to this, those of the second century seem to have been only province-wide, for example the Asian synod which refused to follow the line of Victor of Rome on the date of Easter, and the Pontic synod led by Palmas which considered the same question.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Eusebius, *HE* V.23–24.

The two third-century synods on the rebaptism of Montanists described in a letter of Firmilian of Cappadocian Caesarea to Cyprian seem to have involved several provinces coming together, but not the whole of the region. Firmilian mentions two, at Synnada and Iconium, which seem both to have discussed the topic: 'Very many of us' (*plurimi*), he tells us, met at Iconium (he implies



that he himself was not present at Synnada), including 'those from Galatia and Cilicia and other neighbouring regions' (Synnada presumably represented the more westerly parts of the subcontinent).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Firmilian's letter to Cyprian (= Cyprian, *Ep.* 75) 7 and 19.

The Ancyran synod of 314 seems therefore to have been the first Asia Minor-wide ecclesiastical synod.

A second point to note is that although thirteen bishops may not seem to augur a very comprehensive synod, when we examine their sees in more detail we can recognize that most of these bishops are metropolitans, representing the capital cities of most of the provinces of Asia Minor as they were at the time. Out of the provinces given in the largely contemporary

Verona List,<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> For an edition of the Verona List and a discussion of its provinces, see Timothy D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), 201–8. For a discussion of Anatolian provincial boundaries, see Mitchell, *Anatolia*, ii. 151–63.

we seem to have metropolitans for Bithynia (Nicomedia), Diospontus (Amaseia), Galatia (Ancyra), Cappadocia (Caesarea), Lycia et Pamphilia (Perge), and Cilicia (Tarsus), as well as a single Phrygia or a still combined province of Phrygia et Caria (Laodicea), and Pisidia (whose capital at this point might have been either Iconium or Pisidian Antioch). This is a good enough match to suggest a comprehensive policy of inviting metropolitans only (the bishops of Iuliopolis, Zela, and Neronias are readily explicable as secretaries or travelling companions to their metropolitans). We may perhaps guess that the Ancyra list reflects a period before Phrygia Secunda, Paphlagonia, Isauria, and Hellespontus were separate provinces, or one in which they have been temporarily returned to the governorship of adjacent provinces, though the absence of a bishop from the prestigious see of Ephesus seems only explicable by illness, a vacancy, or a deliberate slight.

Once again, this is an unusual way of organizing a synod. Previous synods whose bishop-lists including sees survive, such as Iliberris, or the Carthage baptism synod of 256, or even to some extent the contemporary synod of Arles, consist of a large number of bishops from the province where the synod was being held, with markedly fewer from further afield. It seems a

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### **Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [15]-[19]

---

reasonable assumption from what Firmilian tells us that the synods at Synnada and Iconium followed a similar pattern. Ancyra 314 represents a more systematic, possibly bureaucratic, approach to synodal legislation, privileging those ecclesiastical figures, the metropolitan bishops, who mirrored the local power-brokers in the imperial structures, the provincial governors.

The final point we should note about this list at present is the way in which it seems to be constructed to lend the greatest possible influence to the see of Ancyra itself, and conversely to isolate those sees which might be in a position to claim influence of their own. Ancyra is at the crossroads of the cities represented: Nicomedia and Iuliopolis lie to the north-west, Amaseia and Zela to the north-east, Caesarea, Tarsus, Neronias, and Great Antioch to the south-east, and Laodicea, Perge, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch to the south and south-west. Of these cities, Caesarea and especially Nicomedia and Great Antioch are the potential rivals to Ancyra's pre-eminence: Cappadocian Caesarea was a great and strategically important city, later to be capital of the Pontica diocese, the administrative unit covering the northern and eastern half of the Asia Minor land-mass; Nicomedia was an imperial capital; and Antioch was the empire's third greatest city. But all three of these cities are on the edge of the area represented, and in the case of Antioch and Nicomedia especially, not well placed to have much contact with most of the other bishops. There may well have been friendship networks to which we have no access which could have bypassed this problem, but the arrangement is suggestive nonetheless.

Other, less physical, realities were also in Ancyra's favour in terms of influence. At this period Ancyra may well itself have been the capital of the diocese of Pontica,<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Foss, 'Ankara', 33-4.

home of six of the bishops on our list, including that of Nicomedia; the capital of the other main Asia Minor diocese, Asiana, was, of course, the unrepresented Ephesus. And from this list, also in the absence of Ephesus, Ancyra was the most important see other than Antioch which could claim apostolic succession: though Paul's Letter to the Galatians mentions no city in the province in particular, and may well have been written in fact to the old South Galatian colonies rather than to Ancyra itself, several writers in this period make the connection.

The geographical spread of the sees, in other words, seems pretty clearly designed to give full weight to the authority of Marcellus, despite his youth. With the additional authority of being the synod's host, it seems safe to say he would have had considerable influence on the synod's proceedings, and been one of its main power-brokers. But was he actually its president?

Vitalis of Antioch has traditionally been seen as the president of this synod

for three reasons: because his name heads the list of episcopal names in four

end p.15

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

of its six versions, because the synod used to be thought to be a 'general council of the East', encompassing bishops from Palestine and Syria as well as Asia Minor, and because Antioch is undoubtedly a more prestigious see than Ancyra. All versions of the list, however, derive ultimately from the one source, the Antioch Collection, and the earliest versions of it not only head the list with Marcellus, but give Vitalis' name only in fourth place;<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The evidence is set out in detail in Parvis, 'Marcellus or Vitalis?'.

it was an early daughter version which moved Vitalis' name to the top, possibly to allay any concerns about the synod's orthodoxy, possibly out of jealousy on the part of the scribe for the honour of his own see. One of the two Syriac witnesses to the episcopal list supplies provinces as well as sees, making clear in the case of ambiguous cities such as Caesarea and Laodicea that the ones in Asia Minor are meant. Vitalis was in fact the only bishop who came from outside this area, which greatly reduces the likelihood of his presidency, despite the prestige of his see.

Both the positive and the negative evidence points towards Marcellus' presidency of the synod of Ancyra, in other words; the geographical and literary evidence speaks both for Marcellus and against other candidates. Since Marcellus, as host, must have had a central role in issuing invitations as specific as these, it is likely that Vitalis in particular was invited because Marcellus wanted his presence as a weighty ally. Vitalis had been elected to the see of Antioch the previous year;<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> For the date of Vitalis' election, see Richard W. Burgess, with the assistance of Witold Witakowski, *Studies in Eusebian and Post-Eusebian Chronography*, *Historia Einzelschriften* 135 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999), 183 and 286.

although we know nothing of his theology, his two immediate successors Philogonius and Eustathius were both theological allies of Marcellus. It is likely that Marcellus had other allies, too, among the bishops present at the synod, though presumably not his future enemy Narcissus of Neronias, who signed the list at the very bottom.

From the names of those who attended the synod of Ancyra, then, we can already deduce something both of Marcellus' standing and of his political skill. The episcopacy of Ancyra gave him certain political advantages, and he exploited them to the full. Already at this stage in his career he could gather the leading lights of the church in Asia Minor around him, and preside over men presumably older and more experienced than he. We can gain an insight into the success with which he did so, and the pastoral use to which he put his position of power by looking at the canons the synod of Ancyra actually produced.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The translation given here is based on the text printed by Joannou, i.2, 56–73, which follows but occasionally departs arbitrarily from V. N. Benešević, *Syntagma XIV Titulorum sine Scholiis secundum Versionem Palaeo-Slovenicam, Adjecto Textu Graeco*, i (St Petersburg: Typis Academiae Scientiarum Imperialis Petropolitanae, 1906), 229–37. A convenient working edition may be found in E. J. Jonkers, *Acta et Symbola Conciliorum Quae Saeculo Quarto Habita Sunt*, *Textus Minores* XIX (Leiden:

*Canon 1*

It seemed good that priests who have sacrificed, but then gone back to the ring to wrestle again, not as a stratagem but in truth, without pretence, without having come to an understanding and made a deal that they would appear to be subjected to torture, may share in the honour of the clerical chair (*cathedra*), but are not allowed to offer, nor preach, nor fulfil any sacerdotal function.

*Canon 2*

In the same way, that deacons who have sacrificed but after these things have taken up the contest again may retain the other honours, but must cease from every liturgical function, from holding up the bread and wine, or proclaiming any liturgical words. If, however, some of the bishops should be aware of some labour or gentle humility of theirs, and want to give something more or take something away, the authority to do so is theirs.

*Canon 3*

That those who, having fled and having been apprehended, or having been betrayed by those of their household, or otherwise having suffered confiscation of their goods, or having undergone tortures, or having been thrown into prison, and having declared that they were Christians, have been constrained, whether by incense being forced into their hand or food offered to idols being forced into their mouth, but despite this have continued to declare themselves Christians, and have proved their distress at all that happened to them by their demeanour and attitude and a life full of humility, having committed no fault should not be deprived of communion; but even if they have been excluded, by one person's extraordinary severity or even some people's ignorance, they should immediately be readmitted. This applies to clerics as to laity. And it was examined also whether lay people having come under the same constraint may be promoted to the ranks of the clergy. Therefore it seemed good that these too may be promoted, since they have committed no sin, if their previous conduct of life is found to be upright.

*Canon 4*

As for those who have been made to sacrifice and also to take part in a banquet at the temple: those who, being taken there, went up neatly turned out and put on their best clothes and took part in the banquet prepared without a care, it seemed good that they remain one year among the hearers, three years among those who are bowed down,<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> I have used this as a translation of π ο π ι π τ ω and its cognates, thus leaving the ambiguity of the original as to whether prostration or kneeling is

meant.

take part only in the prayers for two years, and then be completely reconciled.

#### *Canon 5*

But those who went up in mourning clothes, and reclining at table ate weeping throughout the meal, once they have fulfilled the period of three years among those who are bowed down shall be admitted without taking part in the offering; if they did not eat, they shall bow down for two years and the third year be admitted to communion without taking part in the offering, being completely restored in the fourth year. And that the bishops have the authority, having tested the repentance of each, to show some humanity or to prolong the time of penitence.

end p.17

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

But above all the life led before and after these things is to be examined, and thus the humanity is to be measured out.

#### *Canon 6*

Concerning those who yielded at the threat alone of punishment and confiscation of their goods or exile and sacrificed, and until the present occasion have neither repented nor changed their lives, but now on the occasion of this synod have come forward and become mindful of changing their lives, it seemed good that they should be admitted as hearers until the great feast, and after the great feast should bow down for three years, and after another two years be admitted to communion but not the offering, and so come to perfect communion, so that the whole six-year period be fulfilled. But if some were received to penance before this synod, the beginning of the six years is to be reckoned from that time. If, however, danger and the threat of death from illness or some other cause should come about, these are to be received according to the ruling.

#### *Canon 7*

Concerning those who dined at a pagan feast<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Joannou makes nonsense of the passage by reading 'or', against the text of Benešević (no conjunction) and all the Latin versions ('and').

and brought and ate their own food in a place designated for the pagans, it seemed good that they should bow down for a period of two years and then be readmitted. But as for the 'if it is necessary with the offering' question, that each of the bishops should examine it and inquire into the rest of the life of each person.

#### *Canon 8*

Those who, under constraint, sacrificed two or three times, shall be

bowers down for a period of four years; they will participate in communion for two years without the presentation of the offering, and the seventh year they shall be fully admitted.

#### *Canon 9*

Those who not only apostatized, but even rose up against their brothers and made them sacrifice or had them made to sacrifice, will be three years among the hearers, then six among those who are bowed down: they will take part in communion without taking part in the offering for one year, so that having done ten years they may take part completely. Their conduct during this time should also be observed.

#### *Canon 10*

Those who are promoted to the diaconate, if at the moment of their promotion they testified and said that they must marry, being unable to live otherwise, and later do marry, may continue to serve, because the bishop accorded them this permission. But if at the moment of their ordination they were silent and accepted to remain as they were, and marry later, they are to cease from their ministry.

#### *Canon 11*

Girls who are engaged to be married, and then kidnapped, are to be returned to their fiancés, even if they have suffered violence from the abductors.

end p.18

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

#### *Canon 12*

It seemed good that those who sacrificed to the gods before their baptism and were baptized subsequently should be promoted to clerical orders, since they have been cleansed of all their sins.

#### *Canon 13*

It is not permitted to bishops of rural regions (χωρικοί) to ordain priests or deacons, nor priests for the city, without the written consent of the bishop in each diocese.

#### *Canon 14*

It seemed good that those of the clergy who are priests and deacons and abstain from eating meat should taste it and thus, if they wish, master themselves; but if they abominate it, to the point of not even eating vegetables cooked with meat, and if they do not obey the canon, that they should cease from the ranks of the clergy.

#### *Canon 15*

If priests have sold something belonging to the church during a

vacancy of the episcopal see, the parish has the right to reclaim it, and the bishop is to decide if the buyers are to receive the price paid or not, since often the revenue from the thing sold outweighs the original price.

#### *Canon 16*

Those who have done the irrational or who even still do the irrational, as many as sinned before becoming twenty years old, after having been bowers down for fifteen years let them receive the communion of the prayers, then having fulfilled five years in that communion let them touch also the offering. Let the life also be tested which they are leading while they are bowers down, and thus let them receive humanity. And if some have become insatiable in their sins, let them have a long period of bowing down. But as many as have passed this age and have wives and have become involved in these sins, let them be bowers down for twenty-five years and let them receive the communion of the prayers, then having fulfilled five years in the communion of prayers let them receive the offering. And if some both having wives and having passed the fifty-year term sinned, let them receive communion at the end of their lives.

#### *Canon 17*

Those who have done the irrational and being leprous have made others leprous the holy synod commanded to pray with the disturbed.

#### *Canon 18*

If bishops elected but not accepted by the diocese for which they were named fall upon other dioceses, do violence to those appointed there, and stir up trouble against them, they should be excommunicated. But if they want to remain among the presbyters where they were presbyters until then, they are not to be excluded from that dignity, but if they stir up factions against the bishops appointed there, they are to lose the dignity of the presbyterate and be excommunicated.

#### *Canon 19*

Let all who, having promised virginity, set aside the promise, fulfil the ruling for a second marriage. We also forbid those who, being virgins, are living with some men as sisters, to do so.

end p.19

---



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## **Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [20]-[24]

---

### *Canon 20*

If the wife of someone is involved in adultery, or if a man commits adultery, in seven years that person must receive perfect communion according to the successive stages.

### *Canon 21*

Concerning women who have illicit sex and destroy the newly-born and seek abortions, the first ruling excluded them until death, and the second agrees with this;<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> 'And the second agrees with this': omitted by Joannou (and the Latin versions); read by Benešević, following the Greek MS tradition, and by the Syriac.

but finding something more humane we have appointed a ten-year period according to the appointed stages.

### *Canon 22*

Concerning voluntary murders, let them be among those who are bowed down, but let them be found worthy of perfect communion [only] at the end of life.

### *Canon 23*

On the subject of involuntary murders, the first ruling commands to receive perfect communion in seven years according to the appointed stages; but the second to fulfil the five-year period.

### *Canon 24*

Those who practice divination and conform themselves to the customs of the pagans or introduce some into their homes for the discovery of potions or even<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Reading ⲡⲕⲁⲓ with Benešević.

purging them, let them fall under the rule of the five-year period according to the appointed stages, three years bowed down and two years of prayer without the offering.

### *Canon 25*

A certain man, being betrothed to a girl, defiled her sister and made her pregnant; then he married his fiancée, and his sister-in-law hanged herself. It was laid down that those party to it are only to be received among those who stand with the congregation after a



ten-year period according to the appointed stages.

Much can be learned from this legislation, including much about Marcellus. It can be seen, first of all, that these canons are on the whole the product of a unified vision. The canons of Neocaesarea and of Nicaea proceed in no discernible order, suggesting that their subjects were proposed haphazardly by individual bishops and dealt with in the order in which they were raised. (Some of the canons of Neocaesarea, indeed, are hardly regulations at all: 'If someone makes up his mind to desire a woman to sleep with her, but the desire does not come to fact, it appears that he was helped by grace' (Canon 4)).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Joannou, i.2, 77.

This is true of the middle section of the Ancyran canons: Canons 10 to 19 are on general subjects, unrelated for the most part. But canons 1 to 9 and 20 to 25 form two blocks of coherent legislation, the former on the subject of apostasy during the recent persecution, the latter on general cases of adultery and murder. They have consistent tariffs of penance, and they are consistent in

end p.20

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

showing leniency towards the penitents involved. Unlike canons 10 to 19, which were presumably proposed when the floor was thrown open, as it were, they are clearly the product of a single pastoral vision. If he was the synod's president, the overwhelming likelihood is that that vision is Marcellus', though he may have shared it with others.

This is suggested, for example, by the proceedings of other synods which do record some discussion beyond the bare canonical ruling. The September 256 synod of Carthage met to discuss one matter only, it would seem, the question of whether heretics coming over to the Catholic church were to be rebaptized. Cyprian, as president, spoke first and proposed the question, the other bishops all spoke in turn, and the matter was agreed.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Sententiae Episcoporum Numero LXXXVII de Haereticis Baptizandis*, in S. Thasci Caecili Cypriani *Opera Omnia*, CSEL 3, ed. Guilelmus Hartel, i (Vienna: C. Geroldi Filius, 1868), 435–61; Cyprian, *Sententiae Episcoporum Numero LXXXVII de Haereticis Baptizandis*, CCL 3E, ed. G. F. Diercks (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004).

The canons of the synod of Sardica in 343 and of one mid-fourth-century synod at Carthage reveal more than most canons do of the process by which they were adopted,<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> For the canons of Sardica, see Joannou, i.2, 156–89, and the text and translation in Hess, *Early Development*, 212–55. (This work is a much developed re-edition of Hess, *The Canons of the Council of Sardica A.D. 343: A Landmark in the Early Development of Canon Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958). ) For a discussion of the significance of their form, and other councils whose canons have a similar shape, see Hess, *Early Development*, 60–75 (*Canons of the Council of Sardica*, 24–41). For the African councils, see C. Munier, *Concilia Africae, A. 345–A. 525*, CCL 149 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1974), pp. 3–10 *et passim*; and for Constantinople, see Joannou, i.2, 437–44.

since they are given in the form of truncated minutes, with a name attached to the proponent of each topic, and sometimes to those who made other interventions. Ossius of Corduba, who presided at Sardica, proposed

three-quarters of its canons, most of which seem to have been assented to with very little debate; Gratus, bishop of Carthage, proposed over a third of those at the Carthaginian synod over which he presided, including the first four, and intervened in all the rest. The authority of Gratus, as bishop of the great see of Carthage, and Ossius, as the distinguished veteran of the persecutions and of Nicaea, would have been clearer than that of the young bishop of Ancyra among his fellow Asian bishops. Nonetheless, it seems a reasonable assumption from this evidence that a synod's president would be likely to propose a good proportion of the canons it passed, as well as playing an important role in the acceptance or rejection of those proposed by others.

If we turn to a closer look at the legislation of Ancyra, we can see what looks to be evidence of the debates behind some of the canons. Synods follow the common Roman legislative pattern of *relatio* (presentation of the problem at issue), *sententiae* (canvassing of the general opinion), preparation of a proposition based on the *relatio* and the *sententiae*, and formal vote. In some cases, as seems often to be the case at Serdica, the proposition is conflated with the *relatio*, and the *sententiae* with the formal vote of *placet*/ὁ οὕτως ἐστὶν καλόν (it seems good). At

end p.21

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Ancyra, however, as at Iliberris,<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Samuel Laeuchli uses sociological tools to expose the differences behind some of the canons of Elvira/Iliberris: S. Laeuchli, *Sexuality and Power: The Emergence of Canon Law at the Synod of Elvira* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1972).

evidence of some differences of opinion expressed at the *sententiae* stage seems to remain.

In canons 1 and 2, the proposal that clerics who apostatized but then repented and became confessors in the face of renewed persecution should retain their pensions, as it were, but cease to take part in the liturgy, seems a sensible compromise; it avoided the potential problem of polluted sacraments that was still such a bone of contention in the church (particularly in a region with a strong tradition of Novatianism), but recognized that they had in some measure redeemed themselves by their subsequent witness. This is precisely the sort of issue on which it made sense for a widespread policy to be agreed. Nonetheless, canon 2 betrays some dissension in the ranks: 'some of the bishops' are clearly insisting on their right to make their own judgements on such matters, at least at diaconal level. It may be noted that the form in which the canon is written up is slightly sarcastic, and leaves the cavillers open to ridicule, since the putative demeanour of the deacons is only positive but the bishops' putative response may be either way, and the ruling is not really patient of a graded response in any case. Nothing we know of Marcellus' writings would make such asperity surprising, if it comes from him.

Canon 3 is still more striking in this regard. Here we can see one individual, presumably present, being fairly severely reprimanded by the synod for his harshness towards those who were made by force to appear as if they had sacrificed. Others, present or not, are reprimanded for their 'ignorance' in excluding the same category of people. This looks personal; the discussion does not seem to have ended merely in acrimonious impasse, however, since

the synod clearly went on to have further debate on the subject of the promotion of lay people in this category. If it is Marcellus who is behind this remark, and his targets are indeed present, he is being rather high-handed for so young a bishop with so little experience, though he may have had some strong voices behind him. Is it too fanciful to suggest the object of his scorn was Narcissus of Neronias? One of the three non-metropolitan bishops would certainly have been a softer target for this kind of rhetoric than their more distinguished brethren, and Marcellus would hardly have needed a synod to censure his own suffragan Philadelphus of Iuliopolis.

In any case, this is the most visibly acrimonious of the canons. Other suggestions of discord are so minor as to be barely perceptible. Canon 5, for example, may contain another small dig at those bishops wishing to insist on their right to adjust penances as they see fit: having discussed the case of a group of apostates who were made to sacrifice by force and then to take part

end p.22

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

in a pagan banquet, it adjudicates penances to those who shrugged their shoulders and took full part in the festivities, those who ostentatiously wept and dressed in mourning, and those who did not even eat during the banquet. It then adds 'and that the bishops have the authority, having tested the repentance of each, to show some humanity or to prolong the time of penitence'. Is the apposition of 'showing some humanity' with prolonging the penance meant to be sarcastic, suggesting that those who prolong the penance are lacking in humanity? The next sentence, stressing that the life led before and after the lapse is to be examined, and the measure of humanity accorded on this basis, presumably reflects a further *sententia* of one of the other bishops.

Canon 6 is the first example of extraordinary leniency on the part of the synod, in a matter where a roughly contemporary synod (in this case, Nicaea) gave a much harsher sentence. Ancyra gives six years in all to those who apostatized at the mere threat of violence, and have made no attempt to return to the church since their fall. Canon 11 of Nicaea may be given by way of comparison:

Concerning those who went astray without necessity or without confiscation of goods, or without danger or some such thing, which happened in the time of the tyranny of Licinius, it seemed good to the holy synod, even if they were not worthy of humanity, nevertheless to show kindness to them. So as many as are truly repentant will do three years among the hearers, if they are full members of the church, and bow down for seven years. And for two years they shall share in the prayer with the people without taking part in the offering.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Joannou, i.1, 33.

Nicaea gave twice the length of penance that Ancyra gave, in other words, for what is essentially the same offence. Ancyra seems, indeed, to be applying fairly widely a model of six years' penance (ἡ ἑξ ἐτ ἰ α) already in existence for some transgressions, presumably based on the notion that the seventh year counts as the year of release, when slaves are to be set

free.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Deut. 15: 12.

Ancyra also upheld the tradition, it may be noted, of full reception back to communion in danger of death. This seems to have been subject to some debate at this period. The synod of Iliberris ruled time and again (canons 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 17, 18, 47, 63, 65, 70, 71, 72, 75)<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Gonzalo Martínez Díez and Felix Rodriguez, *La Colección Canonica Hispana IV: Concilios Galos, Concilios Hispanos, Primera Parte*, Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra, Serie Canónica IV (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto Enrique Flórez, 1984) or, for a precritical but still useful edition, Jonkers, *Acta et Symbola*, 5–23.

that certain aggravated crimes should exclude being accepted back to communion even at the time of death. The synod of Arles, which was to meet later in the summer of 314, twice considers the point (canon 14: 'Concerning those who accuse their brothers falsely, it seemed good that up until the end they should not have communion'—*placuit eos usque ad exitum non communicare*, and Canon 22: those

end p.23

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

who commit apostasy and never come back to the Church, nor ever seek to do penance, and ask for communion when they are ill are not to be given communion unless they recover and show the fruits of repentance).<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> For the canons of Arles, see Charles Munier, *Concilia Galliae A. 314–A. 506*, CCL 148 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1963), pp. 3–24, or Jonkers, *Acta et Symbola*, 23–8.

The synod of Neocaesarea, which met some time between Ancyra and Nicaea, ruled in the case of a woman who married her brother-in-law that she was to be excluded until death, and only out of humanity to be allowed to 'have penitence' on her deathbed if she promised to dissolve the marriage when she recovered.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Canon 2 = Joannou, i.2, 76.

It is not clear whether this means the woman will actually be received into communion in these circumstances, or simply gain the status of a penitent at the level of hearer, bower down, or participant in the prayers, but the synod seems to assume that what it concedes is theologically the most important step.

Nicaea was to clear the matter up. Canon 13 removed all ambiguity:

Concerning those who are dying, the ancient and canonical law is to be protected also now, so that if someone is dying he is not to be deprived of the last and most necessary viaticum. But if, after being despaired of and having received communion and having shared in the offering again, he is found again among the living, let him be among those who communicate in the prayer only. And generally, also concerning everyone whatsoever who is dying who asks to partake of the Eucharist let the bishop impart a share of the offering after approval.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Joannou, i.1, 35.

I shall suggest in looking at Marcellus' role at Nicaea that he was involved in the drawing up of its canons, and that this ruling in particular may be his. In any case, it seems likely that the 'ruling' (ῥῶς) referred to in Ancyra canon 6 according to which the dying should be received back into the church, and the 'ancient and canonical law' (ἐπὶ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἀποστολικῶς νόμος) referred to at Nicaea, which decrees that they should receive the Eucharist, were one and the same.

In canon 7, one suspects a little more sarcasm. Those who have eaten at a pagan banquet in a pagan place—presumably a temple banqueting room—but brought their own food, are given two years as bowers down, and then the canon continues, 'But as for the "if it is necessary with the offering" question, [it seemed good] for each of the bishops to examine it and to inquire into the rest of the life of each person.' 'The "if it is necessary with the offering" question' is presumably an extremely condensed way of designating the question as to whether the penitents should be received back into full communion straight from the bowing down stage, or spend some time participating in the communion of the prayers only, without also receiving the offering. This extraordinarily terse shorthand, so compressed as to be

end p.24

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [25]-[29]

barely intelligible, coupled with the laborious repetition of the word 'each' in the subsequent phrase, tends to suggest impatience on the part of the person drafting the wording of the canon, who has presumably thus abbreviated the *sententia* of one of the other bishops. It is not unlikely that this reflects a long and fruitless argument over whether one of the penitential stages can reasonably be missed out or not. If so, the synod eventually despaired of coming to a collective mind on the question, and decided to leave it to everyone's own discretion. The *sententia* underlying the final clause, it may be noted, is expressed in the same terms as formerly—the importance of each bishop's right to regulate the stages of penance as he sees fit, and the necessity of considering a penitent's whole life rather than just the apparent strength of his or her contrition at the current moment. It presumably comes from the person or persons who have been bickering with the president on this subject from the beginning.

The other persecution canons are straightforward. Canon 8 gives six years overall to those who, having suffered violence, sacrificed two or three times, and canon 9 gives ten years to those who, as well as themselves sacrificing, compelled their brothers or caused others to compel them to do so. Canon 12 states that those who sacrificed before they were baptized may still be raised to the clerical rank, as their baptism has washed away their apostasy.

Only ten of the twenty-five canons of Ancyra concern the recent persecution, but they bear an important enough role to suggest that they were the synod's *raison d'être*, and therefore that Marcellus would have had considerable interest in their drafting. These rulings correspond in important ways to the rulings of the other penitential canons, 19–25, in which evidence of Marcellus' involvement may also be sought. It makes less sense to look for traces of Marcellus' intervention in the remaining canons, particularly the non-penitential ones, since most of them lack any sense of a guiding agenda, and could represent the concerns of any of the group. Nonetheless, canons 14, 16, and 17 should be considered for a moment in this context.

Canon 14 is obviously interesting for its anti-Manichaean overtones: it is the radical dualist's religious horror of eating flesh that is being smoked out. However, it is possible that this prohibition could also be connected with the focus of Marcellus' own theology. Like Irenaeus, Marcellus has an earthy, incarnational anthropology, and may well believe in an earthly reign of Christ after the Second Coming. A certain sort of vegetarianism might be linked in his mind with a hatred of the material world and a false, crypto-Platonic longing to escape its fleshy trammels.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> The connection between vegetarianism and Neoplatonism is exemplified by the *De Abstinencia* of Porphyry, who may possibly still have been alive at the time of the synod of Ancyra.

Canons 16 and 17 are a puzzle in more ways than one. Firstly, they deal with a transgression which they call ἀλογεῖσθαι, 'to do the irrational'. Not



only do we not know exactly what this means, but the canons' translators were not sure either. Secondly, with the exception of the penance for voluntary murder, the penances they prescribe are well beyond the norms established in the other canons of this synod in their severity.

These canons seem to be dealing with a specific outbreak, both of 'leprosy'—some kind of skin disease—and of a sexual transgression which is thought to have led to it. As in the case of those who sacrificed in the persecutions (now over), the transgression is described in the aorist (past definite) tense or with aorist participles, whereas one would expect the present if the synod simply had a general problem in mind. Instead of using the form  $\delta \circ \xi \epsilon \nu$  ('it seemed good'), usually with the present infinitive, indicating a general policy, the canon uses present third person imperatives ('let them be bowers down for twenty-five years') to describe the penance, which again seems to suggest it is addressed to a specific, known group of people. One may imagine that it was the outbreak of skin disease, or perhaps a confession connected with it, which first alerted clergy to the situation, and that whatever is involved is something of a group activity, with individuals egging one another on, or at least encouraging one another with their exploits.

The earliest Latin translation tells us that the Greek is untranslatable, with three possible meanings: bestiality, marriage in the forbidden degrees (that is, incest), or homosexuality.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> The version *Isidori antiqua* in *EOMIA*, ii.1, 92–4 lines 6–12.

The second meaning can be ruled out by the terms in which the acts are described: marrying within the forbidden degrees is not generally a serial activity. Homosexuality might seem more probable as a hugely disapproved-of group activity where age and marital status affected the degree of guilt. However, the evidence that the canon means bestiality is rather better. The word itself (unknown in classical Greek except in a discreet passage Cicero puts in that language, where it probably means either out of one's mind with anger or mindlessly drunk)<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Cicero, *Epistulae ad Atticum* VI.4.3. Shackleton Bailey takes it here of speaking in a 'confused and incoherent way': D. R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), *Cicero's Letters to Atticus*, iii, 51–50 B.C. 94–132 (Books V–VII.9) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 117–18.

would have more force here if it meant 'to do the irrational' in a transitive sense, which is how Lampe takes it.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *PGL*, s.v.  $\lambda \circ \gamma \epsilon \iota \mu \alpha \iota$  (p. 78), gives only the meaning 'have carnal relations with animals'.

Theodore the Studite uses it twice in this sense in a list of vices explicitly referring to Basil's canons, as a synonym for Basil's expression  $\zeta \omega \circ \phi \theta \acute{o} \rho \omicron \iota$ , 'animal-corruptors'.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Theodore the Studite, *Epp* 22 and 31 echo Basil, *Ep* 188.7 (this was pointed out to me by Professor Timothy Barnes). The only other passage found in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* which uses the word occurs in the thirteenth-century lexicon of Pseudo-Zonaras (Alpha 138), where it refers to being corrupted with irrational animals.

That is also the way it is taken by the great twelfth-century commentators

on the canons, Zonares and Balsamon.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Joannes Zonares, in PG 137, 1172D and 1176B–C; Theodorus Balsamon, in PG 137, 1169B. The third prominent commentator of the Comnenian renaissance, Alexius Aristenus, is unsure: PG 137, 1173C, and 1177A.

Moreover,

end p.26

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

although the Latin versions all hedged their bets and translated the word in both senses, the earliest Syriac simply translates it with the phrase 'have intercourse with animals'.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Ethpaul of the verb *shawteph*, the reading of both MSS A (BM Add. 14,528) and B (BM Add. 14,526) in Schulthess, *Die syrischen Kanones*, 40.

It might be added that it would be easier to identify a skin disease as caught from animals (anthrax, for example), which would produce recognizable and very localized symptoms, than to identify a venereal disease as caught from one sex rather than the other. If the word does mean bestiality, the problem may perhaps be youthful raids on the herds of neighbouring villages, in which some have joined who are old enough to know better.

The severity of the penance for this activity is in notable contrast to most of the rest of these canons: it is no doubt meant to express shock and strong disapproval of such activities, but it does not really fit with the sort of tariff established for other offences (was bestiality really so much greater a crime than infanticide, even in the early church?). For this reason, and because these two canons are found isolated among the miscellaneous questions rather than integrated among canons 20–25, the other canons giving specific penitential terms for sexual offences and murder, I would suggest that Marcellus is not likely to be this case's initial proponent, even though like everyone else he must have agreed to the sentence. If it is a single, specific outbreak of the problem which is being addressed, presumably the bishop of the relevant city had the main voice in laying down the penance.

Canons 20–24, however, or even perhaps 19–24, which are general rulings on issues of sex and murder and all have parallels in the legislation of Iliberris, may well have been conceived as a group, and for this reason may well once again have been mostly proposed by Marcellus. Like most of canons 1–9, they are based on a tariff of ten years' penance for the most serious offences, seven (probably reception in the seventh) for the moderately serious, and five for the slightly less serious.

The rulings of the canons of Iliberris on these subjects, though not entirely consistent with one another, and not exact parallels in every case, are on the whole rather more severe, often a great deal more severe. I give them in the order of the Ancyran canons to which they are parallel.

#### *Iliberris (Elvira) Canon 13*

Virgins who have dedicated themselves to God, if they should throw away the covenant of virginity and should serve pleasure of that sort, not understanding what they have lost, it seemed good that communion should not even be given to them at the end. But if, having been persuaded once or violated by the fall of a weak body,



women of this sort do penance for the whole period of their lives, so that they abstain from intercourse, because of the fact that they seem just to have lapsed, it seemed good that they ought to receive communion at the end.

end p.27

---

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

*Canon 27*

A bishop or any other cleric may only have with him either a sister or a virgin daughter dedicated to God; it seemed good for him to have no woman unrelated to him.

*Canon 7*

If someone of the faithful after doing penance for the appointed time after an adulterous lapse chances to fornicate anew, it seemed good for him not to have communion even at the end.

*Canon 8*

In the same way concerning women who leave their husbands for no preceding reason and join themselves to others, let them not receive communion even at the end.

*Canon 47*

If one of the faithful who has a wife commits adultery not once but often, he should be approached at the point of death. In which case if he will promise that he is going to cease, let communion be given to him. If having recovered he commits adultery again, it seemed good that he should not further make a game of the communion of peace.

*Canon 64*

If some woman has committed adultery up until the point of her death with someone else's husband, it seemed good that communion should not be given to her even at the end. But if she gives him up, let her receive communion after ten years having done legitimate penance.

*Canon 63*

If some woman, her husband being absent, conceives through adultery and kills it after the crime, it seemed good that communion is not to be given even at the end, because she doubled her crime.

*Canon 5*

If some mistress, inflamed with burning anger, shall beat her maidservant so badly that within three days she gives up her soul because of the severity of the punishment, because of the fact that it is uncertain whether she killed voluntarily or by accident, if voluntarily, after seven years, if by accident, after five years of legitimate penance done it seemed good that she should be admitted

to communion. But if in the intervening time she becomes ill, let her receive communion.

#### *Canon 6*

But if anyone kills someone else by sorcery, for the reason that this crime could not be brought about without idolatry, communion is not to be imparted to him even at the end.

It is not possible to be sure whether the bishops at Ancyra had the canons of Iliberris, or some of them, in front of them: ordinarily there was little use of Latin Christian material in the Greek-speaking East, but if the Spanish bishops circulated their canons to Rome, they might have been encountered there by visiting Eastern bishops, who would presumably have been horrified at the wholesale exclusion of large numbers from communion on their deathbed that the Iliberris canons envisage. It could be that Iliberris canon

63

end p.28

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

is the 'first ruling' which excluded women committing abortion or infanticide from communion up until their deaths (in Ancyra's ambiguous wording); equally, it could be the ruling of an earlier Eastern synod or canonical collection. What is clear is that Ancyra canons 19–24 were self-consciously kinder than contemporary legislation. Women, in particular, who are dealt with on the whole more harshly than men at Iliberris, are explicitly dealt with even-handedly at Ancyra, and in the case of women who commit abortion or infanticide, more leniently than men who commit voluntary murder in other contexts. In the case of adultery, the force of the Ancyran canon seems to be that both sexes must be treated equally, and *must* be received in the traditional seven years—no allowance for lengthening the period is permitted, whatever about shortening it.

Can we ascribe such self-conscious 'humanity' to Marcellus, or to a leading group of which he was one? It seems likely that we can, for it is the thread which runs through almost the whole of the synod. Likewise, an unusual generosity towards women seems to run all through the canons, from the greater leniency accorded to those who wept at the pagan feast in canon 5 (not men, at least upper-class men, surely), to the harsh treatment (ten years' penance) accorded in canon 25 to all those who had a part in a man's ill-treatment of his suicidal sister-in-law. If Marcellus, as host and president of the synod, had the influence which seems inescapable in these roles on the general tone of the legislation at Ancyra, it seems probable that he was in some measure responsible for these two features of it.

Our examination of this synod, and of Marcellus' role in it, has enabled us to see his character and his pastoral abilities in a rather stronger and clearer light than is often shone on them. Whatever group decided to hold the synod, and drew up the very specific list of invitations, he must have been at least a valued member of its inner circle, if not its leader. If we cannot pinpoint his exact allies among the group that attended, they must nevertheless have been there. The business of the synod was obviously conducted well and constructively; the canons it produced were almost entirely sensible and humane.

All of this indicates a Marcellus who was well respected from the beginning of his career; it suggests a man who was humane, constructive, able to work well and effectively with others, pastorally sensitive and moderate, or at the very least, one who valued such qualities. The word φιλανθρωπία, '(love of) humanity', appears a number of times in the canons of Ancyra. God's extraordinary φιλανθρωπία was a key concept in Marcellus' theology;<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> The word appears three times in the extant fragments.

it would not be surprising if it were a key concept in his pastoral vision also. In the wording of the Ancyran legislation, we can also discern a certain impatience, sarcasm, and tendency to goad opponents for their perceived lack of

end p.29

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [30]-[34]

logic or generosity—facets of Marcellus' character that we will also recognize in the future.

Whatever we can glean from the canons of Ancyra about Marcellus is especially valuable because it shows Marcellus in repose, as it were, outside of any explicit theological controversy. It gives us something of a background against which to assess his status, his abilities, and his actions as they appear at Nicaea, at Tyre, at Constantinople, at Rome, at Serdica, and during the long years of silence between Serdica and death. It gives us some access, I would argue, to the bishop he wanted to be, was once, and had it not been for the Arian controversy, might long have continued to be: the intelligent and humane pastor, working to strengthen a church which had suffered much during the persecution, by binding up the wounds of division, and offering a clear way back into the community for those who had fallen away.

## 2. Marcellus the Theologian

Marcellus' theology must be pieced together; we have no unproblematic statement of it. Most of what has come down to us of his thought is to be found in the surviving fragments of a major work of the early 330s, *Against Asterius*, though we also have one more work which is undoubtedly by Marcellus, the *Letter to Julius of Rome* of 341. About one-sixth of *Against Asterius* has survived, quoted in works of Eusebius of Caesarea and Epiphanius of Salamis.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> The percentage of the whole work represented by the extant fragments can be calculated from the fact that the whole work was—according to Eusebius of Caesarea—'nearly 10,000 lines [ἑξήκοντα ἑνὶ ἑκατὸν] long' (*Contra Marcellum* I.1.3). He will have meant the standard sixteen-syllable line which was used as a measure of length for literary works; a professional scribe would have been vividly aware how many lines long a text was, since that was the basis on which he was normally paid. See E. G. Turner, *Greek Papyri: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 87–8, 94.

Much that is interesting, and even attractive, can be found in these fragments, but there are at least two major problems associated with them.

In the first place, the surviving fragments are those Eusebius and his successor Acacius of Caesarea selected as particularly egregious, alien to their own theology, and likely to shock pious sensibilities in general. The other five-sixths of the work were probably on the whole rather more theologically uncontroversial. In some cases, Marcellus can be seen withdrawing from his most extreme conclusions even within the portions of the work that survive. The remainder of the work would also have provided a context in which what does survive would have made better sense. But Eusebius' selection also does Marcellus a service, in modern eyes, because it necessarily contains those parts of the work that seem to be most bold and

original.

end p.30

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

The other problem with the surviving fragments of *Against Asterius* is that only very careful examination shows the extent to which the arguments of the work are *ad hominem*. Nearly all the exegetical moves Marcellus makes, even the strangest, are driven by the positions to which he is replying. For both of these reasons, therefore, the fragments need to be handled with a certain caution. Above all, it is fatal for anyone attempting to develop an imaginative sympathy for Marcellus' thought to read them simply through Eusebius' eyes.

The two sketches which follow are an attempt briefly to address the two problems mentioned above.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> A more comprehensive analysis of Marcellus' theology can be found in Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, 50–68.

The best way of showing that Marcellus is less idiosyncratic than Eusebius would have us believe is to highlight some of what he has in common with Irenaeus.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> A systematic analysis of the thought of Irenaeus, on which the following sketch draws, can be found in Denis Minns, OP, *Irenaeus*, Outstanding Christian Thinkers (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994).

The best way of showing the effect on his theology of *argumenta ad hominem* is to analyse the way in which his scriptural exegesis is driven by the exegetical arguments of his opponents.

What Irenaeus and Marcellus most clearly have in common is their soteriology. For both of them, salvation begins with God's astonishing love for humankind. Irenaeus famously spoke of 'the Word of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, who because of his excessive love (τῆς ὑπερβουλῆς) became what we are, in order to make us what he himself is' (*Adv Haer* V. Praef.). In Marcellus' thought, God says to humankind, through Jesus Christ, 'I have glorified you, and I shall glorify again', in order that because of his excessive love for humankind (ὑπερβουλῆς) he might render immortal formerly mortal

Man<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> I have sometimes employed the old-fashioned term 'Man' to translate ἄνθρωπος, 'human being', because it seems impossible otherwise to give a satisfactory picture of the way in which Marcellus uses the term to cover all of 'the human being joined to the Word', 'humankind in general', 'Adam', and 'Mary'.

in the second glory after the resurrection of the flesh' (Re 96 K 107 S/V 80 P 111).

Both Irenaeus and Marcellus marvel at the unlooked-for generosity of the incarnation. Irenaeus explains the sign from heaven above and earth beneath of Isaiah, unlooked for by human beings, as the doubly saving incarnate Word: '*quod non postulavit homo, quia nec speravit Virginem praegnantem fieri posse quae erat virgo et parere filium, et hunc partum Deum esse nobiscum, et descendere in ea quae sunt deorsum terrae quaerentem ovem quae perierat*' (*Adv Haer* III.19.3).<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> 'Which human being never looked for, since he never hoped that a Virgin might be able to become pregnant, while she was a virgin, and bear a son, and that this child would be God with us, and would descend to the lower parts of the earth seeking the sheep which was lost.'

Marcellus expresses a similar thought: 'For who would have believed before the demonstration of the facts that the Word of God would assume flesh, having been born through a Virgin, and that he would display the whole Godhead in it bodily?' (Re 13 K 16 S/V 33 P 38).

end p.31

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Like Irenaeus, Marcellus' image for the plight of humankind is bondage in slavery to the Devil (as in Re 98 K 110 S/V 83 P 115; cf., for example, Irenaeus, *Adv Haer* III.18.7, V.21.1), overcome by the obedience of Christ as human being, replaying the old contest but this time winning (as, for example, in *Adv Haer* III.18.2). In Marcellus, it is clear that the Word effects salvation, but effects it through the human being he assumed: 'The Word of the invisible God was going to be born through a Virgin and to assume human flesh, also in order that through it, having prevailed against the Devil, who formerly overpowered Man, he might prepare him to become not only incorruptible and immortal, but even enthroned in the heavens with God' (Re 98 K 110 S/V 83 P 115). Irenaeus also has something of this slipping between the humanity of Christ and humanity in general, though his Christology is not alarmingly divisive in the way Marcellus' can sometimes be. But both describe what is effected by the incarnation as adoptive sonship by the communion (*communio*/κ ο ι ν ω ν ι α) between humanity and the Word of God: 'And because of this he does not name himself Son of God, but everywhere calls himself Son of Man, in order that he might prepare Man through such a confession to become son of God by adoption (θ ε σ ι ς), because of the communion with him' (Re 34 K 41 S/V 111 P 117); 'For by what means could we have become participators in his adoption of sons, if we had not received from him through the Son that communion with him, unless his Word, made flesh, had communicated it to us?' (*Adv Haer* III.18.7).

For both Irenaeus and Marcellus, human beings are made in the image of God specifically because they are made in the image of the incarnate Word (Re 84 K 95 S/V 56 P 57; *Adv Haer* V.16.2.), and as a consequence (at least in Marcellus' thought), it is the incarnate Word, not the pre-incarnate, who is the image of the invisible God of Colossians 1: 15. This is Marcellus' most distinctive contribution to fourth-century theology, and the one which perhaps most annoyed his contemporaries; nonetheless, it must delight all those who see the application of image theology to a cosmic, pre-incarnate Christ as fundamentally counter-productive. For Marcellus, it is the incarnate Christ who makes God visible and tangible, which is the whole point of an image, and as a result those who have seen Jesus Christ have seen God. 'For who would have believed before the demonstration of the facts that the Word of God would assume flesh, having been born through a Virgin, and that he would display the whole Godhead in it bodily?'

It is likely that Marcellus also shared Irenaeus' famous theology of *anacephalaiosis* (recapitulation, or summing up all things, based on Eph. 1: 10; cf., for example, *Adv Haer* III.16.6). Marcellus only uses the word twice in the extant fragments, and only once soteriologically, but the way in which

he does so is extraordinarily rich. For Marcellus, the incarnate (and, indeed, resurrected) Christ sums up the new creation: the Word becomes 'first-born of all creation' in the same sense as 'first-born from the dead', the first new

end p.32

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

human being (κ α ι ν ε ς ἄ ν θ ρ ω π ο ς), and the ὁ ρ χ η (origin/head) of all things on earth as well as in heaven, precisely by becoming united to human flesh (Re 6 K 6 S/v 15 P 26). Marcellus' Christ may well, like Irenaeus' Christ, also sum up human experience, explicitly living through every age of a human being, from birth to old age, since he was deemed to have died at about age fifty: 'You are not yet fifty years old, and you say that you have seen Abraham?' (John 8: 57; cf. *Adv. Haer.* II.22.4–6). Marcellus probably accepted the same lifespan for Christ, which would see him born in about 20 BC, for he consistently uses the phrases 'not more than four hundred years ago' or 'not four hundred years ago' to describe the beginning of the new dispensation:<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Re 102, 103 K 115, 116 S/V 103, 104 P 122, 123.

if he reckoned Christ to have been born in AD 1, he would presumably have rounded the consequent figure of 330 or so years before the composition of *Against Asterius* down to three hundred, whereas a birth in around 20 BC produces a figure of slightly over 350 years since Christ's birth, more likely to be rounded up.

Another important aspect of Marcellus' theology can also be best understood, I would argue, in the context of Irenaeus' theology: his use of the terms δ ὐ ν α μ ι ς and ἐ ν ἐ π γ ρ ε ι α,<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Taken straightforwardly, 'power' and 'activity'.

sometimes as a pair, sometimes separately. There is general agreement that these terms are not used by Marcellus in the Aristotelian sense of potentiality and actuality.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Theodor Zahn, it should be noted, did not argue that the terms should be understood in this way in Marcellus' thought, despite the current urban myth to the contrary, but rather argued the opposite: 'Da sich keine Spur von einem Gebrauch des ἐ ν ἐ π γ ρ ε ι α in dem oben an dritter Stelle genannten, so zu sagen passiven Sinn gezeigt hat, welchen wir, freilich erst nach einer Verkümmernung des bei Aristoteles noch in wogender Fülle hin und her sich wendenden Begriffs, mit dem Wort actu zu verbinden pflegen, so scheint es von vornherein bedenklich, dem δ ὐ ν α μ ι ε ν α ι die dem entsprechende Bedeutung der Potenz, der auf die Überführung zur Wirklichkeit wartenden Möglichkeit zu geben, wiewohl gerade dieser Gebrauch des Worts ein sehr populärer geworden war' (Zahn, *Marcellus*, 125–6).

Maurice Wiles argued in 1987, drawing on a suggestion of Denis Minns and Paul Parvis, that, when used as a pair (for example, Re 47 K 52 S/V 70 P 16), they should be translated as 'faculty' and 'its exercise in practice'.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> 'Person or Personification? A Patristic Debate about Logos', in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird*, ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 281–9, at 288.

This would draw on the usage of medical writers such as the second-century author Galen, which uses the words to describe bodily organs and their characteristic activities.<sup>51</sup>



<sup>51</sup> On the theological and philosophical history of the terms  $\delta\iota\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  and  $\epsilon\iota\upsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ , see Michel R. Barnes, *The Power of God:  $\delta\iota\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2001). Barnes, it should be noted, does not accept that Marcellus uses  $\delta\iota\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  and  $\epsilon\iota\upsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$  as a pair of technical terms at all.

It is important to have a satisfactory model of what Marcellus means by them, because the extent to which we allow that Marcellus has any concept of the Word's real existence at all (which his enemies often denied he had)

largely depends on what we make of these terms.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>52</sup> The key fragments which use these terms together are Re 47 K 52 S/V 70 P 16, and Re 55 K 61 S/V 87 P 96: 'In order that in saying "In the Beginning was the Word", he might show that the Word is in the Father as power ( $\delta\iota\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ ), for God is the beginning of all things which came to be, "from whom are all things"; and in "and the Word was with God", that the Word is with God as acting power ( $\epsilon\iota\upsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ), for "all things came to be through him, and apart from him not any one thing came to be", and in having said "the Word was God", that one should not divide the Godhead, since the Word was in him and he was in the Word; for he says, "The Father is in me and I am in the Father." ' 'For just as all things which came to be came to be by the Father through the Word, thus also things which are said by the Father are signified through the Word. For because of this also the most holy Moses names the Word "messenger" here, because he appeared because of nothing other than in order to announce to Moses those things which he knew to be profitable to the Sons of Israel. And he knew it to be profitable to think there to be one God. Wherefore also he said to him, "I am the one who is", in order that he might teach there to be no other God apart from himself. And this is easy, I suppose, for those who think well to know even from a certain small and humble example from our world. For it is impossible for anyone to separate the discourse ( $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ ) of a human being as a faculty ( $\delta\iota\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ ) and as a reality ( $\epsilon\iota\upsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ); for the discourse is one and the same with the human being, and is separated in nothing other than only in the performance of the deed ( $\tau\tau\eta\varsigma\pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\xi\epsilon\omega\varsigma\epsilon\iota\upsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ).'

end p.33

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

I would argue that Marcellus' use of  $\delta\iota\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  and  $\epsilon\iota\upsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$  in describing the Word holds the same place in his thought as the notion of the Word as the 'hand of God' ( $\chi\epsilon\iota\rho\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ ) does in Irenaeus'.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Or hands—Irenaeus sometimes includes the Spirit as 'God's left hand', as it were. It gives an account of the way in which the Word both seems to act to some extent independently (it is not the Father who took flesh), and yet is one with God. The hand of God creates all things (*Adv Haer* IV.20.1), fashions Adam (*Adv Haer* III.21.10), and forms and adapts us from the beginning to the end (*Adv Haer* V.16.1). This is how God's power works in Marcellus' thought also: always, inseparably there, and able to be at rest, but characteristically expressed in action, in creating the world and human beings, and in effecting their salvation.

Let us turn now to the way in which Marcellus' theological arguments (including his Scripture exegesis) are driven by the exegesis of his opponents. We can see this very clearly by considering the exegetical underpinning of a key passage in the work of Asterius the Sophist to which Marcellus was responding. A good third of Marcellus' long work seems to have targeted the arguments and exegesis behind it.

For the Father is one [of two contrasting subjects], who begot from

himself the only-begotten Word and First-born of all creation—One begetting One, Perfect begetting Perfect, King begetting King, Lord begetting Lord, God begetting one who is God, an unvarying image of essence (*ousia*) and will and glory and power./ But the one who was begotten by him, who is the image of the invisible God, is [the] other.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> ὁ ἄλλος μὴ γὰρ ἔστιν πατρὶ γεννησας ἑξ αὐτοῦ τὴν μονογενὴ λόγον καὶ πρῶτότοκον πάσης κτίσεως, μόνος μόνον, τλειος τλειον, βασιλες βασιλα, κύριος κύριον, θες θεόν, οσίας τε καὶ βουλης καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ δόξης ἁπαρ ἁλλὰ κτον ἐκόντα./ ὁ ἄλλος δὲ ἔστιν ἑξ αὐτοῦ γεννηθεὶς, ὁ ἔστιν ἐκ νου τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὁρατοῦ. Asterius, frs. 10, 11, in Markus Vinzent, *Asterius von Kappadokien: Die Theologischen Fragmente, Einleitung, Kritischer Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 86, 88).

Although Eusebius never continues the quotation past this point, it is likely that Asterius went on, 'For one is ingenerate, the other is generate...', and that his explanation 'to be ingenerate is to be that which is not made, but eternal; to be ingenerate is not to have a cause of being, but even to be

end p.34

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [35]-[39]

oneself to the generate the cause of their coming into being' is part of the same discussion.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Asterius, frs. 12, 2, 4 (pp. 88, 82 Vincent).

This passage is underpinned by decades of theology, philosophy, and Scripture exegesis in the Origenist tradition. Marcellus seeks to prise it all apart by careful re-interpretation of all the relevant biblical material, writing whole sections on each phrase of this passage, sometimes on each word.

His strategy is to attack the kind of carbon-copy theology it represents by taking all the scriptural passages Asterius and his tradition were in the habit of using to demonstrate two Lords, Kings, and so on, one of whom creates or crowns or appoints the other, or causes him to come to be, and applying them to the incarnate Christ. He accepts, for purposes of argument, the proposition that there are two distinct acting subjects referred to in Scripture, of whom one is created and finite. But if there are, then the second is the Word made Flesh, not the Word qua Word.

Marcellus develops this as follows. The only proper title for the pre-incarnate, Marcellus asserts, is Word:<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Re 37 K 43 S/V 3 P 18.

every other title and every passage in Scripture from either Testament which is traditionally thought to apply to Christ (with the exception, it turns out, of Power (δύναμις), sometimes Wisdom, and occasionally Son) applies in fact to the Incarnate Christ. So the Only-begotten of the Father, for

Marcellus, is not the Word qua Word, but the Saviour begotten of Mary;<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Re 26 K 31 S/V 59 P 60.

the First-born of all Creation is the incarnate Christ, not the pre-incarnate;<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Re 8 K 8 S/V 11 P 22.

the speaker of Proverbs 8: 22 ('The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways for his works') is the incarnate Christ, not a cosmic instrument of creation;<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Re 9 K 9 S/V 26 P 31.

and most importantly, it is the incarnate Christ who is the image of the invisible God, not the equally invisible Word as such, since it is the incarnate Christ who makes the Unseen present and visible to humankind, as images do.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Re 82-83 K 93-94 S/V 54-55 P 55-56.

The payoff of this, for Marcellus, is that Asterius' distinct secondary cosmic being is otiose, and, indeed, unscriptural. One does not beget One as Asterius would have it, Marcellus insists, because the Old Testament teaches

us that there only is one God; instead, the Word, made known to us for the first time in the prologue to John's Gospel, is always there in and with God from the beginning.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Re 46 K 51 S/V 68 P 14.

Marcellus is bound to have disputed 'Perfect begetting Perfect', with its implication of two separate beings, each of whom is complete without the other, but not enough of his discussion of this question survives to allow us to reconstruct the line he took. His line on 'King begetting King' is much clearer: Christ is not another cosmic King, Marcellus argues, but precisely earthly king of an earthly kingdom<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Re 99 K 111 S/V 99 P 118.

(Marcellus, like many theologians of Asia Minor, believes in an earthly reign of Christ which is still to come). And so on.

end p.35

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

The Lord of Heaven, the 'Lord Almighty' as Marcellus tends to designate him, does not beget another heavenly Lord (for 'the Lord our God is one Lord'), but an earthly Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Re 99 K 111 S/V 99 P 118; Re 85 K 96 S/V 113 P 62.

There are not two Gods, under any circumstances, as Moses and the Prophets go to great lengths to teach in almost every book.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Re 67 K 76 S/V 97 P 104.

And the image of essence and will and glory and power could not be itself essence or will or glory or power, because an image is an image of something other than what it is itself, so it is Christ's flesh, not the Word, which is the image, through being united with the Word, of all that God is.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Re 85–86 K 96–97 S/V 113–114 P 62–63.

Marcellus never spontaneously uses the word οὐσία (essence), but he certainly believed God and the Word together had only one of it; Christ has two wills, the will of the Father which is also the will of the Word, and a human will,<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Re 64 K 73 S/V 74 P 87.

as was seen in Gethsemane, but not a pre-incarnate will which is separate from the Father's, and two glories, the glory he shared with the Father before the world began, and the glory he wins for humankind as Christ, but no separate glory apart from these.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Re 96 K 107 S/V 80 P 111.

When Jesus says, 'My Father goes on working, and I work' (John 5: 17), he means the work of salvation he is bringing about as the Incarnate; the Word is the Power of the Father, and there are not two cosmic powers.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Re 13 K 15 S/V 32 P 37.

From this brief sketch, it can be seen that Marcellus' most distinctive theological claims are all driven by his readiness to concede as much ground as possible to his opponents, before demonstrating that they are wrong even

on their own terms. He allows that Proverbs 8: 22 ('The Lord created me the beginning of his ways for his works') indeed implies a creation in time; he allows that the 'first-born of all creation' must actually be created; he allows that the language of begetting implies something bodily and also implies a temporal coming into existence; he allows that an image is not exactly like whatever it is an image of; he allows that various biblical passages proclaim a kingdom which comes to be in time, such as 'The Lord has become King, let the earth rejoice!' (Ps. 96 (97): 1), and 'I have been established king by him' (Ps. 2: 6). But he then uses them as grist to his own mill, highlighting the newness and distinctiveness of the incarnation, and making all these passages contribute to the honour that has been done to human beings by God.

It should be noted that there are indications within the fragments themselves that Marcellus is deliberately pushing the more radical aspects of his theology beyond what his own fixed positions actually were. Towards the end of the work, he briefly makes use of a more usual exegesis of Proverbs

8: 22, referring it to creation rather than the incarnation;<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Re 54 K 60 S/V 110 P 106.

he uses the title Son of the pre-incarnate Word;<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Re 17 K 20 S/V 38 P 43.

he pulls back from the extreme suggestion that the Word might abandon the flesh, the human being Jesus, who might nonetheless

end p.36

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

continue a separate existence, definitely his oddest theological speculation.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Re 108 K 121 S/V 109 P 128.

But even this can be seen as an attempt to value the flesh for its own sake, as God's good creation: Marcellus is very sure that the Word has no need to be united to the flesh any longer once salvation is complete, but that flesh became immortal when united to the Word, and, Marcellus implies, it is hard to imagine that it would simply be destroyed. What to do theologically with the flesh of Christ after the eschaton was a problem to more than one fourth-century theologian. Some accounts depict the resurrection as transforming the flesh out of all recognition, and in one way or another envisage Christ's humanity vanishing in a sea of glory. Marcellus' thought, tentative as it is, is that the Word came to restore, not to do away with, human flesh. The 'more than human glory' human beings are to receive through the resurrection does not destroy their humanity, in Marcellus' thought, but raises it to a place in the eternal Kingdom of God.

end p.37

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

## 2 *Nicaea*

---

## Sara Parvis

**Abstract:** This chapter examines the evidence for membership of the two alliances which squared up against one another before Nicaea, including the names and numbers on both sides, and the degree to which nameable individuals committed themselves politically. The theological affinities and differences of Alexander of Alexandria's allies are studied, particularly those of Marcellus with each of the rest. The significance of the initial calling of the 'great and priestly synod' for Ancyra rather than Nicaea is considered. It is argued that the synod was not originally called by Constantine but by the pro-Alexander alliance, and moved by him to his own palace to promote peace. The Synod of Antioch is discussed and dated to 324. It is argued that Marcellus had little influence on the Nicene Creed, which was not characteristic of his theology and which he never defended, but probably rather more on the canons of Nicaea.

**Keywords:** Nicaea, Nicene Creed, canons, Synod of Antioch, Alexander of Alexandria, Ancyra, Constantine

Theological controversy in the East did not begin with Arius. Eusebius of Caesarea tells us that the leaders of the Eastern churches had been bickering since before the Great Persecution.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, *HE* VIII.1.7–8.

Theologians had been arguing about Origen since before his death, and the churches of both Antioch and Alexandria had seen schisms in the late third and early fourth centuries. But what may still be called the 'Arian controversy', since it flared up over certain theological statements of Arius' and ultimately became a struggle over whether, and the extent to which, the Nicene pronouncement on such statements should be embraced as normative, began at a given moment, even if there is still no perfect agreement on when exactly that moment came.

The documents which bear witness to this outbreak have been analysed many times, and the story they tell may seem to be well-worn. Nonetheless, it is worth telling again, both because some crucial details are still often missed,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> It is surprising, for example, how many commentators seem unaware that the letter of Alexander generally entitled *He Philarchos* (in *Athanasius Werke*, iii.1, *Urkunden zur Geschichte des arianischen Streites 318–328*, ed. Hans-Georg Opitz (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1935), *Urkunde* 14) is not a private letter either to Alexander of Byzantium or to Alexander of Thessalonica, but simply an exemplar of an encyclical which circulated the entire East in search of signatures; or that the 'Tome of Alexander' which survives in Syriac (*Urk* 15) is essentially an extract of the same letter; or that, therefore, around two hundred bishops had apparently already condemned Arius well before Nicaea.

and because the way in which the problematic is set up inevitably affects the way in which it is seen to continue. It is one of the claims of this book that the events of the years 325–345 are best made sense of as a struggle between two ongoing, though continually modified, alliances. Since this is a view which is largely against the consensus of current English-speaking scholarship, the ground needs to be carefully set if that claim is to be made good.

end p.38

## 1. The Two Alliances

However one might understand later stages of the Arian controversy, there is no denying that the period immediately prior to Nicaea was characterized by the drawing up of two alliances: an alliance of those who were prepared to speak, or write, in favour of Arius, or at least some of the theological positions he adopted, and an alliance of those who actively backed Alexander against Arius and his supporters. Both Arius and Alexander can be seen in the documents of the period self-consciously seeking and enumerating allies, and also giving at least a few names of bishops who were against them.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Arius' letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia (*Urk* 1.3); Alexander of Alexandria to All the Bishops (*Henos Somatos*; *Urk* 4b, especially 4, 6, and 11); and Alexander of Alexandria to Alexander of Byzantium (*He Philarchos*; *Urk* 14.59–60).

Others (at least Eusebius of Nicomedia and Philogonius of Antioch) can also be seen recruiting in favour of each.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre (*Urk* 8); Philogonius in the Tome of Alexander of Alexandria to All the Bishops (*Urk* 15.5), analysed below.

It is possible to argue that the lines drawn up before Nicaea did not correspond to the real theological fault-lines of the East at the time, but they nonetheless were drawn up at this time in this particular way.

In looking at the two alliances, I shall pay particular attention to those whose names reappear in sources describing events which took place after Nicaea. It is this which will give us a handle on the extent to which the two alliances are temporary, or even opportunistic, and the extent to which they lasted into the next phase of the controversy.

### (i) Arius' allies

There are a number of indications in the ancient sources of the extent and nature of the support on which Arius was able to draw before and during Nicaea. By means of these, we can gain some sense of the numbers and names both of those bishops who were in some way or other theologically like-minded to Arius around the time of Nicaea, and of those who seem actually to have offered him some political support. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that the two are not the same.

The fifth-century historians make several noteworthy claims. Rufinus and Sozomen both assert that there were seventeen bishops at Nicaea who were initially favourable to the opinions of Arius, although most of them eventually went with the majority opinion.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Rufinus, *HE* X.5; Sozomen, *HE* I.20.1.

Theodoret refers to 'a few' who supported Arius' views at Nicaea, and gives the names of six of these explicitly in this context, referring also to others previously mentioned.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Theodoret, *HE* I.7.14.

The anti-Nicene historian Philostorgius, meanwhile, cites a list of twenty-two bishops whom



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [40]-[44]

he calls Ἀρειοφρόνες, the 'Arian-minded', who thought the same way as Arius at Nicaea.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* I.8<sup>a</sup> (p. 9.10–23 Bidez).

From the pre-Nicene sources themselves, particularly Arius' *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia* (*Urk* 1), we have more indications and names. We have letters or fragments of letters written in Arius' support by Eusebius of Nicomedia, Eusebius of Caesarea, Paulinus of Tyre, Athanasius of Anazarbus, Theognis of Nicaea, and the Antiochene presbyter George, later bishop of Laodicea (we also have a later reference to one written by Maris of Chalcedon which does not survive).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Urk* 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, and 13.

Arius' letter to Eusebius makes a claim of widespread support throughout 'the East' for one theological view of his in particular, 'that God precedes the Son without beginning'. In this same letter, Arius refers to Eusebius of Nicomedia as his 'co-Lucianist' (συλλουκιανιστής), which implicitly invokes another group of potential supporters, the pupils or disciples of the Nicomedian martyr Lucian of Antioch.

It may be worth considering the disciples of Lucian first, because modern commentators often have an all-or-nothing attitude to them; either they are the key to everything, or they are simply a red herring. Perhaps the most interesting thing about them, however, is the very varied extent to which they become involved in ecclesiastical politics, despite their theological affinity.

The fifth-century anti-Nicene historian Philostorgius gives us the names of eleven male pupils of Lucian's in all. His main list consists of Eusebius of Nicomedia, Maris of Chalcedon, Theognis of Nicaea, Leontius, afterwards bishop of Antioch, Antonius of Tarsus in Cilicia, Menophantus [of Ephesus], Numenius, Eudoxius, Alexander, and Asterius the Cappadocian.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* II.14 (p. 25.10–15 Bidez).

Elsewhere, Athanasius of Anazarbus in Cilicia is also mentioned as having studied under Lucian.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* III.15 (p. 46.1–3 Bidez).

The names of four women disciples, Eustolia, Dorothea, Severia, and Pelagia, also appear in Lucian's hagiography, although any role they played in subsequent events is largely invisible (Eustolia seems to have lived with Leontius as a 'spiritual sister' for a time).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The *Vita Luciani* used by both Symeon and Philostorgius is reconstructed by Bidez as Anhang VI of his Philostorgius edition (pp. 184–201). Gustave Bardy's *Recherches sur Saint Lucien d'Antioche et son École*, Études de Théologie Historique (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne et ses fils, 1936), 296–315, is still by far the best discussion of

Lucian and his disciples, even if it does include, in R. P. C. Hanson's phrase, 'all, and rather more than all, that is known of Lucian' (Hanson, *Search*, 79). For the view that the disciples of Lucian made themselves such only after his death, see Hanns Christof Brennecke, 'Lukian von Antiochien in der Geschichte des Arianischen Streites', in *Logos: Festschrift für Luise Abramowski zum 8. Juli 1993*, ed. Hanns Christof Brennecke, Ernst Ludwig Grasmück, and Christof Marksches, Beihefte zur ZNW 67 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), 170–92, at 182–4. The women disciples are listed in Anhang VI.10 (p. 192.19–22 Bidez).

Arius' name is not mentioned in this context: either he was written out of the group as an embarrassment, or he was a later hanger-on who had not been one of the original pupils.

The eleven fall into various political categories, strung out across a continuum. The most politically engaged of all is Eusebius of Nicomedia, who has

end p.40

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

family connections with one of Licinius' most trusted officials and later also with the family of Constantine.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ammianus reports that Eusebius was related to Basilina (*PLRE* i, 148), the daughter of Julius Julianus (*PLRE* i, 478–9), who had been Licinius' praetorian prefect and continued to be influential in Constantine's court.

On whatever basis Arius appeals to him as a co-Lucianist, he responds with vigour, putting pressure on Paulinus of Tyre to write in support of Arius and praising Eusebius of Caesarea for showing zeal in doing so. The Alexandrian encyclical letter *Henos Somatos* accuses him of using his newly seized position as bishop of Licinius' imperial capital as an excuse to try to run the Church in general.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Urk* 4b.4 (p. 7.4–7 Opitz).

He is certainly prominent in ecclesiastical affairs thereafter until his death. His theology appears initially very close to Arius', and there is no real evidence that it ever changed.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> On Eusebius' theology in general, see Hanson, *Search*, 29–31. For one telling example of affinity to Arius (in the use of the title 'God' rather than 'Father'), see Markus Vinzent, 'Die Gegner im Schreiben Markells von Ankyra an Julius von Rom', *ZKG* 105 (1994), 285–328, at 312.

A letter to Licinius' wife, Constantine's sister Constantia, in the last years of Licinius' reign gives us a detailed insight into his Christology and his eschatology, as well as his relations with the imperial family.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Knut Schäferdiek ('Zu Verfasserschaft und Situation der epistula ad Constantiam de imagine Christi', *ZKG* 91 (1980), 177–86) makes a compelling case for the attribution, which has not subsequently been convincingly assailed. The best edition is now Annette von Stockhausen, 'Die Epistula ad Constantiam', in Torsten Krannich et al., *Die ikonoklastische Synode von Hiereia 754: Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar ihres Horos*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 15 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 91–112. The only previous collection of all the available fragments is in Pitra's edition of Nicephorus' *Adversus Epiphanium*: J. B. Pitra (ed.), *Spicilegium Solesmense*, i (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1852), 383–90.

Maris of Chalcedon and Theognis of Nicaea<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> On Theognis, see Bardy, *Lucien*, 204–10. Three short fragments of Theognis were

edited by D. De Bruyne in 'Deux lettres inconnues de Théognius, l'évêque de Nicée', *ZNW* 27 (1928), 107–10 = *CPG* 2070. *CPG Supplementum* has failed to notice the re-edition by R. Gryson, *Scripta Arriana Latina*, i. *Collectio Veronensis, Scholia in Concilium Aquileiense, Fragmenta in Lucam Rescripta, Fragmenta Theologica Rescripta*, CCSL 87, i (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982), 235.

join with Eusebius in his initial championing of Arius and, as we shall see (particularly in Theognis' case), in virtually every other political act in which he engages for the rest of his life. Their theology, nonetheless, might be no more than broadly in agreement with his: all we have of it are a few fragments of Theognis, far less clear in their import than those of, say, Athanasius of Anazarbus, and the fact that Maris championed the relatively neutral Fourth Creed of Antioch after Eusebius' death in 341. The 'Westerners' at Serdica did not even consider Maris dangerous enough to be worth condemning in 343. But during Eusebius' lifetime, whatever the differences in their theology, the three always seem to act politically as one.

Next comes Asterius the Sophist, whom we have already met as the target of Marcellus' *Against Asterius*, and the defender of the theology of Eusebius of Nicomedia. His ecclesiastico-political action was necessarily curtailed by his enforced lay status, the result of his earlier apostasy during the Great Persecution, and the stigma attached to that act; nonetheless, his intellectual

end p.41

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

talents were considerable, and put to good use in toning down and defending the theology of Eusebius, and quite likely also of Arius. He may also be the original author of the main theological rival to the Nicene Creed, the Second Creed of Antioch. And though his support of his fellow Lucianists was less effective politically than it might have been but for his fall, his loyalty to Eusebius of Nicomedia is clear, and he seems to have been heavily involved in the development of ecclesiastical events in general: Marcellus sneers at the number of journeys he is continually making around the East. How much fellow understanding with or interest in other Lucianists besides Eusebius he had is impossible to tell: he has been seen as the brain behind the whole theological tradition previously known as 'Arianism', though others see him rather as a moderating influence on it.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Markus Vinzent, 'Gottes Wesen, Logos, Weisheit und Kraft bei Asterius von Kappadokien und Markell von Ankyra', *Vig Chr* 47 (1993), 170–91.

Two more from the list of Lucianists seem to have become politically active only after the death of Eusebius. In the case of Leontius of Antioch, this is not too surprising, since he only became bishop there in 344, though he had been teacher to the young Aetius in the mid 330s.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> On Aetius' studies with various of the disciples of Lucian, see Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 20–3.

Menophantus of Ephesus is more difficult to pin down in this respect: Theodoret seems confident that he was one of those who initially supported Arius at Nicaea, but he was not present at Tyre, and does not appear in lists of the chief political actors between Nicaea and Serdica. But shortly after Eusebius' death he appears to be politically prominent again: the Westerners at Serdica thought highly enough of his political importance to include him

among their eight condemnations in 343, and he is listed as one of the leaders of the synod at Antioch which condemned Athanasius in 349.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Sozomen, *HE* IV.8.3–4. For the date, see Timothy D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 98–9.

It is possible that both Menophantus and Leontius regarded Eusebius with a certain nervousness, at least under Constantine, and until the fixed direction of Constantius' ecclesiastical politics became clear.

Two more of the Lucianists, Athanasius of Anazarbus and Antonius of Tarsus, seem to have had strong theological views, but apart from one intervention on behalf of Arius by the former,<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> There survives a fragment of a letter to Alexander of Alexandria (*Urk* 11), as well as three short fragments edited by De Bruyne, 'Deux lettres', 107–110. *CPG Supplementum* does not record the re-edition of the latter (*CPG* 2061) in Gryson, *Scripta Arriana Latina*, I, 235.

to have avoided political activity altogether. The bishop of Anazarbus was one of the most theologically extreme of Arius' original supporters, teaching, like Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia, that the Son is ἐκ τῆς οὐκ ὄντων (out of non-being), and he did write in Arius' support. He also taught the young Aetius in the early 330s. Nonetheless, his presence is not recorded at any synod, neither those for

end p.42

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

which we have complete lists of at least names (Nicaea, the two diocesan synods at Antioch of 324 and 328, Serdica), nor those for which we have partial ones (Tyre 335 and Antioch 341), nor is he ever accused of plotting against other bishops. The same is true of Antonius of Tarsus (another teacher of Aetius'), though he only became bishop in the mid 330s, which may allow some low-level involvement on his part at Tyre or Antioch. Both of these bishops hail from Cilicia, one of the most consistently anti-Nicene provinces in its episcopal theology and politics, but they clearly show that strong theological views do not necessarily result in political activity.

Of the final three Lucianists, Numenius, Eudoxius, and Alexander, we probably know nothing, unless Eudoxius is Eudoxius of Germanicia,<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Bardy (*Lucien*, 194) is surely correct in arguing that Philostorgius would have made this identification explicit.

or Alexander is the unknown bishop of that name who was present at the two synods of Antioch in 324 and 328 but not, apparently, Nicaea.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Alexander seems to have yielded in the persecution as well as Asterius, but being less well known he might conceivably have entered the ranks of the clergy nonetheless: Philostorgius, *HE* II.14 (p. 25.15–17 Bidez).

We have, therefore, among the eleven, eight with some kind of identifiable theological position, all broadly aligned with one another, six who became recognizably politically involved in the Nicene and post-Nicene ecclesiastical struggles (if becoming politically involved is defined as attending at least one synod), four of whom can be considered as forming something of a political unit during Eusebius of Nicomedia's lifetime. We shall see these different levels of support for Arius (and Eusebius of Nicomedia) again.

The Lucianists may give us a good pattern of the type of support that was potentially and actively available to Arius, but other sources give us a better sense of numbers. The figure of seventeen initial supporters of Arius at Nicaea is so specific a number that Rufinus seems unlikely to have invented it: it may well stem from one of two important lost fourth-century sources, Gelasius of Caesarea's ecclesiastical history or Sabinus of Heraclea's synodal collection.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> For a useful survey of the debate over the parameters of Gelasius' ecclesiastical history, see Philip R. Amidon, *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. xiii–xvii. On Sabinus, see W. D. Hauschild, 'Die antinizänische Synodalaktensammlung des Sabinus von Heraklea', *Vig Chr* 24 (1970), 105–26.

The number is all the more plausible because we have no difficulty whatever in finding seventeen bishops whose presence is attested at Nicaea who are likely to have spoken in favour of some of Arius' views. Philostorgius' twenty-two 'Arian-minded' bishops, on the other hand, have long been recognized to be problematic.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See e.g. Rowan Williams, *Arius, Heresy and Tradition*, revised edn. (London: SCM, 2001), 67–8.

Six of them are in any case not attested as present at Nicaea.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> If we accept Archbishop Williams's plausible emendation of 'Amphion of Sidon' to 'Amphion of Epiphaneia', there is still no indication in any of the records that Sentianus of Boreion in Libya, 'Melitius' of the Thebaid of Egypt, Paulinus of Tyre, Athanasius of Anazarbus, Meletius of Sebastopolis, or Basil of Amaseia was present at the Council (cf. E. Honigmann, 'La Liste originale des pères de Nicée', *Byzantion* 14 (1939), 17–76; Henricus Gelzer, Henricus Hilgenfeld, and Otto Cuntz (eds.), *Patrum Nicaenorum Nomina Latine, Graece, Coptice, Syriace, Arabice, Armeniace* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1898)), and Basil, at least, was dead.

Nonetheless, the list is still likely to provide

end p.43

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

valuable information, once one sets aside the assumption that everything Athanasius of Alexandria says is always entirely straightforward.

In 356, during his third exile from Alexandria, Athanasius wrote the following passage, in which he includes among a long list of the 'orthodox' five of the names on Philostorgius' list of the 'Arian-minded':

So if these writings had come from the orthodox—if they had come from...Leontius...of Cappadocia...or the great Meletius and Basil and Longinus and those with them from Armenia and Pontus, or...Amphion the confessor of Cilicia...or those who thought as these did, there would be nothing to be suspicious of in the writings, for apostolic men are straightforward and sincere in manner. (*Letter to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya* 8.4)

Meletius of Sebastopolis was a confessor, and Basil of Amaseia a martyr; Leontius of Caesarea, Longinus of Neocaesarea, and Amphion of Epiphaneia all signed the Nicene Creed. There is no difficulty, therefore, in Athanasius' calling them 'orthodox', particularly since they are evidently all safely dead. But that does not preclude their having been 'Arian-minded' at a certain period, nor does it argue that they would necessarily have supported

Athanasius in 356 had they still been alive. The same list includes the miracle-worker James of Nisibis, who was apparently claimed with equal confidence by the anti-Nicene side:<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Vaggione, *Eunomius*, 179–80.

he supported Eusebius of Caesarea at a synod in 328 which took stringent measures against the supporters of Eustathius of Antioch (also on Athanasius' 'orthodox' list), for example. The fact that Amphion of Epiphaneia voted with Ossius and the majority at the 324 synod of Antioch against Eusebius of Caesarea, Theodotus of Laodicea, and Narcissus of Neronias (as did another of Philostorgius' Arian-minded bishops, Tarcondimatus of Aegeai) shows only that he did not wish to share their fate; he, like James, supported Eusebius at the 328 synod (as did Tarcondimatus). Meletius of Sebastopolis, meanwhile, is spoken of in the most effusive terms by Eusebius of Caesarea.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Eusebius, *HE* VII.32.26–28.

It seems not unlikely that all of these bishops are being claimed by Athanasius' opponents in some context he wants implicitly to counteract without alluding to it directly.

If one allows, then, that Philostorgius' list may—indeed, must—actually refer to a time before Nicaea, since Basil of Amaseia died under Licinius,<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> See Ernst Honigsmann, *Patristic Studies*, Studi e Testi 173 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1953), 14–27.

and that Athanasius' conscription of five of its members to 'orthodoxy' should not be allowed to rule them out of court without further ado as supporters of Arius, we have a useful and largely persuasive list of nameable

end p.44

---



---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### **Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [45]-[49]

---

individuals who had some theological sympathy with Arius prior to late 324. This demands nothing more difficult than the assumption that the connection of the list with Nicaea itself was made by Philostorgius or his transmitter Nicetas, not the original source. Here is the list, with the provinces as given by Philostorgius:

Upper Libya: Sentianus of Boreion, Dachius of Beronike, Secundus of Tauchira, Zopyrus of Barke, Secundus of Ptolemais, Theonas of Marmarike

The Thebaid of Egypt: Melitius

Palestine: Patrophilus of Scythopolis, Eusebius of Caesarea

Phoenicia: Paulinus of Tyre

Cilicia: Narcissus of Irenopolis, Athanasius of Anazarbus, Amphion of Epiphaneia (emended from Amphion of Sidon in Phoenicia), Tarcondimatus of Aegeai

Cappadocia: Leontius of Caesarea, Longinus of Neocaesarea, Eulalius of Sebasteia

Pontus: Basil of Amaseia, Meletius of Sebastopolis

Bithynia: Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon, Eusebius of Nicomedia, nicknamed the Great.

This is still not, however, an exhaustive list of those who offered Arius some support before or during Nicaea. (It may perhaps be a list of those who *wrote* in support of him; all those bishops we know to have done so are on this list, and the rest would fit nicely into two or three local synods' worth.) Theodoret's names of those who, he says, were 'pleading the cause' (συνηγούμενοι) of Arius at Nicaea differ somewhat, though not altogether, from Philostorgius': 'A few whom I mentioned earlier and, in addition to them, Menophantus of Ephesus, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, Theognis, who was bishop of Nicaea itself, and Narcissus of Neronias...and along with these Theonas of Marmarike and Secundus of Ptolemais in Egypt, were speaking against the apostolic teachings' (HE I.7.14). Those of whom he made mention earlier are the seven bishops mentioned in Arius' letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia: the two Eusebii, Theodotus of Laodicea, Paulinus of Tyre, Athanasius of Anazarbus, Gregory of Berytus, and Aetius of Lydda.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Theodoret, HE I.5.5.

Of these thirteen, only Paulinus and Athanasius of Anazarbus were not present at Nicaea.

This takes us to twenty potential supporters of Arius at Nicaea, twenty-six in the period before it, including the active Lucianists, the six bishops who are known to have sent letters in Arius' support, and the seven whom he himself names. If we accept Rufinus' figure of seventeen bishops who actually gave



Arius some political support at Nicaea, then perhaps we might follow Athanasius so far as to assume that it was Leontius, Longinus, and Amphion who

end p.45

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

held back from doing so. This would give us the following nameable supporters of Arius before and during Nicaea, with the putative seventeen supporters at Nicaea in bold type:

Libya: Sentianus of Boreion, **Dachius of Beronike, Secundus of Tauchira, Zopyrus of Barke, Secundus of Ptolemais, Theonas of Marmarike**

Thebaid: Melitius<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> If this is meant for the schismatic rival bishop of Alexandria, Melitius of Lycopolis, his inclusion by Philostorgius as 'Arian-minded' seems contradicted by Epiphanius' claim that he intervened *against* Arius (*Pan* 68.4.1). Nonetheless, he may still in the complex Alexandrian politicking before Nicaea have changed sides at some point, as Colluthus evidently did, particularly since his followers made common cause with Arius' friends after Athanasius' election.

Palestine: **Eusebius of Caesarea, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, Aetius of Lydda**

Phoenicia: Paulinus of Tyre, **Gregory of Berytus**

Syria: **Theodotus of Laodicea**

Cilicia: Athanasius of Anazarbus, Amphion of Epiphaneia, **Narcissus of Irenopolis, Tarcondimatus of Aegeai**

Cappadocia: Leontius of Caesarea

Diospontus: Basil of Amaseia

Pontus Polemoniacus: Longinus of Neocaesarea

Armenia: Meletius of Sebastopolis, **Eulalius of Sebasteia**

Asia: **Menophantus of Ephesus**

Bithynia: **Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon, Eusebius of Nicomedia.**

The pattern of support for Arius among those listed above is as variegated as that of the Lucianists. The Libyans showed him more loyalty than any. They seem to have had little if any interest in politicking with the likes of Eusebius of Nicomedia, however, and are absent from Serdica, although some of them may have attended at Tyre, and they rejoin the debate in later years.

The most politically active otherwise are a knot of bishops from Palestine, Phoenicia, Syria, and Cilicia: Eusebius of Caesarea, Paulinus of Tyre, Theodotus of Laodicea, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, and Narcissus of Neronias. The first three are close friends: the bishop of Caesarea dedicated books to each of the others, and spoke highly of them in his published works. Yet they varied, or at least wavered at different points, in their attitudes to the Arius affair. Paulinus seems to have been reluctant to become involved, whereas Eusebius was initially zealous, although they can both be found joining with Patrophilus of Scythopolis to allow Arius to continue his ministry just over

the border into Palestine once he has been expelled from Alexandria.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Sozomen, *HE* I.15.11 (= *Urk* 10).

Eusebius of Caesarea, Theodotus, and Narcissus of Neronias all accepted

end p.46

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

provisional condemnation at the 324 synod of Antioch rather than betray their theological principles (Narcissus can pretty much always be found at the forefront of the anti-Nicene political scene, as far as 356 at least), but they all signed up to the Nicene Creed a few months later. Theodotus attracted a strange letter from Constantine after the banishment of Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis, for whatever reason, warning him against imitating their conduct for fear of attracting the same punishment,<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *Urk* 28.

but we do not otherwise see much of him after Nicaea. Patrophilus of Scythopolis, meanwhile, carries on politicking for years, teaming up with Acacius of Caesarea after Eusebius' death, through all Acacius' theological vagaries, but he also avoids potential trouble by absenting himself from the Antioch synod of 324 and from Serdica, as well as Seleucia in 359.

The question of Paulinus' post-Nicene political role is complicated by the difficulty in determining when exactly he became bishop of Antioch, as we shall see. But the most interesting member of this group remains Eusebius of Caesarea, the Scripture scholar and inventor of church history, the sincerity of whose Christian beliefs is palpable. He was heavily involved in the politics of the post-Nicene period until his death in 339, including the depositions of Eustathius of Antioch, Athanasius of Alexandria, and Marcellus of Ancyra. Yet it is not unlikely that he concealed this fact from himself as much as he concealed it from the readers of his *Life of Constantine*, for it was against all of his principles of church unity and respect for the major sees. It is likely that he felt nervous of and ambiguous towards Eusebius of Nicomedia from early on: Eusebius makes no appearance in the *Ecclesiastical History*, and even Lucian of Antioch is treated with a certain lack of warmth, despite his glorious martyrdom.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Eusebius, *HE* VIII.13.2, IX.6.3.

But Eusebius of Caesarea acted in concert with his namesake from the time of Nicaea onward, even if he could so little make sense to himself of what he was doing that he gave up writing church history altogether.

One last nameable figure at Nicaea who might have been expected to be part of the pro-Arian alliance is the Cilician bishop Macedonius of Mopsuestia. Macedonius was fairly active in the years after Nicaea: he was one of the Mareotis commission investigating the dirty deeds of Athanasius for the synod of Tyre in 335, one of the addressees of Julius of Rome's pained letter after the Dedication Synod at Antioch of 341, and one of those who brought the 'Long-winded' creed to the West in 345, though he was not one of those condemned by the Westerners at Serdica.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> 'Long-winded' is Richard Vaggione's apt translation of Athanasius' dismissive if accurate term for this creed ('Machrostichos', 'many-lined') in *Syn* 26.1 (Vaggione, *Eunomius*, 70).

He is certainly to be found among the signatories to the Nicene Creed, but he

does not appear by name in any of the lists of those who were active on Arius' behalf before or during Nicaea. He may have been one of Rufinus' seventeen, but the other

end p.47

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

candidates seem better attested; he should probably therefore be counted as one of those in the theological orbit of the pro-Arian alliance, rather than one of those who were active in it at this stage.

Finally, having looked at the variety of the support Arius attracted and the names and numbers that can be pinned down, we should look at Arius' general claim that 'all those across the East say that God precedes the Son without beginning', and so 'they have become anathema, except for

Philogonius and Hellanicus and Macarius, heretical, uncatechized folk.'<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Urk* 1.3 (p. 2.5–7 Opitz).

This is, of course, a claim of theological sympathy, not necessarily of political support, but the extent to which it shades into the latter is worth some investigation.

The first step is to determine the extent, geographically speaking, of the claim Arius is making: what does he actually mean by 'East'? The sees of the nine bishops cited by name in this passage are all from the four large coastal provinces of Palestine, Phoenicia, Syria, and Cilicia which form the heart of the civil diocese of Oriens, so even though Arius probably intends his designation to cover the whole civil diocese (minus the Egyptian provinces), including the bishops of Mesopotamia, Arabia, and Isauria, it is likely that it is the bishops of these four large coastal provinces of whom he is primarily thinking.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> These are the names of the other provinces of the Diocese of Oriens as attested at Nicaea; the Verona list includes also the provinces of Osrhoene (part of Mesopotamia at Nicaea), Augusta Libanensis (part of Phoenice), and Augusta Euphratensis (part of Syria). The organization of provinces seems to have changed at least once, if not twice, between Verona and Nicaea, as Licinius' imperial boundaries shrank and Constantine's grew; it is therefore difficult to pin down the arrangement at a given moment between the two.

This corresponds closely, as we shall see, to the area from which most support was given in later years to those who had belonged to the old pro-Arian alliance.

The level of political support that could be garnered around the time of Nicaea, all things being equal, from these bishops is attested by some unusually good evidence. We have lists of bishops from these provinces<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Antioch 324: Palestine, Arabia, Phoenicia, Coele Syria, Cilicia, and some from Cappadocia (*Urk* 18.3); Antioch 328: Coele Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Cilicia, Isauria.

who attended three synods in under four years: the 324 synod of Antioch, led by Ossius of Corduba and Eustathius, which provisionally deposed Theodotus of Laodicea, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Narcissus of Neronias; the 325 Council of Nicaea; and the synod of Antioch led by Eusebius of Caesarea which passed twenty-five canons, which I would date to late 328 (and which must have taken place within a year or two of that date).<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Lists of those who attended these three synods are given in the Appendix as Tables 1, 2, and 3.

At least in the case of Antioch 324 and Nicaea, some coercion was brought to bear on the final result: not to sign the Nicene creed risked deposition, in the case of 'those who were suspected of heresy'; not to sign at Antioch, in the face of Ossius' authority, probably also risked condemnation. But in the case of the 328 synod of Antioch, it was the former allies of Arius who had the upper

end p.48

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

hand; any previously covert supporter of Arius could vote there untrammelled, along with any bishop who felt himself to be neutral in the whole affair. It was an important synod, too, because it was due to elect the next new bishop of Antioch. The number of bishops who voted at that synod should therefore be the maximum possible political support for Arius from these provinces.

The canonical letter of this synod was signed by 33 bishops, of whom at least 27 can be identified with bishops who attended at Nicaea.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> It is extremely tempting to emend 'Aetherius' to 'Aetius' (of Lydda), since Constantine's address to what must have been the leaders of this synod includes him (Eusebius, *VC* III.62.1). The mistake would have to have been in an early Greek version of the letter, however, since both the Syriac and the Latin have Aetherius. Eduard Schwartz does not make the identification, but assumes instead that Aetius left before the canons were signed (see Eduard Schwartz, *Gesammelte Schriften* [ed. Walther Eltester and Hans-Dietrich Altendorf], iii. *Zur Geschichte des Athanasius* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1959), 216–21).

All but three of these were from the provinces of Syria, Cilicia, Phoenicia, and Palestine. This is as compared with the 55 bishops (40 or so from the four main provinces, around 15 from the rest) who voted against Arius and his allies at the (professedly hastily-convened) 324 synod of Antioch, and the 86 (59 from Arius' main provinces and 27 from Arabia, Mesopotamia, Cyprus, and Isauria) who signed the Nicene Creed. These figures suggest a healthy alignment on the part of the 'East' with Arius' theological allies when the opportunity is there, but not an overwhelming one. Clearly it was not merely Ossius who was keeping the majority even of these bishops from offering the pro-Arian alliance their backing.

From this survey, the broad outlines of Arius' support before and going into Nicaea have, I hope, become clear. Eight bishops—Eusebius of Nicomedia, Maris of Chalcedon, Theognis of Nicaea, Eusebius of Caesarea, Paulinus of Tyre, Theodotus of Laodicea, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, and Narcissus of Neronias—are consistently involved in politicking on Arius' behalf, whatever their occasional reluctance, and all of them will continue to be politically engaged after Nicaea. Another ten were prepared to speak in favour of Arius' theological views at Nicaea, and two of these, Secundus of Ptolemais and Theonas of Marmarique, were prepared to be sent into exile for their beliefs. Seven more gave Arius such support at some point before Nicaea that their names have come down to us. Beyond these was a wider level of theological support which Arius and his friends did not succeed in converting into political support at this stage in the controversy.

But what is not always recognized is that all of this support comes from the

same geographical areas, above all Bithynia, Cilicia, and Libya (which never showed any strong counteractive support for Arius' opponents, as we shall see), and then also Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine (which were all strongly contested between the two sides). The incumbents of the capitals of Asia, Cappadocia, Diospontus, and Pontus Polemoniacus all show some rather more half-hearted support, without any apparent backing from the rest

[end p.49](#)

---

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [50]-[54]

---

of their provinces, as do two bishops from 'Armenia' (which seems to be a single province at Nicaea).<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See Honigsmann, 'Liste original', 46.

But most of Asia Minor, Egypt, and the Greek-speaking regions of continental Europe show no support at all for Arius at this stage. And these are the regions which will show support in the future, both political and theological, for the heirs of the alliance which supported Alexander of Alexandria.

#### (ii) Alexander's allies

We have a number of sources which point to the level of explicit support on which Alexander, in his turn, could draw before and during Nicaea, and which give names and provinces for those who backed him. These include Arius' letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia (once again), the two encyclical letters sent out by Alexander himself, generally called by their opening words *Henos Somatos* and *He Philarchos* (*Urk* 4b and *Urk* 14), Marcellus' *Letter to Julius of Rome*, a fragment of Eustathius quoted by Theodoret which describes his disappointment at the Council, and the version of *He Philarchos* generally titled the *Tome* of Alexander which survives in Syriac (*Urk* 15). In addition, we have the Syriac letter from the 324 synod of Antioch (*Urk* 18), the fragment of a letter of Constantine moving the coming Great Synod from Ancyra to Nicaea (*Urk* 20), and the Nicene bishop-lists themselves.

Constantine's fragmentary letter and a passing reference in the letter of the 324 synod of Antioch together show that the 'Great and Priestly Synod' which eventually met at Nicaea had originally been planned for Ancyra. As various scholars have noted, this must imply that Marcellus was involved in some way in the negotiations before Nicaea.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> For example, Logan, 'Councils', 428-40.

Marcellus' letter to Julius of Rome in 341 speaks of a group of theologians who have written to Julius against Marcellus, a group 'whom I refuted at Nicaea'. Julius reports the Roman deacons Vito and Vicentius as confirming that Marcellus spoke against 'the heresy of the Arians' at Nicaea.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 32.

Marcellus' involvement with the pro-Alexander alliance both before and during Nicaea seems thus assured, despite his absence from the pre-Nicene documents in general.

Arius, in the same letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia which lists names of those who think as he does, adds the names of three bishops of the East who, he is aware, disagree with him: Philogonius of Antioch, Hellanicus of Tripoli, and Macarius of Jerusalem (*Urk* 1.3). Arius must know this piece of information either because he has heard it from friends of his among their provincial

colleagues in Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine, or because they have already written to Alexander against him. Either way, not just neutral but active disagreement is implied.

end p.50

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

The involvement in the pro-Alexander alliance before and during Nicaea of Philogonius' successor at Antioch, Eustathius, previously bishop of Beroea, is also clear. The letter of the Synod of Antioch, in which his name follows Ossius' at the head of the list of signatories, bears witness to his central role after Philogonius' death in the pre-Nicene manoeuvrings, and his account of Nicaea itself shows that he thinks of himself as one of the leading opponents of the group he refers to as 'those around Eusebius' and the 'Ariomaniacs'.

Four more names should probably be included with question-marks: Asclepas of Gaza, Euphratation of Balanea, Alexander of Byzantium, and Eutropius of Adrianople. Asclepas, Euphratation, and Eutropius were deposed in the years after Nicaea, according to Athanasius, because they were known to 'hate the heresy' [of Arius and his supporters], or in Eutropius' case, to disagree with Eusebius of Nicomedia.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 5.

Alexander, meanwhile, prefers death to communicating with Arius in Athanasius' colourful account of Arius' exit.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Athanasius, *Mort Ar* 3.

Euphratation seems to have had an exchange of letters with Eusebius of Caesarea in the period before Nicaea, since a fragment survives of a letter from the latter to the former explaining his claim that the Father pre-exists the Son (*Urk* 3.1), while Asclepas made common cause with Athanasius and Marcellus at Serdica. There is no direct evidence, however, that either took an active role in supporting Alexander before Nicaea. Eutropius of Adrianople, meanwhile, was a long-standing friend of Eustathius of Beroea/Antioch: we know him mainly as the dedicatee of Eustathius' anti-Origenist work *On the Witch of Endor*. We can guess from the praise Eustathius heaps on him that Eutropius' theology was reasonably close to his own, self-consciously anti-Origenist and ill-disposed towards that of Eusebius of Caesarea and other defenders of Origen, as well as towards Eusebius of Nicomedia, but Eutropius did not attend Nicaea at all, or at least did not sign there, and nor did Alexander.

If we leave these four aside as not proven to be members of the alliance at this point, this gives us six nameable episcopal members of the pro-Alexander alliance in the period before Nicaea: Alexander of Alexandria, Philogonius of Antioch, Macarius of Jerusalem, Hellanicus of Tripoli, Eustathius of Beroea, then Antioch, and Marcellus of Ancyra. (Ossius of Corduba can be left aside for present purposes, since he does not represent a lasting Eastern ecclesiastical power-base.) To these we should also add the significant figure of Athanasius, though he was still a deacon at this point, if we accept him as the author of *Henos Somatos*.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *Henos Somatos* and *He Philarchos* cannot be by the same author, so great are the differences in their style and theology, and *Henos Somatos* shows great affinity with known works of Athanasius. For the full case, see G. C. Stead, 'Athanasius' Earliest Written Work', *JTSNS* 39 (1988), 76–91.



The theology of the seven, as is generally acknowledged, was very disparate.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> See e.g. Manlio Simonetti, *La Crisi Ariana nel IV Secolo*, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 11 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1975), 43–76.

Because the importance we ascribe to the theological differences between them on the one hand, and what they had theologically in common on the other, strongly affects our views on whether the bond between them might reasonably have outlasted the synod of Nicaea itself, it is worth looking at these differences and agreements in some detail, before going on to consider the question of the wider support that this alliance attracted.

Alexander's theology was the most clearly Origenist of the seven.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> For the view that the controversy was at its origin a debate within the Origenist tradition, see Simonetti, *Crisi*, 55–60.

He and Arius could have agreed on a good deal; he and Eusebius of Caesarea or Asterius on even more. Almost every expression he uses is implicitly or explicitly attacked by Marcellus of Ancyra. But, despite this, on the crucial question of the Son's eternity, a great gulf has opened up between Alexander and his fellow Origenists of the pro-Arian alliance, while he and Marcellus find themselves standing together, despite their differences, on the other side of the divide.

The agreements in terminology of Alexander and his opponents against Marcellus are legion. He can speak of Father and Son as two πράγματα, two in ὑπόστασις, two φύσεις.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Two entities, two in being (hypostases), two natures. Two entities, *Urk* 14.15 (p. 22.7 Opitz); Father and Son are τὰ ἐν ὑποστάσει δύο φύσεις (natures two in hypostasis), *Urk* 14.38 (p. 25.23 Opitz); the Logos has his own distinctive hypostasis, *Urk* 14.16 (p. 22.10 Opitz).

He takes the tag 'First-born of all creation' of the cosmic rather than the incarnate Christ,<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Urk* 14.24 (p. 23.21–22 Opitz): the tag is from Col. 1: 15.

as he does 'from the womb before the morning star I gave birth to you'.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Ps. 109 (110): 3, applied in *Urk* 14.34 (p. 24.31–p. 25.1 Opitz) to 'the natural (φυσικὴν) Sonship of the Father's bringing to birth'.

The Logos as 'unvarying image of the Father' is one of his favourite terms;<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Ἀπαράλλακτος εἰκὼν occurs in *Urk* 14.38 (p. 25.25 Opitz) and 14.47 (p. 27.14 Opitz); εἰκὼν is also used with reference to the Son (without ἀπαράλλακτος) in 14.27 (p. 24.4–5 Opitz) and 14.52 (p. 28.5 Opitz).

the Son is also τέλειος (perfect, complete).<sup>52</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Urk* 14.29 (p. 24.11 Opitz) and 14.47 (p. 27.14 Opitz).

The Son stands in the middle between the uncreated Father and created things.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *Urk* 14.44 (p. 26.25–27 Opitz).

The generation of the Son by the Father is incomprehensible: 'Who can declare his generation?'<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> The tag from Isa. 53: 8 appears in *Urk* 14.21 (p. 23.5–6 Opitz) and 14.46 (p. 27.7–8 Opitz).

All of these expressions are accepted and used by the Eusebian party, and all are objected to by Marcellus, as we have already seen.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Probably including the last (Isa. 53: 8), which was applied to the incarnate Christ by Athanasius (*De Incarnatione* 37 (p. 224 Thomson)), though no interpretation of the phrase by Marcellus survives.

Both Eusebius of Nicomedia and Asterius speak of two natures, Eusebius saying 'entirely other in nature and power [is the one begotten from the Unbegotten]',<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre, *Urk* 8.3 (p. 16.4–5 Opitz).

and

end p.52

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Asterius explaining this by speaking of 'the nature of the Father and the nature of the Begotten'.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Marcellus, Re 30 Kl 35 S/V 9 P 3 = Asterius, fr. 8 Vinzent = *CM* I.4.11.

Eusebius of Caesarea speaks of 'two Πράγματα' (as indeed does Athanasius), as part of the list 'two οὐσίαι (essences) and πράγματα and δυνάμεις (powers)',<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Two *ousiai*, two *pragmata*, and two *dunameis* are securely attested in the fragment of the letter to Euphrat of Balanea cited in Eusebius, *CM* I.4.41 = Marcellus, Re 72 Kl 82 S/V 117 P 78 = *Urk* 3.4 (p. 6.1–2 Opitz). Two *theoi* is added to the list in Marcellus' report of the homily Eusebius gave while passing through Ancyra: Marcellus, Re 73 Kl 83 S/V 120 P 81 = *CM* I.4.46. Eusebius of course could have spluttered indignantly that he does not believe in two Gods (as he does in *ET* II.23.1). But he is by no means averse to the phrase δεύτερος θεός (see for example the references collected in Thomas A. Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism*, 2 vols., Patristic Monograph Series 8 (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1979), i, 47 n. 2). It is not inconceivable that in order to make a particular point he could, like Origen in *Dial Heracl* 2, have replaced that phrase with the much more provocative δύοθεο.

(the other two of which terms Alexander and Athanasius would have indignantly denied, it should be said); Marcellus is unconvinced. Two (or three) ὑποστάσεις (beings) would be ascribed by all the Eusebian party, so far as we know: certainly Asterius,<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. Marcellus, fr. Re 60 K 69 S/V 50 P 74 = Asterius, fr. 61 Vinzent.

Eusebius of Caesarea,<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> See e.g. Eusebius, *ET* I.10.4.

and the Dedication Creed<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> 'Three in hypostasis' (Athanasius, *Syn* 23.6).

make them explicit.

The same is true of the Colossians 1: 15 phrase 'the image of the invisible

God'. 'Ἀπαράλλακτος εἰκὼν τοῦ πατρὸς (unvarying image of the Father) is one of Alexander's favourite ways of describing the Son's relationship to the Father; he interprets εἰκὼν, image, in the sense of ἑσόπτρον (mirror),<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *Urk* 14.39 (p. 26.2–3 Opitz), picking up the language of Wis. 7: 26. combining it with the Hebrews text χαρακτήρ της ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ (imprint of his being; 1: 3).<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> *Urk* 14.28 (p. 24.5–6 Opitz), 14.48 (p. 27.18–19 Opitz), 14.52 (p. 28.5 Opitz). Asterius is also happy to call the Word 'unvarying image',<sup>64</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Marcellus, Re 85 Kl 96 S/V 113 P 62 = Asterius, fr. 10 Vinzent. much to Philostorgius' disgust,<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* II.15 (p. 25.25–27 Bidez). as does the Dedication Creed.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 23.3. In the same way, τέλειος, perfect, appears in both Asterius' letter<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Marcellus, Re 85 Kl 96 S/V 113 P 62 = Asterius, fr. 10 Vinzent. and the Dedication Creed.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 23.3. For the relation of this creed to Asterius, see below. 'Who can declare his generation?' as a get-out clause when one has written oneself into an exegetical corner is also employed by both Eusebii,<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Isa. 53: 8 appears, for example, in the programmatic introduction to Eusebius of Caesarea's *Historia Ecclesiastica* (I.2.2); see Hanson, *Search*, 50, on Eusebius' fondness for the text. Eusebius of Nicomedia must be influenced by the Isaiah tag when he describes the beginning of the Logos as οὐκ ὄντων (Urk 8.3 (p. 16.6 Opitz) ).

after already (as also in Alexander's case) being themselves very specific about various aspects of that generation.

Alexander is at his most interesting, perhaps, when he adverts to the great void which seems to have opened up in early fourth-century consciousness between the Father and the created order. 'The inexperienced ones in their ignorance do not realize how great must be the distance between the Father

end p.53

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

who is ingenerate and the things created by him out of non-being, rational and also irrational. Of which the mediating nature of the only-begotten, through which the Father of God the Word made all things out of non-being, was born out of the very being of the Father (ἐκ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ὄντος πατρὸς).'<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> *Urk* 14.44 (p. 26.25–28 Opitz).

It is, in fact, precisely that great distance between God and created things which is driving the whole theological dispute: more or less everyone in the early fourth century agrees on it. This had not been a major problem in Origen's thought, since God, the Word, and creation were all eternal, and the Word was eternally generated. The mediating Word therefore filled rather

than bridged the gap between God and creation, being both like and unlike the Father, both like and unlike creation. But since creation is no longer thought to be eternal in the early fourth century, this sort of mediator cannot work any more; the mediating Word must mediate from one side or the other of the gulf between what comes to be and what is eternal.

Crucially, Alexander's Word mediates from the Father's side of the gulf, as inseparably united to the Father. Alexander never uses the word οὐσία (essence), but in saying that the Son is ἴδιος υἱός (proper Son) of the Father, and that the Word is the Father's δύναμις (power), he expresses their organic link: they are both necessary entities, who naturally exist together and cannot exist without one another, like the sun and its rays. The sun's rays may reach the earth, but it is the sun they belong to; the Son may act on creation, but he is proper to the Father.

It is for this reason that although Alexander seems to have so much terminologically and exegetically in common with Eusebius of Caesarea, Asterius, and their friends, and so little with Marcellus, it is with Marcellus that he sides, and Marcellus with him. For Marcellus, too, believes the Son is on the Father's side of the divide, not creation's. Three crucial propositions they both affirm demonstrate this. First of all, the Word is not from non-being (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων), as Arius and Athanasius of Anazarbus claim, or even from not being (ἐκ τοῦ μη ὄντος), as Eusebius of Caesarea claims.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Eusebius marvels that anyone could deny the claim 'The one who is begot the one who is not' (ὁ ὢν τὸν μὴ ὄντα ἐγένετο): *Urk* 7.4 (p. 15.3 Opitz).

Second, the Word is eternal, never having had a beginning of being. Third, the Word, or the Son, is the Father's own, proper to the Father, and not to be separated from him.

The Son is 'neither from non-being, nor was there ever when he was not': ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ οὔτε ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων γεγενῆσθαι οὔτε ἦν ποτε οὔτε οὐκ ἦν, says Alexander, taking as proof-text John 1: 18, ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός, ὁ ὢν ἐν τοῦ πατρὸς κόλπον (The only-begotten Son, the one who is, in the bosom of the Father', as Alexander construes it).<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> *Urk* 14.15 (p. 22.4–6 Opitz).

Marcellus, in his Letter to

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [55]-[59]

Julius of 341, affirms all this: he rules out προϋπάρχειν τοῦ υἱοῦ τῶν πατέρων (the Father pre-exists the Son), ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς καὶ τὰ πάντα (from the Father as all things also are), and ἦν ποτε ἥτε οὐκ ἦν (there was when he was not), and affirms that the Son, the Word, is ἀεὶ συνυπάρχων τῷ πατρί, μηδεπώποτε ἀρχὴν τοῦ εἶναι ἐσχηκώς (always existing together with the Father, never having had a beginning of being).<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> *Letter to Julius* (p. 126.2–5 and 9–10 Vinzent).

In *Against Asterius*, he insists in exegesis of Exodus 3: 14 that the Son as well as the Father must be ὁ ὢν, the one who is.

Romans 8: 32, 'He did not spare his own Son', is the source of Alexander's insistence on the Son as ἴδιος υἱός, proper Son, of the Father, in contradistinction to the sons who are not proper but adopted.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Urk* 14.32–33 (p. 24.25–28 Opitz).

No one scriptural source for Marcellus' use of the term ἴδιος survives, but it was clearly central to his thought: 'Since it was impossible to know God otherwise, he teaches human beings to know him through his own Word', he says, discussing in *Against Asterius* Matt. 11: 27, 'No one recognizes...the Father except the Son, and whoever the Son wants to reveal him to'. The idea has an even more central place in the *Letter to Julius*: 'This one is Son, this one is Power, this one is Wisdom, this one is proper and true Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, undivided Power of God, through whom all things which came to be were made.'<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> *Letter to Julius* (p. 126.13–15 Vinzent).

Alexander and Marcellus, in other words, perhaps the members of the Nicene coalition whose theology has least in common, still agree on the key doctrinal claims dividing the theologians of their time. It is noteworthy that Alexander would have continued to agree with Marcellus against every 'Eastern' creed issued over the latter's lifetime, for they all leave room for a denial of some sort of the Son's eternity.

Philogonius of Antioch, Hellanicus of Tripoli, and Macarius of Jerusalem have left no record of their theology in their own words. What Arius has to say about them is nonetheless telling. In the passage in which he refers to them, which changes to plural subjects halfway through, he tells us, 'Since [all the bishops across the East] say that God precedes the Son without beginning, they have become anathema, except Philogonius and Hellanicus and Macarius, heretical, uncatechized folk, who say that the Son is, some an utterance, some a putting-forth, some a co-ingenerate (οἱ μὲν ἐρυγὴν, οἱ δὲ προβολήν, οἱ δὲ συν ἀγέννητον).'<sup>76</sup>

It seems that the irritating thought of 'heretical, uncatechized folk' has caused Arius' mind to wander slightly from his syntax, and begin to characterize the theology of his opponents in general, beyond the three bishops he has mentioned. Nonetheless, it is likely that what he set out to do was to characterize the theology of the three bishops he mentions in these three

end p.55

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

ways. Assuming that there is some real theological position behind each of his caricatures, Philogonius' must be based on exegesis of Psalm 44 (45): 2, 'My heart has brought forth a good Word (ἐξηρεύξατο ἡ καρδίᾱ μου λόγον ἀγαθόν)', a text Marcellus also uses. This may suggest a theology of an internalized and externalized Word (λόγος ἐνδιόθετος and λόγος προφορικός);<sup>77</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Though, as Mark Edwards has pointed out, these terms are not actually particularly common ('Clement of Alexandria and His Doctrine of the Logos', *Vig Chr* 54 (2000), 159–77, at 160–4).

otherwise, it is likely to be an attempt to rule out a material or separative interpretation of the word 'beget', 'give birth' (γεν ν ἡω/ ἐκγεν ν ἡω) in passages such as Psalm 109 (110): 3, 'From the womb before the morning star I gave birth to you'. Either way, it suggests Philogonius' theological position was quite close to Marcellus'. Origen criticizes those who use this passage to argue for a Word without its own hypostasis, something Marcellus certainly taught.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Origen, *Comm in Johannem* I.24.151.

If the three terms are to be applied strictly to the three bishops, Hellanicus would then have a theology that could be nastily described by the Gnostic word *probole*, 'putting-forth', or 'emanation'. This is a problematic word to interpret, because it could imply either something that stays 'put forth', something that becomes a separate entity, or something that juts out but stays attached, which would be travesties of two quite different theological positions. The biblical interpretation behind whatever Arius is designating by this term may be of passages which actually use the word ἐξαποστέλλω (send forth) or ἐξέρχομαι (go forth), such as Psalm 106 (107): 20 and Isaiah 2: 3 (both of which are quoted by Marcellus). This could be a travesty of the images, common since the early third century and used by Athanasius among others, of the sun putting forth a ray of light, or a spring of water issuing in a stream.

The theology of Alexander is itself somewhat open to the charge of teaching that the Son is a συν ἀγέν ν ἦτον, a co-ingenerate—he struggles to defend himself against it. Origen's doctrine of eternal generation, which would have put paid to this problem, had unaccountably been lost sight of for the time being. If Macarius of Jerusalem could be accused of teaching this, he probably taught something close to Alexander's 'always Father, always Son, Father and Son together' (*Urk* 1.2 (p. 2.1 Opitz) ). Arius is certainly explicit that all three refused to allow that the Father precedes the Son.



The theologies represented by these three charges are very different, and Arius seems to view them all as equally distasteful. His change to plural subjects in ascribing them argues that all three of them are held by whole groups of people as well as the bishops he names. Arius gives us no hint that any of them is more widespread than any other, or worse than any other. The sort of theology Marcellus espouses does not stand out at this point as any

end p.56

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

more peculiar or isolated than that of Alexander, in Arius' mind. If Marcellus' theology is basically the same as that of Philogonius, bishop of Antioch for most of the period of the early controversy, and a key figure in garnering support for Alexander against his enemies, it is far from clear that anyone found it self-evidently extreme in comparison with what Alexander believed—or even that Alexander himself did.

We should now consider the theology of Philogonius' successor in the see of Antioch, previously the bishop of Beroea in Syria. Eustathius ought to be a crucial figure to the understanding of the pre-Nicene theological climate; unfortunately, only enough survives of his work to enable us to form a few general and extremely tantalizing ideas of his thought.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Fragments are collected in Michel Spanneut, *Recherches sur les écrits d'Eustathe d'Antioche avec une édition nouvelle des fragments dogmatiques et exégétiques*, Mémoires et Travaux publiés par des professeurs des Facultés Catholiques de Lille 55 (Lille: Facultés Catholiques, 1948) and in *Eustathii Antiocheni, Patris Nicaeni, Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, ed. José H. Declerck, CCSG 51 (Turnhout: Brepols/Leuven: University Press, 2002). The important fragments in Theodoret were re-edited in *Theodoret: Eranistes*, ed. Gerard H. Ettlinger (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

He seems to have been part of a group of self-conscious anti-Origenists which included Methodius of Olympus and Eutropius of Adrianopole (both of whom, the former posthumously, he praises in *On the Witch of Endor*, which is dedicated to the latter), and was a writer of some literary pretension. He wrote a great deal, so far as we can tell; the short work *On the Witch of Endor* survives in its entirety, and fragments survive from some fifteen others, including a work *Against the Arians* in at least eight books.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> See Spanneut, 73. Declerck (pp. cxxxviii–cxxxix) distinguishes fourteen works; CPG 3350–3369 lists nineteen titles for Eustathian texts classed as authentic, but there is probably some duplication.

He must have been a formidable opponent of Arius and his allies, from the fragment which survives of his description of Nicaea, with whose failure to condemn his enemies he was clearly extremely unhappy. His eight books *Against the Arians* must have been the major anti-Arian/Eusebian theological work of the twenties, whichever side of Nicaea they are dated, as Marcellus' *Against Asterius* was of the thirties and Athanasius' *Orations Against the Arians* of the forties. Marcellus, in particular, seems to have carried forward a number of his ideas.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Alastair H. B. Logan, interestingly, suggests that it was Marcellus, longer in a more influential see, who influenced Eustathius rather than vice versa ('Councils', 443 n. 76). This is, of course, possible, but since Eustathius was friends with Methodius, who died c.311, and seems himself to have died before 337, it is likely that he was the older of the two, and there is no evidence that they knew one



another before Eustathius went to Antioch.

His name is usually coupled with Marcellus' (usually alongside the word 'extreme'), and they certainly had a number of important points in common: the designation of Father and Son as one hypostasis,<sup>82</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Eustathius, fr. 38 Spanneut = 88 Declerck.

the description of the Word as the δὴν αμῖς του θεου (power of God),<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Fr. 29 Spanneut = 76 Declerck.

the use of the term 'spirit'

end p.57

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

to describe the divine as opposed to the human in Christ,<sup>84</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Fr. 29 Spanneut = 76 Declerck.

the application of Proverbs 8: 22 ('The Lord created me the beginning of his ways for his works') to the man Jesus, and the teaching that the one who reigns in glory at the Father's right hand is in fact the man Jesus,<sup>85</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Fr. 60 Spanneut = 110 Declerck.

or slightly less divisively, that it is to Christ as human being, on behalf of human beings in general, that that glory is given.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Fr. 43 Spanneut = 93a Declerck.

But there are also important points of difference. Firstly, there is one point on which Eustathius' theology is closer to that of the Alexandrians: his description of the pre-incarnate Logos as 'image', with the man Jesus as 'image of the image':

For Paul did not say 'conformed to the Son of God', but 'conformed to the image of his Son', showing that the Son is one thing and his image is something else. For the Son, bearing the divine tokens of the Father's virtue, is image of the Father. Since also those who are born—like begotten from like—appear [to be] true images of their begetters. But the human being whom he wore is image of the Son.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Fr. 21 Spanneut = 68 Declerck.

Elsewhere, we see Adam's body described as the 'impressed likeness of the most divine image', the 'prototypical statue of God',<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Fr. 5 Spanneut = 61 Declerck.

which seems closer to Marcellus' usage, but in fact goes further than he does in adopting Irenaeus' view that it is the human body, not the soul or mind, which is in the image of God;<sup>89</sup>

<sup>89</sup> On the meaning of 'image' in Irenaeus, see Minns, *Irenaeus*, 59–61.

Marcellus makes a sharp distinction between the flesh of Christ, which is really the image of the invisible God, and the rest of human flesh, which is in the image of Christ's flesh.

It is not clear whether Eustathius is prepared to use the word *ousia* in the

sense of divine essence, either of Father or Son or both. There are only two genuine fragments which might reflect this usage, one surviving in Theodoret's *Eranistes*, the other in Latin translation in Gelasius' *On the two natures*. Theodoret quotes from Eustathius' exegesis of Proverbs 8: 22: 'The temple'—that is, the body—'suffers, but the *ousia* abides without spot.' This might mean 'the divine essence', but it might also mean merely 'that which is essential', that is, 'what it really is'.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Fr. 31 Spanneut = 78 Declerck.

The Gelasius fragment gives us '*Deus Verbum eandem quam Genitor portat imaginem, imago quippe existens divinae substantiae*' ('God the Word bears the same image as the Begetter, being, that is, the image of the divine essence'),<sup>91</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Fr. 44 Spanneut = 95 Declerck.

but this would seem not to be a very close translation of Eustathius' original, since it seems to suggest both Father and Son are images. If it is accurate, it would suggest surprisingly enough that Eustathius believed, like Asterius, that the Logos was the image of the divine *ousia* (or the *ousia* of God); but it seems more likely that the Greek original of

end p.58

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

'image of the divine essence' was χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως τοῦ θεοῦ, 'imprint of God's being' (echoing Heb. 1: 3).

Eustathius' main contribution to anti-Arian polemic, so far as we can tell from the extant fragments, was an insistence on two natures in Christ as a way of combating Arius' doctrine of the mutability of the Word. All the passages which ascribe weakness, emotion, and suffering to Christ, which (according to *He Philarchos*) Arius predicated of the Logos, Eustathius at length and explicitly ascribed to the ἄνθρωπος θεοφῶρος / *homo deifer* (God-bearing human being).<sup>92</sup>

<sup>92</sup> e.g., fr. 43 Spanneut = 93a Declerck.

The impression given by the extant fragments that this was Eustathius' main objection to Arius is probably exaggerated (most of these fragments do come from Theodoret, after all), but it cannot be ignored as a central feature of his theology.

In combating the doctrine of the mutability of the Logos, Eustathius developed a full theology of an aspect of Christ ignored by Alexander, Athanasius (on the whole), and so far as we can tell, all of Arius' allies: his soul. It could be unkindly argued that, as with so much Antiochene Christology, the soul of Christ in Eustathius' thought is primarily there not to show solidarity with us so much as to protect the immutability of the divine nature, but the following fragment, from the *Orations Against the Arians*, shows that this is not so: '*homo autem deum ferens, qui mortis passionem sponte censuit sustinere propter hominum utilitatem, palmam quidem et certaminis, ut ita dicendum sit, honorem, potestatem percepit et, ubi recipitur, gloriam, quam nequaquam prius habuerat*' ('but the God-bearing man, who thought to sustain the passion of death of himself for the benefit of human beings, received indeed the prize of the struggle, so to speak, and honour and power and, when it is received, glory, which he never had

previously').<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Fr. 43 Spanneut = 93a Declerck.

The incipient Nestorianism of this might be alarming, but it does show that Christ (in other words, Christ's soul) has work to do, a choice to make, merit to earn, and glory to receive in Eustathius' system in a way that Athanasius' enfleshed Logos does not; and in the way that Arius' enfleshed Logos problematically does.

Because his work survived largely in fifth-century citations, what we know best about Eustathius is his Christology; the references to his Trinitarian theology in the extant fragments are scanty. We know he spoke of one hypostasis;<sup>94</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Fr. 38 Spanneut = 88 Declerck.

in the case of φύσις, when he is not using it to distinguish the two natures in Christ, his usage is, like Athanasius', ambiguous: the Son is 'by nature' Son of God (by nature Son or by nature God?),<sup>95</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Fr. 35 Spanneut = 85 Declerck.

the one anointing is 'by nature' θεός ἐκ θεοῦ γεννηθείς (born God by nature or born God from God by nature?). The Word is the Wisdom of God and the Power of God, the Son is image of the Father; the Son is pre-cosmic.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Frs. 30, 21, 19 Spanneut = 77, 68, 66 Declerck.

Whether Eustathius

end p.59

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [60]-[64]

would have said ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς ('from the essence of the Father') or *homoousios* ('of the same essence') of his own volition, he certainly defended *homoousios* after Nicaea—but then, so did Eusebius of Caesarea. He may be behind Nicaea's γεννῆται οὐ ποιηθέντα ('begotten, not made'), since he is one of the earliest to argue that the one excludes the other.

Eustathius may have enough in common with Marcellus to warrant the two of them being bracketed together, as they so often are. But their theologies have a very different feel. Both took their distance from Origen (without being able to escape him completely), both proclaim one hypostasis, both have their moments of Nestorianism. But Eustathius fits quite happily into the tradition of normal fourth-/fifth-century 'Antiochene' theology in general, with his two natures Christology and one divine hypostasis (Theodoret, after all, thinks that the Christian meaning of *hypostasis* as different from *ousia* is only a matter of convention).<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> See Theodoret, *Eranistes* I (p. 64.10–13 Ettlinger).

Marcellus, meanwhile, is the outstanding fourth-century representative of a rather different tradition, which has as much in common with the theological strand that would abut in Cyril of Alexandria as it does with that which was to be enthusiastically embraced by Theodoret of Cyrrhos.

No surviving fragments tell us explicitly that Eustathius believed in the Son's eternity, although since he believed in one hypostasis of Father and Son, it seems certain that he did. He certainly would have condemned the idea that the Son was from non-being, and would have insisted that he was proper to the Father and not to be divided from him. But it was the mutability of the Word—condemned by all of the others, certainly, but given a less centre-stage role—which seems above all to have engaged Eustathius—and certainly to have drawn a fuller answer from him than from any of the other anti-Arian allies.

In the case of Athanasius, in his early twenties at the outbreak of the controversy (if one adopts a shorter timescale than Opitz's), the extent to which he was theologically active before and during Nicaea is a matter of some dispute.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>98</sup> See Hanson, *Search*, 151 and 157, for the view that Athanasius was not the author of *Henos Somatos* and played no significant part during Nicaea.

I shall here accept the argument of Christopher Stead,<sup>99</sup>

<sup>99</sup> G. C. Stead, 'Athanasius' Earliest Written Work'.

developing the suggestion of J. H. Newman,<sup>100</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Newman, *Select Treatises of St. Athanasius*, 2nd edn. (1881), ii, 5.

that Athanasius was the author of *Henos Somatos*, and hence, presumably, very much theologically active before around the time of the Council. I would

also argue for an early dating for *Against the Pagans* and *On the Incarnation*: perhaps immediately on Athanasius' return from Nicaea, having been stimulated to think about the status of Christianity across the whole Eastern empire, intoxicated with the splendour of the Council, and fired up by its politics and by the debates

end p.60

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

between Christian and pagan philosophers.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>101</sup> This is Timothy Barnes's date for the work (*Athanasius*, 12–13). The traditional date of just before the outbreak of the controversy appears a little early, but the work seems (pace Khaled Anatolios) a little 'fey' and immature, for all its flashes of theological brilliance, for a date after Athanasius becomes bishop. For further discussion of the range of dates proposed for the work, see Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of his Thought*, Routledge Early Christian Monographs (London/New York: Routledge, 1998), 26–30.

This means we can reasonably draw on these works, too, for evidence of Athanasius' theological thought at the period immediately prior to Nicaea.

*Henos Somatos* gets to the heart of what, theologically, divides the two sides. *He Philarchos* condemned ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων (out of non-being), which Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia both taught, but not all of their allies did, by any means. *Henos Somatos* also condemns ὁ ὢν θεὸς τὸν μὴ ὄντα ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος πεποιήκε (the God who is made the one who is not out of that which is not),<sup>102</sup>

<sup>102</sup> *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.20 Opitz).

where τὸν μὴ ὄντα, the one who is not, is the Word, something all of Arius' allies, so far as we can tell, would have said. Eusebius of Caesarea marvelled that anyone could say anything else: since there can only be one ὁ ὢν (as there can only be one ὁ γέννητός), he complains, the Son *must* be ὁ μὴ ὢν.

<sup>103</sup>  
v.

<sup>103</sup> See Eusebius' letter to Alexander, *Urk* 7.4 (p. 15.2–6 Opitz). In Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* I.22.4, the proposition is put forward as a question representing one horn of a dilemma propounded by 'those around Arius from the teaching of Eusebius [of Nicomedia]'. Vinzent appropriates it for Asterius and numbers it fragment 44.

(Marcellus, as we have seen, is concerned to force his opponents to accept that this syllogism is incompatible with any reasonable exegesis of Exodus 3:

14.)<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> The Logos is ὁ θεὸς ὢν (Marcellus, Re 6 Kl 6 S/V 15 P 26); the flesh which the Word assumed is τὸ μὴ ὄν (Re 10 Kl 11 S/V 29 P 34).

*Henos Somatos* also condemns ἦν ποτε ἄτε οὐκ ἦν (there was when he was not), as *He Philarchos* had.

*Henos Somatos* avoids directly calling the Son the ἴδιος υἱός or ἴδιος λόγος of the Father, presumably as a concession to friendly theologians who might have difficulty with the term. (As Timothy Barnes points out, most of the theology of this letter consists of ruling out condemned propositions rather than articulating positive ones which might be cause for disagreement in their turn.)<sup>105</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 16.

However, Athanasius is happy enough to use such language in *Contra Arianos*, and what he says here comes fairly close to saying the same thing.

<sup>106</sup> See Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 102–7, for a fuller discussion of Athanasius' use of the term.

The position he condemns is that the Word is only called Word and Wisdom 'according to usage', having been itself made by God's own Word and Wisdom (γενόμενος καὶ αὐτὸς τῷ ἰδίῳ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγῳ καὶ τῇ ἐν τῷ θεῷ σοφίᾳ).

<sup>107</sup> *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.23–p. 8.1 Opitz).

This seems to be a position Marcellus has also encountered: he condemns several times the term καταχρηστικῶς ('according to usage') as applied to the Word by his opponents. Athanasius also condemns the proposition that the Word is 'foreign to and alien from and marked off from the essence of God', and that he is not 'by nature either the Father's

end p.61

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

true Word or true Wisdom'.

<sup>108</sup> *Urk* 4b.7–8 (p. 7.12 and p. 8.3–4 Opitz).

All these together come very close to declaring the Word ἰδιος λόγος τοῦ πατρὸς, as well as to declaring that he is not to be divided from the Father.

Elsewhere in the letter Athanasius uses language and arguments very similar to Alexander's, all as Scriptural as possible: the Son is the ἀπαύγασμα τοῦ πατρὸς (effulgence of the Father),

<sup>109</sup> *Urk* 4b.13 (p. 9.4 Opitz).

the perfect image (εἰκὼν τελεία, rather than ἀπαράλλακτος) of the Father;

<sup>110</sup> *Urk* 4b.13 (p. 9.3 Opitz).

to say that the one who is Word and Wisdom once did not exist is equivalent to saying God was once destitute of both.

<sup>111</sup> *Urk* 4b.13 (p. 9.4–6 Opitz).

The texts 'My heart has uttered a good word' (Ps. 44 (45): 2) and 'From the womb before the morning star I gave birth to you' (Ps. 109 (110): 3),

<sup>112</sup> The two texts appear together at *Urk* 4b.12 (p. 9.2–3 Opitz).

and 'I and the Father are one' (John 10: 30)

<sup>113</sup> *Urk* 4b.14 (p. 9.8 Opitz).

are all used in both letters in the same sense, to show that the Son is not from non-being, but from God.

But *Henos Somatos* uses a number of formulations which neither Alexander nor Marcellus uses, so far as we know. Firstly, Athanasius is not afraid to use the word οὐσία (essence), which neither Alexander nor Marcellus ever uses by choice, and comes as close as anyone does at this stage to using the term *homoousios*: he condemns the proposition that the Son is not ὁμοιος κατὰ τὸ οὐ

οὐκ ὡς πατρί (like the Father according to essence),<sup>114</sup>

<sup>114</sup> *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.21–22 Opitz).

as well as the proposition that the Logos is ἕνός τε καὶ ἄλλου ὁρίσματος καὶ ἀπεσχοῖν ἰσμεν ὅς· ἴτη-ς του-θεου- οὐκ ἰσμεν ὅς (foreign to and alien from and marked off from the essence of God).<sup>115</sup>

<sup>115</sup> *Urk* 4b.8 (p. 8.3–4 Opitz).

He also asks rhetorically how the one who is the perfect image of the Father could be ὁμοῖος τῷ οὐσίῳ του-πατρὸς (unlike the essence of the Father).<sup>116</sup>

<sup>116</sup> *Urk* 4b.13 (p. 9.3 Opitz).

These expressions are all likely to be ripostes to Eusebius of Nicomedia's letter to Paulinus of Tyre.

Athanasius is also prepared to use φύσις in a similarly ambiguous way, which excludes neither Alexander's two natures language nor Marcellus' 'one nature': he condemns the proposition that the Son is not 'by nature' (φύσει) the Father's true Logos or true Wisdom,<sup>117</sup>

<sup>117</sup> *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.22 Opitz).

and that he is changeable and alterable 'by nature', which would make him ἕν ὅς· ἴτη-ς του-θεου- οὐκ ἰσμεν ὅς (foreign to the essence of God).<sup>118</sup>

<sup>118</sup> *Urk* 4b.8 (p. 8.2–4 Opitz).

The letter avoids hypostasis language altogether.

Athanasius uses the Platonic language of theoria, seeing and knowing, frequently in this letter (as he does in *Against the Pagans* and *On the Incarnation*); one imagines that Alexander, at least, would have been very happy with this. As in the case of Alexander's Origenist mediator theology, however, the context has shifted: it is not we who do the seeing and knowing of the Father

end p.62

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

(according to *On the Incarnation* we no longer can), but the Son.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>119</sup> See *Urk* 4b.15 (p. 9.13–19 Opitz) and, negatively, *Urk* 4b.8 (p. 8.4–5 Opitz).

It is the reciprocal contemplation of Father and Son which has become vital; it is on their understanding of one another that the world's hope of salvation rests.

In cosmology, then, and in his understanding of the relationship between God and the Word, Athanasius agrees in the essentials with both Alexander and Marcellus, but he is in general rather closer to Alexander. It is worth looking at this point at another aspect of his theology, however, because in the matter of the economy, of what we would call soteriology, the affinities are otherwise. If we examine Athanasius' theology of salvation as it appears in *On the Incarnation*, we can see Athanasius use very different language and a very different philosophical approach to describe concepts which yet are surprisingly close to those of Marcellus.



For Athanasius, *theoria* ought to have been the path to God for human beings. Human beings ought to have been able to avoid the corruption inherent in their contingent natures by contemplating the Word; but they looked down and fell, and so that way was closed to them, and they became liable to death and corruption. Then they ought to have been able to work out that the Word was there, and how divine providence worked, even without being able to see the Word any longer, by looking at God's works as displayed in the created order; but they turned away from nature towards the unnatural, and began worshipping the wrong things and sleeping with the wrong people, unable to learn even the lessons of the inherent harmony of the created order.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>120</sup> Athanasius, *De Inc* 4–5 (pp. 142–4 Thomson); see also *C Gen* 2–3 (pp. 6–8 Thomson).

So God sent the Law, to tell them explicitly how to live rightly, which ought to have worked, but they could not keep the Law either. So God sent the holy ones of the Old Testament, to show them how to live rightly; but they ignored them.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>121</sup> *De Inc* 12 (pp. 162–4 Thomson).

And so, like a teacher who has tried one angle after another in an attempt to explain something to recalcitrant and unintelligent pupils, the Word (the one whose function it is to reveal God) still had the patience to find another way, to condescend to enter a particular part of creation and take on a body, in order to demonstrate by works in that body that the Word could control all those things which were wrongly worshipped by human beings, demons and magic, the weather, water, and the minor local mischievous powers, and even control death itself.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>122</sup> *De Inc* 13–16 (pp. 166–72 Thomson).

So far, so theophanic. This picture would not have seemed alien to Eusebius of Caesarea, for example. But Athanasius, though he uses the language of theophany, keeps feeling his way beyond it to something further. Athanasius rejoices in the vulgarity of the incarnation, in the vulgarity of the language of the gospels, virtually taunts his upper-class pagan interlocutors with it—because it works. Their best, most beautifully phrased, most traditional writings intended to inculcate virtue have had no effect in actually

end p.63

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

persuading anyone to be virtuous, he argues. Only the incarnate Christ can meet people where they really are; only Christianity can persuade them to live rational, virtuous lives, and indeed lives whose virtue is beyond what pagans think possible, so that even women and young children can overcome their fear of death, and even men can be sexually continent.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>123</sup> *De Inc* 50–51 (pp. 258–62 Thomson).

For Athanasius, the Good News is that the Word really did become incarnate, really did come down to our level, the immeasurable gulf that had to be crossed between God and creatures, what is and what belongs to the world of coming to be and passing away, only serving to show God's still more immeasurable generosity. Yes, it is unfitting, yes, it is ridiculous, just as the

Jews and the pagans say, to imagine God entering the material world, and one part of it at that—but that only shows more completely God's power and God's goodness in doing so. And though the Incarnation was theophanic, it was also something more. Life itself took a body and burned corruption out of it, made human beings once again heirs to incorruption and ended the universal death sentence by the death of the Word's own body, which summed up the general death God had visited on humankind.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>124</sup> *De Inc* 8 (p. 152 Thomson) and 44 (p. 246 Thomson).

The Logos did not just teach, but by being joined to it changed the nature of human flesh itself.

Marcellus shares with Athanasius the teaching that it is the Incarnation which has bridged the gulf that separates us from God, and brought God near to us, when nothing else could do so; and hence that it is here that God is to be known. The theophanic function of the Incarnation in Athanasius is supplied by Marcellus' doctrine of the incarnate Logos as 'image of the invisible God', but in a rather more starkly apophatic manner. No one can know either the Word or the Father of the Word apart from this image, as far as Marcellus is concerned; we were made worthy of knowing the Word only by the Incarnation itself.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Marcellus, Re 83 Kl 94 S/V 55 P 56.

It is the incarnate Word who makes the invisible God visible and tangible. It is not clear whether things were otherwise, for Marcellus, before the Fall; but now real knowledge of God is only possible at all through the Word made known in human flesh. The knowledge made possible by the Incarnation is no longer a substitute for raising the mind to contemplate the Word with one's own little rational faculty which is in the image of God's,<sup>126</sup>

<sup>126</sup> See Athanasius, *C Gen* 30 and 34 (pp. 82 and 94 Thomson).

for direct knowledge of God is not possible by that means in any case, for Marcellus: it is looking to Christ's life as lived on earth, and to what he taught, which makes God known. It is one's own human flesh which is therefore made according to the image of God, not (or not just) one's soul or one's mind, for the image of God according to

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [70]-[74]

suggests the controversy has reached an advanced stage.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Urk 4b.6 (p. 7.14–17 Opitz).

Τοὺς περ' Ἀρειον, ('Arius' associates'), together with τοὺς συν ακολουθήσαντας αὐτοῖς ('their hangers-on') have already been anathematized by 'us' (Alexander, or perhaps also the clergy of Alexandria) in synod with nearly one hundred bishops of Egypt and Libya.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Urk 4b.11 (p. 8.11–13 Opitz).

On the other hand, there are various indications that *He Philarchos* cannot be very early in the controversy either. The anti-Alexander reaction seems to be theologically in full swing; he is very much on the back foot in this letter. A creed of Arius' has been in circulation, and some have signed it; *He philarchos* requests its recipients to sign Alexander's 'tome' in return. This, indeed, seems to be the purpose of the letter: to elicit as many episcopal signatures against Arius and in support of Alexander as possible. The version of *He Philarchos* sent to Alexander of Byzantium refers, as we have seen, to signatures already attached to it, not only from Egypt, the Thebaid, and Libya, but also from Syria, Lycia, Pamphilia, Asia, Cappadocia, and the adjoining regions.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Urk 14.59 (p. 29.14–17 Opitz).

Surely *Henos Somatos* would have mentioned such signatures, if they existed at the time when it was written?

Suggesting that the two letters were sent out at the same time, and so were in some sense two versions of the same letter, may seem like a desperate remedy, but there is a surprising amount of evidence for this. First of all, there is the fact that both letters make substantially the same points, and do something like the same job. Both are encyclicals; both seem to have been circulated around much if not all of the Greek-speaking half of the empire, and probably beyond; both write as though they are the first formal notification of Arius' condemnation; both allude to activity in support of Arius by fellow bishops (though only *Henos Somatos* names any). Both give accounts of Arius' theology based on his exegesis of various scripture passages, which are then refuted on the basis of different interpretations of the same passages, and the adducing of others (some but not all of the same passages are discussed in the two letters). Both ask the recipient to have nothing to do with either Arius or his supporters.

The main difference between the two letters, other than the fact that *He Philarchos* actually asks for signatures in support of Alexander, is one of tone. *Henos Somatos* is a great deal less diplomatic than the other encyclical. It is the letter of a strong-minded, intelligent individual who sees the Arius problem in black and white, and expects that his readers will do the same. The writer has no sense of a need to flatter or persuade his audience,

no sense that Eusebius of Nicomedia might be a formidable enemy that other bishops might not want to make. Both politically and theologically, he assumes that the evils of which he writes are patent.

end p.70

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Athanasius, penning this letter when he was about 23, having picked up the rights and the wrongs of the situation from Alexander in the latter's unbuttoned moments, may not have been aware of quite how much support Arius' theology was likely to receive. Alexander must have realized from the number of letters in support of Arius he was receiving that the situation was rather more delicate than his eager young deacon imagined. Athanasius' letter may have made his heart sink, even while he smiled at its brilliant encapsulation of the politics and theology involved.

*Henos Somatos* certainly circulated, because Eusebius of Caesarea quotes a line from it.<sup>149</sup>

<sup>149</sup> See Opitz, 'Zeitfolge', 148, and his note to *Urk* 7.3 (p. 14.14).

But it is possible that it circulated together with another, slightly more diplomatic letter penned by Alexander himself, which sought to win over waverers by painting Arius' theology in rather blacker terms, and by stressing the aspects of Arius' behaviour (such as his having recourse to the pagan courts) most likely to alienate other bishops. The best evidence for this is that two separate documents did apparently circulate under the cover of *He Philarchos*. At *He Philarchos* 59, Alexander writes, as we have seen,

Be of one mind against their mad temerity, like our fellow-ministers who were filled with indignation and wrote to me against them and subscribed the document (τὸ βιβλίον). And I have sent these things to you by my son Apion the deacon: this one, on the one hand, of all Egypt and the Thebaid, this one, on the other, of Libya and the Pentapolis and Syria and also Lycia... (τὸ οὗτο μὲν πάσης Αἰγύπτου καὶ θεβαίᾳδος, τοῦτο δὲ λιβύης τε καὶ πενταπόλεως καὶ σὺριᾳς καὶ στυλίου καὶ λυκίας...), according to the likeness of which things I trust to receive from you also. (p. 29.13–18)

'This one', τὸ οὗτο μὲν, of 'all Egypt and the Thebaid', would, on this reading, be *Henos Somatos*. Though that letter is written in Alexander's name, it is clear that it was meant to be more than a personal appeal, since Athanasius' copy has the signatures of the clergy of Alexandria and the Mareotis on it.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>150</sup> *Urk* 4b.21 (pp. 10–11 Opitz). On the transmission of the text, see Schwartz, *GS* iii, 73–4 and 127.

The sentence 'We, having come together with the bishops across Egypt and Libya, being nearly one hundred, anathematized [those around Arius who say these things]'<sup>151</sup>

<sup>151</sup> *Henos Somatos* 11.

suggests that the bishops of Egypt and the Thebaid might well also have signed a copy of the document. If so, *Henos Somatos* would function as something like a synodal letter of the bishops of Egypt and Libya (one would have to assume that none of the Libyan bishops actually signed the

document initially, despite being at the meeting, not too difficult an assumption). It might be that no synodal letter had been circulated originally, since Arius was only a presbyter, and that *Henos Somatos* was meant to supply the breach once the mistake had been recognized; it certainly looks as close as possible to a synodal document without actually being one.

end p.71

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

*He Philarchos* would then itself be 'this one, on the other hand', τ οὗτο δέ, signed by those bishops outside Egypt who were in solidarity with Alexander, including, eventually, at least one Libyan bishop. It would be *He Philarchos* itself (known in a later version as the *Tome to All Bishops*) which its recipients were asked to sign as previous signatories had; depending on how he was received, the messenger could presumably play up or play down the importance of the more openly anti-Eusebian *Henos Somatos* presented along with it. These further signatures would then be added to the copies that were still circulating, and the list of provinces be updated in the text.

If *Henos Somatos* and *He Philarchos* were circulated at the same time, this considerably shortens the time required for the train of events from Arius' first condemnation to Constantine's arrival on the scene as victor over Licinius in September 324. We merely have to fit in a round of letters from and in support of Arius before the two encyclicals are circulated, and another round afterwards in reply to Alexander's letters.

Some such date as 322 seems demanded by Alexander's complaint that Arius 'daily excit[es] seditions and persecutions against us [Christians]' (in the context this must mean by pagans), while still declaring the present time 'a period of peace'.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>152</sup> *Urk* 14.5 and 59 (p. 20.13–14 and p. 29.11 Opitz). According to Hanson, 'This no doubt describes what has been happening in Alexandria during the period of prohibition of meetings' (*Search*, 136). Williams, on the contrary, thinks that these statements would be 'very odd...if the letter was written in 323 or 324, at the time of Licinius' anti-Christian legislation' (*Arius*, 51).

This would seem to belong in a period of heightened tension, when relations between Licinius and Constantine had broken down again and Licinius was beginning to regard Christians with a jaundiced eye and to legislate accordingly, but before any really serious measures had been taken: synods were still possible, for example. The period between spring 321 (after Licinius had begun to show his hand by refusing to recognize Constantine's consuls)<sup>153</sup>

<sup>153</sup> See Barnes, *New Empire*, 95–6.

and spring 323 (shortly after which time Licinius' ban on ecclesiastical synods must have been in force)<sup>154</sup>

<sup>154</sup> On Licinius' motley collection of anti-Christian measures, see Barnes, *Constantine*, 70–2, and Simon Corcoran, *The Empire of the Tetrarchs: Imperial Pronouncements and Government AD 283–324*, Oxford Classical Monographs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 195. The ban on synods is mentioned in Eusebius, *VC* I.51.1–2 (but not in the account of Licinius' anti-Christian measures in *HE* X.8). The date of the ban is uncertain, but should perhaps be placed fairly late in the possible window (c.spring 320–c.spring 324), since it would otherwise be surprising that ecclesiastical turmoil was not even worse at the accession of Constantine than it in

fact was (Eusebius notes that the canons require bishops to gather to ordain a bishop (VC I.51.2)).

would seem to fit this best. If we imagine the first flurry of letters to have taken much of the summer of 322 (autumn and winter being less propitious times for friends to take the relevant letters back and forth), *He Philarchos* would be written about the spring of 323, by which time tension with pagans would have become very overt, although Alexander might still optimistically say that it was not a time of persecution.

end p.72

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Based on this dating of the two encyclical letters, and on the various important details in the letters picked up by Rowan Williams and others, my suggested narrative of the events leading to Nicaea (including the order of the eight documents most important for dating purposes), is as follows.

Eusebius of Nicomedia, while still in the see of Berytus, shows some form of malevolence towards Alexander of Alexandria—possibly trying to prevent his being chosen as bishop there, perhaps in order to advance Arius'

candidacy.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>155</sup> Philostorgius, for what it is worth, claims that Arius had been an alternative candidate at the time of Alexander's election (*HE* I.3 (p. 6.8–10 Bidez)), and Theodoret seems to support the idea that they were then rivals (*HE* I.2.9). Williams, *Arius*, 40, is agnostic on the worth of this report.

Alexander is chosen bishop in any case, of a diocese which already has at least two schismatic factions, that of the bishop Melitius of Lycopolis, and that of the presbyter Colluthus.

Eusebius is translated to Nicomedia some time after Licinius moves his capital there in 317. Arius, who by now has strong support, including that of most of the bishops of Upper Libya, eleven presbyters and deacons, and a number of upper-class women, either has a high-profile dispute with the schismatic Colluthus, or provokes a showdown with Alexander, accusing him of heresy. In the spring of 322, Alexander takes some form of action against Arius, either through friends in the civic administration or by the use of vigilantes, and succeeds in ejecting him from his church. Arius remains in the area, probably holding services in monastic settlements on the fringes of

Alexandria,<sup>156</sup>

<sup>156</sup> This could be the point of the jibe about 'robbers' caves' in *Urk* 14.3 (p. 20.3–4 Opitz).

and his friends bring various actions in the civic courts against Alexander. Alexander holds a synod of Egyptian and Libyan bishops, which condemns Arius, but not entirely wholeheartedly: some if not all Libyan bishops, at least, refuse to be part of Arius' condemnation.

In the spring of 322 Arius also writes to Eusebius of Nicomedia, who seems already to know something about these events (which could conceivably mean that he instigated them), to let him know the names of those in the Eastern provinces whom he believes to be of the same opinions as himself, the precise theological formulations Alexander has used, and the formulations of his own which Alexander has condemned (*Urk* 1). Eusebius begins a letter campaign, to encourage as many bishops as possible to write to Alexander protesting at his treatment of Arius. Some bishops of Libya,



various individuals in the Oriens provinces, a synod at Neocaesarea in Pontus Polemoniaca, and a synod in Bithynia all do so.<sup>157</sup>

<sup>157</sup> See my interpretation of Philostorgius' list of the 'Arian-minded' in section 1 (i) above.

At some point, Arius and his friends produce a statement of their faith which is calculated to annoy Alexander intensely but to seem relatively innocuous to neutral parties (*Urk* 6), Alexander predictably rejects it, and Arius or his supporters circulate it around the East, asking people to sign it or else specify what part of it they disagree with, a move calculated to embarrass the less theologically

end p.73

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

self-confident into compliance. This phase lasts most of the year. Eusebius' letter to Paulinus chiding him for his lack of involvement (*Urk* 8) probably comes towards the end of it. During this period, a number of bishops (almost certainly including Philogonius at Antioch, and quite likely Eustathius of Beroea and Marcellus) write to Alexander in support, filling him in on the wider theological views of those who side with Arius, and probably urging him to take action.<sup>158</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Cf. *Urk* 14.59 (p. 29.13–14 Opitz).

By the spring of 323 Alexander, realizing he must take some wider action, begins a large-scale counter-attack. He has his deacon, Athanasius, write an encyclical giving Alexander's version of events (*Henos Somatos*, *Urk* 4b), which he first circulates among the bishops of Egypt and the Thebaid who have already condemned Arius. They sign the letter. This is then circulated further in lieu of an encyclical letter from the original synod which condemned Arius. Alexander meanwhile also uses the Arius affair to unite the other factions of the Alexandrian church, sending *Henos Somatos* to the clergy of Alexandria and the Mareotis to sign (*Urk* 4a), which they do, including Colluthus, who takes the opportunity to claim that his former schism was because of Arius' heresy. (Alexander allows him to sign, and presumably allows him back into communion, but retains enough irritation against him still to include a censorious reference to his former schism in *He Philarchos*.)<sup>159</sup>

<sup>159</sup> *Urk* 14.3 (p. 19.11–p. 20.2 Opitz).

Alexander writes another encyclical himself as a covering letter (*He Philarchos*, *Urk* 14), which goes over the same ground as *Henos Somatos* with a somewhat more careful eye to its audience, and includes a statement of faith of his own which he asks recipients to sign. He uses the signatures of the Egyptian bishops as leverage to persuade as many Libyan bishops as possible (which may not be more than one) to sign *He Philarchos* before he sends the letters out further, apparently to strategically placed allies who can gather signatures in their own regions before sending the letters on to further-flung regions or more reluctant signatories who need to be targeted by a more impressive array of signatures before they will sign.

We can follow the routes they took after the Egyptian and Libyan signatures were added by looking at the two lists of provinces given in the two versions of *He Philarchos* / the *Tome to All Bishops* that have come down to us. The



copy addressed to Alexander of Byzantium, carried by Apion the deacon, has signatures from Syria (meaning it was presumably sent straight to Philogonius from Egypt); 'Cappadocia and the neighbouring regions', which had presumably been well represented among the signatories of Arius' creed and so were targeted early on; Lycia and Pamphilia; and Asia, these last provinces being obvious stops on a coastal voyage from Antioch to Byzantium. The version addressed to Meletius obviously draws on the results of several local collections: from Palestine and Arabia (collected by Macarius of Jerusalem, perhaps);

end p.74

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [75]-[79]

Achaia (presumably the target of a specific voyage); Thrace, Hellespontus, Asia, Caria, Lycia, Lydia, Phrygia, Pamphilia, Galatia, Pisidia (perhaps gathered by Alexander, Marcellus, or both); Pontus, Pontus Polemoniacus, Cappadocia, and Armenia; and finally 'all the God-loving bishops of the East' (evidently gathered by Philogonius, whose name is included with them).

Another copy of the letter seems to have gone to Rome.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Cf. *Urk* 16.

Philogonius may have co-ordinated the lists of signatories as they returned, given that so many copies of the letter seem to have ended up at

Antioch.<sup>161</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Theodoret mentions that he has seen copies addressed to Philogonius and Eustathius, as well as the one addressed to Alexander that he gives, and *Urk*. 15 is also of Antiochene provenance.

This takes us, according to our current chronology, as far as the late autumn of 323, the collecting of the signatures having taken the better part of a year. Arius' allies presumably continued to be active during this time: Eusebius of Caesarea (*Urk* 7) and possibly Paulinus of Tyre (*Urk* 9) wrote to Alexander after they had seen *Henos Somatos*. The synod of Palestine (*Urk* 10)<sup>162</sup>

<sup>162</sup> *Urk* 10 (p. 18 Opitz) = Sozomen, *HE* I.15.11.

may have taken place just before Licinius' ban as a tardy attempt at a compromise, by which Arius might leave Alexandria and teach instead in Palestine, as Origen had done before him. Events, however, were now too far advanced for any such compromise to succeed. Philogonius apparently died on 20 December 323;<sup>163</sup>

<sup>163</sup> For the date, see section 2 (ii) below.

the struggle to replace him, combined with the ban on synods, produced a bitterly divided church of Antioch; Constantine and Licinius, meanwhile, were rapidly moving towards war.

### (ii) The Synods of Ancyra and Antioch

The *Tome* of Alexander to all bishops had two hundred signatures by the time the exemplar of the Meletius copy returned to Philogonius, presumably shortly before the latter's death. This gave Alexander the clear advantage, not only over Arius but also over those bishops who had championed him. It looks as though Alexander was planning another synod, larger than the Egyptian one, to condemn them, too, after he had secured the support he needed. *He Philarchos* mentions three bishops, ordained 'somehow or other' in Syria, who have inflamed Arius and Achilles and their comrades still further, and states, 'Let their judgement be referred to your adjudication

(περὶ ὧν ἡ κρίσις ἀν' αὐτῶν πρὸς ἡμετέρας δοκιμασίας).<sup>164</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Urk 14.23 (p. 25.17 Opitz). There are various possibilities as to who the three bishops are: the three who held the Palestinian synod (Eusebius of Caesarea, Paulinus of Tyre, and Patrophilus of Scythopolis), perhaps, or the three who were eventually condemned at the synod of Antioch in 324. But Eusebius of Nicomedia, initially bishop of a Phoenician see, is as reasonably described as being 'ordained in Syria' as are Eusebius of Caesarea, Paulinus, Patrophilus, or Narcissus of Neronias.

*He Philarchos* itself does not formally solicit that judgement; it formally solicits only agreement on the judgement that has already been made concerning Arius, Achillas, and other presbyters and deacons. It would seem, therefore, that the recipients of

end p.75

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

the *Tome* of Alexander were expected to come together at some future point as a synod to make that judgement. And we do know of a synod which was supposed to come together to make a final judgement on some episcopal cases, whose intended members represent virtually all the provinces to which Alexander wrote: the synod of Ancyra, which became the synod of Nicaea.

The 'great and hieratic' synod of Ancyra,<sup>165</sup>

<sup>165</sup> Urk 18.15 (p. 40.18 Opitz (Syriac); p. 40.17 (Schwartz' retroversion)).

which Constantine moved to Nicaea, was an established fact at the synod of Antioch in late 324,<sup>166</sup>

<sup>166</sup> On the date of this synod of Antioch, see below.

which is also almost the only reason we know of its planned existence. The decision of the synod of Antioch to excommunicate Eusebius of Caesarea, Theodotus of Laodicea, and Narcissus of Neronias was respectfully made conditional on the decision of the coming synod of Ancyra.<sup>167</sup>

<sup>167</sup> Urk 18.15 (p. 40.16–18 (Syriac), 16–17 (Greek retroversion)).

It is normally assumed that it was Constantine who had originally summoned it.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>168</sup> So e.g. Hanson, *Search*, 148, and Williams, *Arius*, 58. Against this 'often repeated modern assertion', see Barnes, *Constantine*, 378 n. 35.

It is not improbable, however, that this synod had already been summoned, or at least mooted, by Alexander and his allies two years previously, but prevented from taking place by Licinius' ban on episcopal synods.

If Alexander did intend to attempt to have Eusebius of Nicomedia condemned and, if possible, deposed (and the open attack on Eusebius in *Henos Somatos* makes this likely), Ancyra was the perfect place to do it. There was precedent for an Asia Minor-wide synod there,<sup>169</sup>

<sup>169</sup> Alastair H. B. Logan makes this point in an article which argues in general for Marcellus' importance to the manoeuvres before Nicaea (Logan, 'Councils'), though I do not think his case for Marcellus' presence at the pre-Nicene synod of Antioch can stand.

which might reasonably claim jurisdiction over the bishop of Nicomedia; it was flanked by provinces which had no links to any of the supporters of Arius

(provinces which between them were to send sixty-six bishops to Nicaea); it was apostolic; it was easy for everyone to get to; it was occupied by Marcellus, who had successfully headed an important (if rather smaller) gathering there ten years earlier, and was probably even then no friend to the politics or the theology of Eusebius of Nicomedia. If such a synod was indeed being put together, Licinius' ban on such gatherings was extremely timely from Eusebius' point of view.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>170</sup> For the suggestion that the ban may have been instigated by Eusebius of Nicomedia, see Barnes, *Constantine*, 376 n. 154.

Constantine's victory over Licinius at Chrysopolis on 18 September 324 allowed the ecclesiastical battle to recommence. After Licinius' surrender at Nicomedia the following day, Constantine turned his thoughts towards a triumphal tour of the East, but he found his way blocked by news of ongoing ecclesiastical strife there.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>171</sup> See *Urk* 17.6–10 (p. 33.1–p. 34.18 Opitz = Eusebius, *VC* II.69.1–71.3), and Stuart Hall, 'Some Constantinian Documents in the *Vita Constantini*', in Samuel N. C. Lieu and Dominic Montserrat (eds.), *Constantine: History, Historiography and Legend* (London: Routledge, 1998), 86–103.

He is also likely to have been faced with petitions

end p.76

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

from Alexander and his allies, including perhaps petitions to allow the planned Ancyran synod to take place, and with the counter-lobbying of Eusebius of Nicomedia, his allies, and his connections at court. These last, including his own sister Constantia, Constantine also had to decide whether to treat with respect as important power-brokers in the East, or to spurn as allies of Licinius. It was a complicated situation, and one which required urgent attention.

Constantine seems to have addressed it with a letter normally known as 'Constantine's Letter to Alexander and Arius' (*Urk* 17), though it is more likely to have been addressed to a number of bishops across the East.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>172</sup> Stuart Hall ('Constantinian Documents', 87–9, 91) has shown that the letter cannot simply have been sent to Alexander and Arius, since much of its language implies a much wider audience and a geographic setting in the Diocese, rather than the Prefecture, of the East; he connects it with the Synod of Antioch of 325 (as he dates it). It would seem odd, however, for a letter which apostrophizes Alexander and Arius to be addressed entirely to a synod which neither of them attended; but Hall's arguments would work just as well if the letter was written to be taken round the whole East, including Antioch, Palestine, and Alexandria (which would also explain why Eusebius of Caesarea has his own copy of the letter).

The letter was apparently taken East by two trusted imperial figures, Marianus the Notary and Ossius of Corduba.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>173</sup> The figure referred to by Eusebius in the *Life of Constantine* as the letter-bearer is identified by B. H. Warmington ('The Sources of Some Constantinian Documents in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History and Life of Constantine', *St Pat* XVIII.1 (1985), 93–8) as Marianus the Notary rather than Ossius, but since Ossius seems to have been in the East at exactly the same period, it seems likely that they travelled together.

All of this probably happened very quickly after the surrender of Licinius at Nicomedia, since Constantine seems to have planned an imperial *adventus* at

Antioch for late 324.<sup>174</sup>

<sup>174</sup> For the numismatic evidence showing that an *adventus* was planned, see Barnes, *New Empire*, 76, though Barnes has since become still more agnostic about the visit's actually having taken place ('Constantine's Speech to the Assembly of the Saints: Place and Date of Delivery', *JTSNS* 52 (2001), 26–36, at 20 n. 15).

If we allow four to five days for the news of Licinius' defeat to reach Antioch,<sup>175</sup>

<sup>175</sup> See Lionel Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World* (London: Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1974), 188, for the accelerated speed of news on such occasions.

about two weeks for the consequent loyal letters of recognition of Constantine and the first of the inevitable petitions to the victorious new ruler to return from there to Nicomedia, including petitions to be allowed to appoint a new bishop of Antioch, and if we assume an immediate decision from Constantine and allow another two weeks for Ossius to be briefed and to make his journey, he would have reached Antioch around 21 October.

Richard Burgess has argued that what he found there was general strife after the death of Paulinus (whom Burgess argues to have succeeded Philogonius and preceded Eustathius), as the two factions each attempted to install a candidate of their own as bishop of Antioch.<sup>176</sup>

<sup>176</sup> See Burgess, *Chronography*, 184–91, for a thorough discussion of the complex evidence involved.

Paul Parvis has argued that the complex evidence of the Antiochene bishop-lists and the disappearance of Paulinus from Tyre some time before Nicaea<sup>177</sup>

<sup>177</sup> The bishop of Tyre at Nicaea is a certain Zeno, who is also said by Epiphanius (*Pan* 69.4.3) to have received a copy of *Henos Somatos*, which he could have done at any point before Nicaea. He is not necessarily aged (cf. Vaggione, *Eunomius*, 17 n. 31).

is better

end p.77

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

explained by the theory that Paulinus and Eustathius were in fact rival bishops of Antioch at this stage, and had been since Philogonius' death nearly a year previously.<sup>178</sup>

<sup>178</sup> For the date of 20 December 323 for Philogonius' death, see Burgess, *Chronography*, 182–4. On the division in the Antiochene church, see Paul Parvis, 'Constantine's Letter to Arius and Alexander?', *St Pat* (2006, forthcoming). Two additional points about Paulinus' dates should be noted: Eusebius' dedication of Book X of the Ecclesiastical History to Paulinus implies he is still alive in 324, but not necessarily that he is currently bishop of Tyre; Aetius' studies with Paulinus in Antioch would surely be more worthy of their important place in his later biographies if they lasted longer than six months.

If so, Eustathius had probably secured the keys of the main church from Philogonius, in the teeth of some of the city's presbyters,<sup>179</sup>

<sup>179</sup> A significant portion of the Antiochene presbyterate (including George, Stephen, Eudoxius, and Eustathius, later bishops of Laodicea, Antioch, Germanicia/Antioch/Constantinople, and Sebaste) were leading figures in the controversy in later years. They were all expelled from the Antiochene church by Eustathius.

since the presumption of legitimacy seems to have been in his favour.

Ossius hurriedly called a synod to address the situation;<sup>180</sup>

<sup>180</sup> See *Urk* 18.3. This synod is usually dated to early 325, because Philogonius' death is usually dated to December 324, but if Philogonius had been dead for nearly a year, Ossius could not simply have ignored the problems that death had created as he passed through on the way to Alexandria.

it might have met as early as mid-November, if he sent all the bishops imperial travel-passes. This synod recognized Eustathius as bishop of Antioch, possibly before it even began, and broke off communion with Theodotus of Laodicea, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Narcissus of Neronias, who are likely all to have been supporters of Paulinus, although the synod gave their approval of Arius' theology as the reason for their condemnation.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>181</sup> *Urk* 18.14 (p. 40.4–14 Opitz (Syriac); 40.3–14 (Schwartz's retroversion)). Holger Strutwolf (*Die Trinitätslehre und Christologie des Euseb von Caesarea: Eine dogmengeschichtliche Untersuchung seiner Platonismusrezeption und Wirkungsgeschichte*, *Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte* 72 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1999), 31–44) has recently claimed that neither the condemnations nor the creed are genuine, but that they are both Antiochene additions from the 350s to an original letter of an actual 325 synod of Antioch. This argument rests largely on perilous assertions about the first appearance of 'neo-Arian' theological terms—the phrase 'image of the will', far from first appearing in the writings of Didymus the Blind, can be found in fragments of Asterius quoted by Marcellus which cannot be later than the early 330s.

The synod at Antioch produced a profession of faith which for our purposes is interesting for two reasons above all: the fact that it is modelled fairly closely on the faith of *He Philarchos*, and the fact that it is nothing like the creed of Nicaea. It is preserved in a Syriac version published by Schwartz with a Greek retroversion, to which Luise Abramowski has made a number of improvements.<sup>182</sup>

<sup>182</sup> *Urk* 18; Luise Abramowski, 'Die Synode von Antiochien 324/25 und ihr Symbol', *ZKG* 86 (1975), 356–66.

The fact that many of the members of the synod of Antioch must already have signed the faith of *He Philarchos* perhaps explains the similarity between the two, although there are some differences of emphasis, and a few of theology. The apologetic tone of the *He Philarchos* faith has been dropped, including the initial description of the Father as ἀγὲν ὁ πατήρ (with which Arius'

end p.78

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

creed also begins),<sup>183</sup>

<sup>183</sup> *Urk* 14.46 (p. 27.1 Opitz) and *Urk* 6.2 (p. 12.4 Opitz).

and the defensive move (replying to the implied accusation of Arius' creed) of excluding the interpretations of Sabellius and Valentinus; the Son's generation is declared to be incomprehensible to any but Father and Son, with the appropriate Scripture tags, with no other apology. On the other hand, this creed is occasionally closer to Arius' in wording than that of *He Philarchos*, though not at significant points: the Father is pronounced to be 'Lord of the Law and the Prophets and of the New Covenant', as in Arius'

version, rather than of 'the Patriarchs and Prophets and all the saints', for example.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>184</sup> *Urk* 18.8 (p. 38.16–17 Opitz) and *Urk* 6.2 (p. 12.6–7 Opitz) as opposed to *Urk* 14.46 (p. 27.3–4 Opitz). In this discussion I normally cite *Urk* 18 by page and line of the retroversion.

Elsewhere, the creed of *He Philarchos* is altered to address points in Arius' creed which were not dealt with at first. Arius called the Son a 'κτίσμα (created thing), but not as one of the κτίσματα, a γέννημα (one brought forth), but not as one of the γεγεννημένων';<sup>185</sup>

<sup>185</sup> *Urk* 6.2 (p. 12.9–10 Opitz).

Antioch 324 insists that the Son is not a κτίσμα (this translation is to be preferred to Schwartz' ποιητόν), and is a γέννημα in the strict sense, though in an unknowable fashion.<sup>186</sup>

<sup>186</sup> *Urk* 18.9 (p. 38.18–19 Opitz). Though *ebada* (p. 38.14 Syriac) regularly means Ποίημα and the like, it is also used to translate δημιουργημα. See R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879–1901), col. 2773.

Against Arius' claim that the Son of God was created by the will of God, Antioch defines the Son as not born or coming to be by will or fiat (θελήσει ἢ

ἔσσει γεννηθῆναι ἢ γενέσθαι).<sup>187</sup>

<sup>187</sup> *Urk* 6.2 (p. 12.8–9 Opitz) as opposed to *Urk* 18.10 (p. 39.5 Opitz).

Other points are largely carried over from *He Philarchos*, although a little more sharply worded. Mary is once again described as Theotokos (God-bearer). The description of the Son as image (εἰκών) of the Father (sometimes varied to χαρακτήρ της ὑποστάσεως, impress of [his] being) is still central,<sup>188</sup>

<sup>188</sup> *Urk* 18.10 (p. 39.1 Opitz), 18.11 (p. 39.9), and 18.13 (p. 40.1). On the choice between εἰκών and χαρακτήρ, see Abramowski, 'Antiochien 324/25', 357–8.

but the Son is now simply εἰκών instead of being ἀπαράλλακτος εἰκών (the non-scriptural and Origenist 'unvarying' image), and it is specified that he is not image of the Father's will, or of something else, but of his hypostasis (the Syriac word Schwartz renders here as εἰκών could also represent χαρακτήρ, so the reference is probably simply to the safely scriptural Hebrews 1: 3).

The Son is eternal, and only-begotten Son of God.<sup>189</sup>

<sup>189</sup> *Urk* 18.9 (p. 39.1 and p. 38.18 Opitz).

Father and Son are still both separately called ἀτρέπτος and ἄν αλλοίωτος, unchangeable and unalterable.<sup>190</sup>

<sup>190</sup> *Urk* 18.8 (p. 38.15 Opitz) and 18.10 (p. 39.4).

The Son is ἐκ του πατρὸς (from the Father):<sup>191</sup>

<sup>191</sup> *Urk* 18.9 (p. 38.18 Opitz).

*ousia* and its compounds are once again avoided, and ὑπόστασις and φύσις ('being' and 'nature') are



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [80]-[84]

used ambiguously (as *Henos Somatos* had used them; the opening of *Henos Somatos* is also borrowed for Antioch's synodal letter). The positions that the Son of God is a κτῖσμα or γενητόν or a ποιητόν or not truly γέννημα, or that ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν (there was when he was not), are

anathematized;<sup>192</sup>

<sup>192</sup> Urk 18.13 (p. 39.17–18 Opitz).

further (presumably after some discussion) the positions that he is immutable by his own free will, that he is generated out of not being, or that he is not by nature immutable, 'for as our Saviour is proclaimed to be the image of the Father in every respect, he is so especially in this

particular'.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>193</sup> Urk 18.13 (p. 39.18–p. 40.1 Opitz).

The synodal letter in which this creed is to be found is addressed to Alexander of Byzantium, by this time known to be the future New Rome; presumably he is here being treated as an alternative to Eusebius of Nicomedia as leader of Constantine's newly-conquered region. It is no surprise that this synod commends Alexander of Alexandria and largely uses the creed he put together; it very much takes things up where they were interrupted by Licinius' ban, deposing those who do not agree with the faith of Alexander (as currently modified), and looking forward to the 'great and priestly synod at Ancyra', which will finish the task.

Eustathius' role at this synod is interesting, and is a good refutation of those who imagine that he and Alexander, as Origenist and anti-Origenist, only ever partook in an armed truce against Arius, which was bought at the (too high) price of introducing the nakedly Sabellian *homoousios* into the Nicene creed.<sup>194</sup>

<sup>194</sup> e.g. Hanson, *Search*, 171–2.

Eustathius was clearly, after Ossius, the most authoritative figure at this synod; it would have been a good opportunity to introduce *homoousios* or some such formula, had he been itching to do so. Alexander's creed was indeed changed at Antioch, and changed in a Eustathian direction: all possible ways of describing the Son as mutable (Eustathius' bugbear) are closed off, while the ἀπαράλλακτος (non-scriptural and Origenist, never used by Eustathius) is dropped from αἰών. The strict meaning of γεννητός, begotten, is insisted on: Eustathius argues elsewhere, 'If created, then not begotten; but if begotten, not created' (εἰ γὰρ κτιστός, οὐκ ἄρα γεννητός; εἰ δὲ γεννητός, οὐκ κτιστός).<sup>195</sup>

<sup>195</sup> Fr. 57 Spanneut = 107 Declerck.

But these changes are very moderate. *Ousia* and its compounds, I have argued above, were not in Eustathius' normal vocabulary for describing the

relations between Father and Son, any more than they were in

Alexander's;<sup>196</sup>

<sup>196</sup> This synod's insistence that the Son is image, not of the will nor of anything else but the Father's hypostasis, clearly shows the sense in which fr. 44 Spanneut = 95 Declerck, cited above, chapter 2.1 (ii), is to be taken.

they are not used here. Nor does Eustathius take the opportunity to specify one hypostasis

end p.80

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

of Father and Son. Rather, Alexander's language is largely kept to throughout, a little precision is added to his thought in one or two places, and the defensiveness of the formula is removed; otherwise, Eustathius seems quite happy to let Alexander's faith be his. Marcellus might not have been so mild; he would presumably have been unhappy with the insistence on the Son as a  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\ \nu\ \eta\mu\alpha$  (one brought forth), as well as the belief in 'one God' and 'one Lord Jesus Christ', suggesting two hypostases. But Marcellus was not there.<sup>197</sup>

<sup>197</sup> Logan ('Councils', 434–5) speculates that Marcellus was one of the 'learned brethren' present at the synod, but it is hard to see why, as a bishop, he would not have signed the synodal letter, as bishops from Cappadocia had. Logan sees his hand in the condemnation of Narcissus' three *ousiai*, but Eustathius is equally likely to have objected to this. And there is no need to posit harsh questioning of Eusebius of Caesarea beyond the text of the faith of Antioch; Eusebius could not willingly have subscribed it as it stands, since it rules out  $\epsilon\kappa\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \mu\eta\ \epsilon\iota\mu\epsilon\iota\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , 'from not being', which

he tells Alexander (*Urk* 7.4) cannot reasonably be denied.

Nonetheless, Ossius must have met and talked with him on his way through Asia Minor, and at Antioch, the idea of a synod at Ancyra was very much back on the agenda.

### (iii) Nicaea

If it was Alexander and his supporters, rather than Constantine, who had originally called the Great and Priestly Synod, and called it for the carefully chosen see of Ancyra, they were presumably less than happy when Constantine moved the synod to the imperial palace in Nicaea shortly before it was due to take place.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>198</sup> *Urk* 20.

(This may explain why Alexander of Byzantium and Eutropius of Adrianople, both apparently supporters of Eusebius' opponents, did not even attend the synod.) They were less happy still when Constantine's pious interventions in favour of peace caused the very persons the synod had been originally intended to condemn to escape apparently scot-free. This is clear from an account of the synod given by Eustathius and preserved by Theodoret:

What then do we say? That is the reason a great Council comes to the city of Nicaea. Two hundred and, I suppose, seventy assembled together: I cannot record the size of the crowd clearly since I did not take the trouble to track it down.<sup>199</sup>

<sup>199</sup> On the number present at the Council, and the number believed to have

been present, see Honigmann, 'La liste originale'. Honigmann argues that within the amplified lists of Nicene names (including the lists edited by Gelzer et al. in *Patrum Nicaenorum Nomina*) a shorter list of some 194 names, represented by the Latin list A V, can be isolated, a list which corresponds more closely than any other to the original list of members of the Council. I have argued elsewhere ('Did Marcellus Sign the Nicene Creed?', forthcoming) that A V does indeed represent the list of those who signed the Nicene Creed, but that the longer Antiochene recension of 218 names includes the names of some who signed only the canons of Nicaea, not the creed. With the number of secretaries and associates present, however, the numbers would have been extremely difficult for the participants themselves to determine, so their frequent inflation to 270 or 300 is not necessarily a deliberate misreckoning.

end p.81

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Now when there was debate as to what the faith is, a clear proof  
brought forward the very words of the blasphemy<sup>200</sup>

<sup>200</sup> Eustathius may be referring to an actual document called 'The Blasphemy of Eusebius', analogous to the extracts from Arius' *Thalia* cited in Athanasius, *Syn* 15 which are introduced by the rubric 'Blasphemies of Arius', or—in MSS K,O, and R—'Blasphemy of Arius' (Opitz, apparatus to *Syn* 15.3 (p. 242.8)).

of Eusebius. It was read in the presence of all, and at once its deviation brought ever-growing grief to those who heard it and unbearable shame on the one who wrote it.

But when the Eusebian shop-hands had been clearly caught out, and the impious document was torn up in the sight of all, some, alleging the cause of peace, conspired to silence all those whose words are normally the best.

But the Ariomaniacs are afraid that they might be exiled after so great a Council has come together. And so they rush forward and anathematize the condemned doctrine, subscribing with their own hands to a common statement. And when with all possible deviousness they had held onto their episcopal seats—though they should have been degraded—at times covertly and at times openly they lobby for the rejected opinions, sabotaging various refutations. And because they want firmly to establish the tares they have planted, they fear the learned and shun witnesses. And that is why they attack the heralds of truth.

But even so we do not believe that the godless can ever gain the upper hand over the divine. For, though they should again grow strong, they will again be defeated, as the venerable voice of the prophet Isaiah said.<sup>201</sup>

<sup>201</sup> Theodoret, *HE* I.8.1-5.

Constantine's presence was clearly crucial to this result. The historical commentators Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret all agree that Constantine made great play of peacemaking, all but Eusebius describing how he took the petitions that either side lodged against the other and

destroyed them all without reading them.<sup>202</sup>

<sup>202</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.8.18–19; Sozomen, *HE* I.17.4; Theodoret, *HE* I.11.4–6—each putting a distinctive speech in Constantine's mouth.

Whatever he may have thought he was doing, and however admirable his sentiments, this initial action of his effectively pre-empted the whole synod. It was not the result that Eustathius and his friends had been working towards.

'All whose words are normally the best' probably includes Marcellus:<sup>203</sup>

<sup>203</sup> Feige, 'Markell', 281, suggests this is the case.

he reports in his *Letter to Julius* that he refuted 'some', who were still his enemies in 341, at Nicaea, a claim which the Roman presbyters who were there with him corroborate.<sup>204</sup>

<sup>204</sup> Marcellus, *Letter to Julius* (= p. 124.2–3 Vincent) and *Letter of Julius of Rome*, in Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 32.2.

Marcellus' refutation, though it impressed his own supporters, was doubtless as uncompromising as his later work *Against Asterius* would be; it would certainly have sat awkwardly with Constantine's peace policy, and more than one bishop might have been keen for an excuse to set it aside.

end p.82

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Did Constantine have any ulterior motive for pre-empting proceedings against Eusebius of Nicomedia and the others?<sup>205</sup>

<sup>205</sup> Timothy Barnes (*Constantine*, 213) replies to accusations of technical incompetence on the part of Constantine by pointing out that Constantine's concern was above all for a united Christian laity. This is perfectly true, and Constantine's motives throughout the whole are perfectly reasonable and intelligible—but not, I would hold, compatible with the norms of ecclesiastical synodal legislation as understood up to that point.

Was he consciously protecting them? If Barnes is correct in now assigning the delivery of Constantine's *Oration to the Saints* to Holy Saturday of 325 in Nicomedia (which he surely must be),<sup>206</sup>

<sup>206</sup> Barnes, 'Constantine's *Speech*'. Barnes has to be correct that Constantine, like everyone else, would have avoided speaking with approbation of two *ousiai* after Nicaea; his arguments in favour of Nicomedia are persuasive, and the year therefore follows inescapably. The presence of Eusebian-influenced theology and technical terminology is another strong argument in favour of a setting in Nicomedia around this time.

Constantine can be found using the technical terms of Eusebian theology (two *ousiai*; second God; Son as effect as well as cause) with gay abandon shortly after Eusebius of Caesarea and his friends have been condemned at Antioch for some of this very language. Since Constantine himself had admonished Arius and Alexander six months earlier that such philosophical minutiae should not be discussed in public at all, it seems a reasonable assumption that he was unaware quite how tendentious the terms he was using actually were—it is possible, indeed, that his Greek theological translator has imported technical terms with malice aforethought into a rather blander Latin original. The content of the speech, too, is presumably informed by whatever theology he was hearing around him at Nicomedia, or whatever was being given to him to read on the subject. But however much

of its theology and philosophy he really understood, the speech certainly does show that at this point Constantine was choosing to treat Eusebius of Nicomedia as holy and orthodox.

The synod of Nicaea was not, in the light of all this, the triumph for the pro-Alexander coalition it is often presented as. It was certainly not the triumph for Marcellus and Eustathius that it is sometimes presented as. It was, in fact, from the point of view of all of these, a dismal failure; it was a triumph for their opponents, who against all the odds had utterly outmanoeuvred them. This is why none of them refers to Nicaea in the years immediately after it took place, except with despondency. But when the tide receded even further, and the agreement at Nicaea began to look like a considerable improvement on the alternatives, the fact that a whole generation had (however unwillingly) signed up to it was to prove crucial in finally re-establishing some kind of unity when that had come to seem for most of the century like an impossible dream.

#### (iv) The Creed of Nicaea

The view (shared by his critics and defenders alike) that Marcellus of Ancyra was influential in the writing of the Nicene Creed will no doubt continue to be

end p.83

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

held for a long time to come,<sup>207</sup>

<sup>207</sup> It is held by e.g. Schwartz, *GS* iv, 17; Gericke, *Marcell*, 8; and Logan, 'Councils', 441–6.

but a couple of recent articles have begun to point out how little evidence there actually is linking him to it. Gerhard Feige is apparently more interested in clearing the word *homoousios* of heretical associations than in clearing Marcellus of them, but he surveys the interpretation of *homoousios* in particular throughout the fourth century, showing that it is only with Basil of Caesarea that the word itself becomes expressly accused of having Sabellian overtones, whereas Arius himself rejected it rather on the grounds (reasonable enough, one might think) that it had disturbingly Gnostic

associations.<sup>208</sup>

<sup>208</sup> Gerhard Feige, 'Markell von Ankyra und das Konzil von Nizäa (325)', in *Denkender Glaube in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Festschrift aus Anlass der Gründung der Universität Erfurt*, ed. Wilhelm Ernst and Konrad Feieries, Erfurter Theologische Studien 63 (Leipzig: Benno Verlag, 1992), 277–96. See esp. *Urk* 6 (p. 13.17–20 Opitz).

Eusebius of Caesarea makes the same point, and never tries to associate Marcellus with it. Oskar Skarsaune, meanwhile, argues that the word *homoousios* cannot be considered an indicator of authorship or part authorship of the Nicene Creed because it was adopted on the orders of Constantine, but analyses all the creed's other crucial phrases—'from the *ousia* of the Father', 'true God from true God', 'begotten not made', and 'begotten from the Father as *monogenes*', and finds that all this points to the Nicene Creed as a product of the Alexandrian party rather than Eustathius or Marcellus.<sup>209</sup>

<sup>209</sup> O. Skarsaune, 'A Neglected Detail in the Creed of Nicaea (325)', *Vig Chr* 41

(1987), 34–59.

It should already be clear that I (largely) agree with both scholars in these matters. Despite the common assumption that Marcellus, given his theology, *ought* to have approved of the word *homooousios*, or of the four other characteristic expressions of the creed which Skarsaune picks out, none of this vocabulary can actually be paralleled in any of Marcellus' writings, including either of his two creeds, except where it is attributed to his opponents.

The Nicene Creed is a surprising document in the context of pre-Nicene debate, because it is neither based on nor uses some of the most important language of the two faiths which had been previously used by the pro-Alexander alliance, the faith of *He Philarchos* and the faith of the 324 synod of Antioch, despite the fact that these had been subscribed in the one case by nearly two hundred signatories, in the other by fifty-seven. Instead of being a complex series of propositions about Father and Son loosely based around the Rule of Faith, as in the case of the three preceding faiths of the controversy (Antioch, the *Tome*, and Arius' own creed), the Nicene creed is (apart from the few technical defensive additions and the anathemas) a much simpler one, much more scriptural, much closer to what we think of as an ordinary baptismal creed. Its very structure proclaims it a document which was chosen (or forced on the assembly) for reasons of inclusivity, and then fought over word by word. It has been fought over word by word many times since, particularly in recent decades. But I will nonetheless here propose my

end p.84

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [85]-[89]

own narrative of its genesis and fingerprinting of its crucial phrases, both because it is incumbent on me, having dismissed Marcellan authorship, to propose some alternative, and because my (admittedly controversial) view of who actually was behind the crucial phrases is important to the story of how (and why) Nicaea eventually came to be defended.

Eusebius of Caesarea claims that the creed he put forward to the assembly (presumably by way of clearing his name) was joyfully accepted by all, and implies that it formed the basis of the Nicene Creed.<sup>210</sup>

<sup>210</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea to the Church of Caesarea = *Urk* 22.7 (p. 43.26–p 44.10 Opitz).

This claim was placed in question by Lietzmann<sup>211</sup>

<sup>211</sup> Especially in Hans Lietzmann, 'Symbolstudien XIII', *ZNW* 24 (1925), 193–202.

and J. N. D. Kelly,<sup>212</sup>

<sup>212</sup> J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd edn. (London: Longman, 1972), 217–20.

who both concluded that the Nicene Creed, which has many minor as well as major differences from Eusebius', is based on a rather different creed type, the Jerusalem. Many commentators still hold to the view that Eusebius' creed is not the basis for the other.<sup>213</sup>

<sup>213</sup> See e.g. Ayres, *Legacy*, 89 n. 10.

Markus Vinzent has nonetheless argued, persuasively, in my view, that the Jerusalem creed type is a chimera, and that Eusebius' creed is actually the best parallel that exists to the Creed of Nicaea.<sup>214</sup>

<sup>214</sup> Markus Vinzent, 'Die Entstehung des "Römischen Glaubensbekenntnisses"', in Wolfram Kinzig, Christoph Marksches, and Markus Vinzent, *Tauffragen und Bekenntnis: Studien zur sogenannten 'Traditio Apostolica', zu den 'Interrogationes de fide' und zum 'Römischen Glaubensbekenntnis'*, *Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte* 74 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), 185–409, esp. 195–6. Markus Vinzent, reacting against the Lietzmann–Kelly analysis, concludes, 'Die Parallelen zu Eusebius' Pistis und die Unterschiede zu der des Alexander und der der Synodalen in Antiochien machen erneut deutlich, dass kein anderes wie auch immer postuliertes östliches oder westliches Taufbekenntnis als Grundlage für Nizäa angenommen zu werden braucht, sondern dass man sich bei der Formulierung des *Credo* wohl direkt auf Eusebius stützt' ('Entstehung', 348).

Eusebius presents his creed as the simple faith which he has learned 'from the bishops before us and in our first catechesis and when we received baptism, and as we have learned from the holy Scriptures, and as we have believed in the presbyterate and in the episcopacy itself, and have taught'. This claim is likely to have been perfectly calculated to appeal to Constantine, who had expressed in public the view that the dispute was far too technical<sup>215</sup>



—he expresses his own rule of faith in the *Letter to Alexander and Arius* as a belief in Divine Providence, obedience to the twin commands to honour and love God and love one's neighbour, faith in Christ as Light of the World, and love of truth (the account of Christianity many Christians would perhaps have given to an interested outsider).

The professedly simple, traditional, and scriptural character of Eusebius' creed must presumably have been an important part of its appeal to Constantine; in any case, this type of creed in general and, I would argue, this creed in particular, thereafter became the model for the Nicene faith. A comparison between the two creeds indicates the way in which the modifications must have proceeded.

end p.85

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**  
 © Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

*Eusebius' Creed*

We believe in one God,  
 Father, ruler of all,  
 maker of all things visible  
 and also invisible;  
 and in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
 the Word of God,  
 God from God, light from  
 light, life from life,  
 Only-begotten Son,  
 First-born of all creation  
 before all the ages begotten  
 from the Father,  
 through whom also all things  
 came to be,  
 who because of our salvation  
 was enfleshed  
 and lived a life among  
 humankind  
 and suffered, and rose on  
 the third day  
 and ascended to the Father,  
 and he shall come again in  
 glory to judge living and  
 dead.

And we believe also in one  
 holy Spirit.

*Nicene Creed*

We believe in one God, Father, ruler of all,  
 maker of all things visible and also invisible;  
 and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God,  
 begotten from the Father as only-begotten  
 —that is, from the Father's essence—  
 God from God, light from light, true God from true God,  
 begotten not made, *homoousios* (coessential) with the  
 Father, through whom came to be all things  
 —both the things which are in the heavens  
 and the things which are in the earth—  
 who because of us human beings  
 and because of our salvation came down  
 and was enfleshed, became a human being,  
 suffered, and rose on the third day, ascended into the  
 heavens, is coming to judge living and dead. And in the Holy  
 Spirit.<sup>216</sup>

<sup>216</sup> For a full critical edition of the Creed, see Giuseppe Luigi Dossetti, *Il simbolo di Nicea et di Constantinopoli*, Testi e Ricerche di Scienze Religiose 2 (Rome: Herder, 1967).

The first line of Eusebius' creed, 'We believe in one God, Father, ruler of all, maker of all things visible and invisible' was adopted unchanged. The second line got as far as 'and in one Lord Jesus Christ', before it began to be modified.

Marcellus would already have objected to 'one Lord Jesus Christ', with its suggestion of a second hypostasis, which suggests that he had indeed been silenced by Constantine in the name of peace, since even the Fourth Creed of Antioch managed to dispense with calling Christ 'one'.<sup>217</sup>

<sup>217</sup> See Chapter 5 below.

'Word of God' was replaced by 'Son of God', perhaps at the behest of Eustathius of Antioch, who was the one of the pro-Alexander coalition who seems particularly to have preferred Son language to Word language, as guaranteeing a real and unique generation. The phrase γεννῆσθαι ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μόνον οὐγενῆ (begotten from the Father as only-begotten) was then added, not unlikely also at Eustathius' insistence, further specifying the sense in which 'Son' was to be

end p.86

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

understood, and attempting, still with entirely biblical language (which seems to have been something of a shibboleth at Nicaea, in contrast to the three earlier 'technical' faiths) to rule out other possible understandings of ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς.

Athanasius reports that at this point it became clear that the Eusebians had ways of interpreting all of this in accordance with their own thought, and that some unambiguous expression had to be used.<sup>218</sup>

<sup>218</sup> See the brightly coloured account in Athanasius, *Decr* 19–20.

ΤΟΥΤΕΣΤΙΝ ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΟΥΣΙΑΣ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ (that is, from the essence of the Father) was added to rule that out, the first time an unscriptural expression is used in this creed.

This contribution conceivably comes from Athanasius, lowly deacon of twenty-five that he was, in the shape of a whisper in Bishop Alexander's ear, or an urgent suggestion to him between one session and the next. This may seem a desperate proposal. Nonetheless, if one accepts that Athanasius is the author of *Henos Somatos*, it must be conceded that Alexander had already more than shown the kind of trust in his ability that this would imply.

There are three reasons for suspecting Athanasius of the authorship of this phrase. Firstly, among the leaders of the synod (if we may consider Athanasius a leader by proxy), it is only Athanasius' theology that ἐκ της οὐσίας του πατρὸς reflects. Alexander and Eustathius had both scrupulously avoided the term *ousia* in this sense to date, preferring the apophatic 'Who can declare his generation?' formula used in the previous creeds; Marcellus never uses the term in a positive sense either. Athanasius, meanwhile, had used *ousia* of his own choice in *Henos Somatos* (a step Alexander had retreated from in *He Philarchos*) and was to continue to use it afterwards, defending this very phrase.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>219</sup> Repeatedly in *C Ar* I, for example. See Hanson, *Search*, 428 and 437.

Secondly, Athanasius has a very clear memory of how this formula came to be adopted, over twenty-five years later: personal involvement tends to sharpen one's memory for such points.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>220</sup> *Decr* 19. It may be noted that, of the other three authors of surviving eyewitness accounts of some aspect of Nicaea, both Eusebius of Caesarea and Marcellus mention only or largely their own contributions to the synod, while Eustathius remembers primarily what went wrong.

No one else who was there displays any interest in the phrase. And finally, it was Athanasius who continued to defend the creed itself in preference to

other formulae, which no one else who was there actually does.<sup>221</sup>

<sup>221</sup> Marcellus, Ossius of Corduba, and Protogenes of Serdica, for example, were all prepared to move beyond the Nicene formula at Serdica in 343.

Alexander, having tacitly rejected this language once before, was presumably now so keen to produce a formula that Eusebius of Nicomedia would not be able to sign that he accepted the idea, since, if it was indeed Athanasius' suggestion, he must himself have proposed it to the assembly. Eustathius and most of the rest of the anti-Eusebian majority must also have concurred, with greater or lesser reservation, because a large majority would

end p.87

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

have been necessary for this first unscriptural phrase to be included without leaving the opportunity for the pro-Arian alliance to object.

The assembly then returned to Eusebius of Caesarea's text. 'God from God' and 'light from light' then passed (Arius had protested against the second of these formulations in his creed,<sup>222</sup>

<sup>222</sup> In the form  $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\chi\nu\ \sigma\upsilon\ \alpha\pi\omicron\ \lambda\acute{\upsilon}\chi\nu\ \sigma\upsilon$  (*Urk* 6.3 (p. 13.1 Opitz)).

and Marcellus would not have liked it much either, since it belongs to the language of image<sup>223</sup>

<sup>223</sup> Cf. Barnes, *Power of God*, 118–24.

), and then divergence begins again. 'True God from true God' was insisted on, against Eusebius himself and all those who argued (basing themselves on 'That they may know you, the only true God') that the Son was God, but not true God.<sup>224</sup>

<sup>224</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea uses John 17: 3 in this way in *Urk* 3 (p. 5.4–10 Opitz).

$\gamma\epsilon\nu\ \nu\ \eta\theta\epsilon\iota\nu\tau\alpha\ \sigma\iota\ \pi\omicron\iota\eta\theta\epsilon\iota\nu\tau\alpha$  (begotten, not made) was perhaps again a formulation of Eustathius', maybe from an earlier draft: the first word is taken from the Antiochene faith, the second modelled on it, and both are characteristic of Eustathius' thought.

We come next to the notorious  $\epsilon\mu\sigma\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omega\ \pi\alpha\tau\rho\iota$ , co-essential with the Father. Skarsaune rightly complains that it has been the focus of far too much attention in considering the Nicene creed, largely due to the preoccupations of the generation of the 350s and 360s, and to the fact that *homoiousios* was so memorably coined by the group which sought to distance itself from the Sabellianism it imputed to Athanasius' party. It is clear that it was of less embarrassment to Eusebius of Caesarea than the anathematizing of  $\eta\ \nu\ \nu\omicron\tau\epsilon\ \delta\iota\epsilon\ \sigma\iota\kappa\ \eta\ \nu$  (there was when he was not) or  $\eta\ \nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \gamma\epsilon\nu\ \nu\ \eta\theta\eta\ \nu\ \alpha\iota\ \sigma\iota\kappa\ \eta\ \nu$  (before he was begotten he was not), which he can only explain his signing of by pretending it applied to those who claimed Christ was not before his birth from Mary.<sup>225</sup>

<sup>225</sup> Compare the tone of *Urk* 22.12–13 with 15–16.

Nonetheless, it seems likely that it was ultimately introduced because both Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia had said they could not accept it,<sup>226</sup>

<sup>226</sup> For Arius see *Urk* 6.3 and 5 (p. 12.11 and p. 13.18 Opitz) and the fragment from

the *Thalia* cited in Athanasius, *Syn* 15.3 (p. 242.17 Opitz). For Eusebius of Nicomedia see the fragment from Ambrose, *De Fide*, printed as *Urk* 21 (p. 42).

and the anti-Eusebian alliance were evidently becoming more and more keen to produce a creed which Eusebius of Nicomedia and his friends could not possibly sign.

Could Marcellus be its author? Theodor Zahn argued in favour of Marcellus' influence at the synod that the word was meant in a 'Marcellan' sense, that is in the sense of numerical identity rather than generic identity.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>227</sup> Zahn, *Marcellus*, 9–32.

Basil Studer argues persuasively that this was not the case: for both Eusebius of Caesarea and Athanasius ὁμοφυῆς and ὁμογενὴς were synonyms for ὁμοούσιος.<sup>228</sup>

<sup>228</sup> Basil Studer, *Trinity and Incarnation: The Faith of the Early Church*, tr. Matthias Westerhoff, ed. Andrew Louth (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 107.

It was the likes of Basil of Ancyra and Basil of Caesarea in the 350s and 360s who identified the word as meaning μον οούσιος or τ αυτοούσιος, as a way of

end p.88

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

crystallizing their own fear of 'Sabellianism'. Marcellus, however, never uses the word in any of his extant writings, despite the fact that the *Letter to Julius* would have given him ample opportunity to do so.

Could the author of the word be Eustathius, who, after all, apparently defends it in exchanges with Eusebius of Caesarea in the years after Nicaea?<sup>229</sup>

<sup>229</sup> Socrates, *HEI*.23.8. Socrates does not actually say that Eustathius uses the word himself, but seems strongly to imply as much.

It does not, nonetheless, seem to be part of his own vocabulary; it is entirely absent from the Creed of Antioch, as well as the fragments. Athanasius, who defended the word in latter years with great gusto, is once again a likely suspect.<sup>230</sup>

<sup>230</sup> On Athanasius' use of *homoousios*, see Christopher Stead, *Divine Substance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 260–6.

But Eusebius of Caesarea's evidence demands that Constantine must have been involved in some way in the word's introduction, and may even be himself its author.<sup>231</sup>

<sup>231</sup> *Urk* 22.7 (p. 44.3–4 Opitz). Constantine (or at least his translator (see Eusebius, *VC* IV.32)) uses the word, in rather a different context, in the *Oration to the Saints* 13.1 (p. 172.12–13 Heikel), where he is trying to say that 'things which occur by nature do not belong to the same order of reality as do matters of moral choice'.

If so, this intervention may be ignorant or informed, spontaneous or carefully planted by others, a Machiavellian attack on Arius or even Eusebius of Nicomedia (whom Constantine turned against at some point), or a straightforward attempt to help along the debate. But in any case, this is the last controversial addition to the creed proper. Although various other changes were made to Eusebius' text which also make points against its original theology, they are not changes Eusebius and the others would have found great difficulty in agreeing to.

The lines 'Only-begotten Son, First-born of all creation, before all the ages begotten from the Father' were excised. Marcellus attacked the conjunction of 'Only-begotten' and 'First-born', which also appears in the Dedication Creed of Antioch, in *Against Asterius*, but no one else in the pro-Alexander alliance would have liked it either, with its suggestion that the eternal Son was a creature. Nor would any of them have liked 'Before all ages begotten from the Father', leaving room as it does for 'There was when he was not.'

On the other hand, the addition of 'Through whom all things came to be which are in the heavens and on earth' serves to underline the Son's difference from the created order. διὰ ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἄνθρωπους (because of us human beings) was added to διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν (because of our salvation), presumably to show in what sense διὰ ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἄνθρωπους ought to be used, since Arius was accused of having applied it to the 'creation' of the Word rather than to the incarnation.<sup>232</sup>

<sup>232</sup> See *Urk* 4b.9 and 14 (p. 8.6 and p. 9.12 Opitz).

κατελθόντα (having come down) was added before σαρκωθέντα (having been made flesh) to stress once again the gulf between the Son and the world, and ἐν ἀνθρώποις πολιτευσάμενον (having lived a life among humankind) was replaced by

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [90]-[94]

ἐν ἀνθρώποις ὄντα (having become a human being), perhaps under the influence of Eustathius, in order to stress that the Son was made fully human, body and soul—Marcellus doubtless approved of this change, but Alexander cannot have been too interested in it.

In the penultimate section, ἀνελθόντα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, καὶ ἔξοντα πάλιν ἐν δόξῃ κυρίου ναὶ ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς ('ascended to the Father, and he shall come again in glory to judge living and dead') becomes ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, ἔρχομενον κυρὶ ναὶ ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς ('ascended into the heavens, is coming to judge living and dead'). This may partly reflect the theology of Marcellus. The future participle ἔξοντα is replaced with the (scriptural)<sup>233</sup>

<sup>233</sup> Matt. 24: 30 and 26: 64.

present participle, making Christ's coming more clearly immediate, an effect to which the removal of πάλιν (again) also contributes. The removal of 'glory' may be intended to counteract a post-resurrection theology in which Christ's body is so glorified it no longer appears human.<sup>234</sup>

<sup>234</sup> Cf. Eusebius' *Letter to Constantia*, especially frs. 8–11 von Stockhausen.

But the change of 'heavens' for 'Father' does not seem particularly characteristic of Marcellus.<sup>235</sup>

<sup>235</sup> Cf. Re 114 K 127 S/V 84 P 116.

Finally, ἐν πνεύμα ἁγίῳ ('one holy Spirit') becomes τὸ ἁγίον πνεύμα ('the Holy Spirit', in the more usual New Testament order). Eusebius' version clearly implies the three hypostases; the Nicene Creed removes the necessity of that interpretation. Here again, Marcellus would approve, although Eustathius may well be the source of the change.

Eusebius added to his creed a version of the formula we later find attached to the Dedication Creed and defended by Asterius:

Each one of these [one Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, one Holy Spirit] exists and subsists, the Father being truly Father and the Son truly Son and the Holy Spirit truly Holy Spirit, just as our Lord said when sending out his disciples to preach: 'Go forth and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'<sup>236</sup>

<sup>236</sup> *Urk* 22.5 (p. 43.15–19 Opitz). Cf. the Dedication creed, cited in Athanasius, *Syn* 23.5–6, and Asterius, fr. 60 Vincent.

Whether or not he invented the formula, this was a clever move of Eusebius': it concentrated on his opponents' potential fissure, the number of hypostases. Marcellus would attack precisely this phrase in *Against Asterius*.

But Eusebius' opponents did not take the bait; they swept this section away entirely, and replaced it with a series of anathemas designed clearly to expose the unity in heresy of their opponents, anathematizing first of all ἡ-ν ποτε ἔτε οὐκ ἡ-ν (there was when he was not) and οὐκ ἡ-ν πρὶν γενεῖν ἡ-ν (before he was begotten he was not) and ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο (he came to be out of non-being)—the order shows that they knew which was the most

end p.90

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

important to their enemies, who had ceased to defend ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων.<sup>237</sup>

<sup>237</sup> See Hanson, 'Who Taught ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων?', in *Arianism, Historical and Theological Reassessments: Papers from The Ninth International Conference on Patristic Studies, September 5–10, 1983, Oxford, England*, ed. Robert C. Gregg, Patristic Monograph Series 11 (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1985), 79–83

A slightly later stage of the discussion, the grammar suggests, qualified the anathematizing of ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων with further anathemas for ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίᾳς (from a different *hypostasis* or *ousia*).<sup>238</sup>

<sup>238</sup> Christopher Stead, *Divine Substance*, 233–42, persuasively analyses these anathemas as intended to rule out two of three options for Christ's origin: he *is* from the Father/the Father's substance; he is *not* from nothing or from anything else (be it *ousia* or *hypostasis*).

There is no reason why the exclusion of ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως need be seen as implicitly Sabellian;<sup>239</sup>

<sup>239</sup> See the somewhat anxious discussion in Hanson, *Search*, 167–8.

the pro-Arian party and their successors clearly had far less difficulty with ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως than with ἐξ ἑτέρας οὐσίᾳς, since they reuse the former in the Fourth Creed of Antioch and its compounds (with the gloss 'and not from God'),<sup>240</sup>

<sup>240</sup> Cited in Athanasius, *Syn* 25.5.

whereas they drop the latter altogether. The anathematizing of τρεπτός and ἀλλοιωτός (changeable and alterable) was not a problem for the pro-Arian party at all, since they also denied that Christ was either of these things: the most they argued was that he was unchangeable and unalterable by grace, not by nature.<sup>241</sup>

<sup>241</sup> So Arius (*Urk* 6.2 (p. 12.9 Opitz)); ἄν ἀλλοίωτος on its own is used by both Arius (*Urk* 1.4 (p. 3.3)) and Eusebius of Nicomedia (*Urk* 8.4 (p. 16.9–10)).

## (v) The Canons of Nicaea

Marcellus apparently did not sign the Nicene Creed. The earliest list of signatories has a certain 'Pancharius of Ancyra', otherwise unknown, in his stead, who may be an accompanying presbyter or deacon.<sup>242</sup>

<sup>242</sup> See E. Honigmann, 'La liste originale', 46, *index restitutus* no. 108.

Marcellus may have retired, ill or feigning to be so, and left his substitute to sign; it seems likely that this was a compromise which allowed him to offer his friends some support without expressing approbation for the theology



they had actually adopted.

He would not have been particularly keen on some of the theology of the Nicene Creed, with its *ousia* language and the expressions 'God from God, light from light', which leave the door open for two hypostases, although it is probable that his main unhappiness with it was the sense of missed opportunity, anger at the slipping away of the chance to condemn the Eusebian party, and perhaps the belief that had his one-hypostasis theology been adopted (as it would be at Serdica) the Eusebian party would indeed have found the creed impossible to sign. Whatever motive was uppermost, Marcellus always continued to ignore the Nicene Creed; when attempting to demonstrate his orthodoxy to Pope Julius in 341, he shunned its expressions in favour of those of *Henos Somatos* and the Roman Creed, and at Serdica he tried to replace or at least to supplement it with something more to his liking.

end p.91

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Pique, as well as theology, may have played some part in this, given that the synod was originally to have taken place at Ancyra. But Marcellus did not simply go home in disgust when things failed to move in the direction he would have wanted at Nicaea. For all the signs are that he was one of the leading figures involved in the drawing up of the Nicene canons.

Marcellus' name may not be on the earliest list of signatories to the Nicene creed, but it is on some of the Nicene lists—those, I argue elsewhere, which represent a composite list of those who signed the creed and those who signed the canons.<sup>243</sup>

<sup>243</sup> 'Did Marcellus sign the Nicene Creed?', forthcoming. Marcellus' name appears in the lists of Theodore Lector, both Syriac lists, the Armenian (as 'Marcellus of Tavium'), and two of the Latin lists (see Gelzer et al., *Patrum Nicaenorum Nomina*).

Most bishops probably signed both; one or two pro-Eusebian figures (Secundus of Tauchira, Theophilus the Goth) also only signed the canons. We cannot draw any conclusions about the number who took part in drawing up the canons, therefore, but it was probably a fairly large number. Ossius of Corduba, the likely president of the synod, presumably presided over the drawing up of the canons too. But Marcellus, with his experience, would certainly have had views on the matters in hand, and when the floor was thrown open for suggestions, would very likely have had at least one canon to propose on his own account.

The canons of Nicaea<sup>244</sup>

<sup>244</sup> Text in Joannou, *Discipline général*, i,1, 23–41.

for the most part address sensible and weighty matters, and take a certain distance from the heated theological debates which were taking place in the same setting. Where they do impinge on matters relevant to the controversy, they eschew heated language and recriminations, on the whole. In this, they contrast very favourably with the canons of both Antioch 328 and Serdica.

The first three canons seem altogether tangential to the controversy, unless the first, which concerns self-mutilation, is considered to be either a lewd joke at Origen's expense or a hit at the Lucianist Leontius, later to be bishop

of Antioch.<sup>245</sup>

<sup>245</sup> Athanasius (*De Fuga* 26.3) reports a scurrilous story that Leontius castrated himself in order to be able to live with a 'spiritual sister', Eustolium. He was supposed to have been deposed from the presbyterate for this reason.

The second canon frowns on an undesirable tendency to ordain neophytes as priests and bishops (a tendency which would get much worse as the century progressed). The third forbids clergy to have 'spiritual sisters' (once again—Iliberris/Elvira canon 27 and Ancyra canon 19 both forbid this too).

Canon 4 demands the written consent of all the bishops of a province to each new ordination—a laudable if somewhat impractical rule—but leaves the ratification of the ordination in the hands of the metropolitan. This signals a notable increase in the metropolitan's power, since it allows the metropolitan to control absolutely the theological make-up of his province.

end p.92

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Canon 5, however, foresees something of this danger and sets up twice-yearly provincial synods to allow excommunications to be thoroughly investigated in case of personal malice.

Canon 6 recognizes the jurisdiction of the bishop of Alexandria over Libya as well as Egypt, no doubt a blow to the Libyan bishops, and certainly a strengthening of Alexander's hand. The churches of 'Antioch and the other provinces' are to 'continue to have their former rights', although what these are is not spelled out. Canon 7 accords the bishop of Jerusalem particular honour, although without making clear whether he is to take precedence over the bishop of Caesarea. Eusebius and Macarius are left to make the best of whatever enmity they have.

Canon 8 allows Novatians ('Cathars') back into the Church on very friendly terms, with the right to remain clergy in places where there is no Catholic bishop or presbyter, and the possibility of being a country-bishop or priest if there is. Canons 9, 10, 11, and 12 deal with clergy ordained without proper inquiry, clergy who are found to have lapsed, those who lapsed under Licinius, and those who abandon the army and then return to it. All are dealt with firmly, even harshly—the first and second categories are to be deposed, the third are given twelve years' penance, the fourth thirteen. Canons 9 and 11 are a good deal harsher than similar provisions at Ancyra ten years previously.

Canon 13 of Nicaea, however, is (depending on one's ecclesiology) arguably the most important piece of legislation in the whole of the history of canon law:

Concerning those who are dying, the ancient and canonical law will be preserved now too, so that anyone who is dying should not be deprived of the last and most necessary viaticum. But if, after he has been forgiven and has obtained communion and partaken of the oblation, he should again be found among the living, he should be placed among those who share in the prayer only. And in general, in the case of anyone at all who is dying and asks to partake of the eucharist, let the bishop upon examination give the oblation.

This provision undoes the harsh legislation of Iliberris and Arles (which the Nicene legislators may well have had before them), and the ambiguous ruling of Neocaesarea, in favour of the tendency of Ancyra. To some, it could be considered of greater importance even than the Nicene Creed itself.

Canon 14 provided that catechumens who fell had to do three additional years as hearers before rejoining the catechumenate. Canons 15 and 16 forbade transfers from one city to another (a topic which was often to be legislated on in the future, including at Serdica), both from the cleric's point of view and the receiving city's. Canon 17 forbade clerical usury, and canon 18 the distributing of the Eucharist to priests by deacons. Canon 19 laid down the rebaptism of 'Paulinists', continuing disciples of Paul of Samosata,

end p.93

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

if there actually were such. Canon 20 ruled that the faithful should remain standing rather than kneeling during ordinary Sunday prayers.

It is tempting to imagine Marcellus making a considerable contribution to this legislation. If he had been expecting to host the Great and Priestly Synod until shortly before it happened, it would not be surprising if he had had some legislative proposals ready beforehand. Ossius of Corduba would presumably have presided over the drawing up of the canons, as noted above: he was himself an experienced legislator, one of the signatories of the canons of Iliberris, the first synod from which regular canons survive. At Serdica, nearly twenty years later, over which he also presided, he proposed most of the canons himself. But he is unlikely to have done so at Nicaea. The canons of Nicaea do not follow one theme, leading fairly smoothly from one into the next, as those of Serdica on the whole do. They either come in pairs of related problems, or else they have little to do with one another at all. There are very few we could predict Ossius' proposal of, with the possible exceptions of canons 15 and 16 (issues which are addressed again at Serdica).

Can we identify any proposals from Marcellus? This must be a hazardous enterprise—there were perhaps more than two hundred other bishops involved in drawing up the canons. On the other hand, few of them were as experienced in drawing up canon law as he was. The most we can say about Marcellus' involvement in the canons of Nicaea, perhaps, is that it would not be surprising, but consistent with what we know of his pastoral attitudes from the Ancyran legislation, if he were responsible for any or all of canons 5, 8, and 13: he believed in structured synodal gatherings, he is known to have been lenient towards the Novatians, and the Ancyran canons are unusually specific about the need to allow communion *in extremis*. But this is, at least, more than we can say about the legislative background of anyone else at the synod of Nicaea.

## (vi) The aftermath of the synod

We know from Eustathius that he and his allies were less than delighted to see Eusebius of Nicomedia and his friends sign up to the creed that had expressly been put together to make it impossible for them to sign. Arius' allies, the Libyan bishops Secundus and Theonas, seem to have been equally horrified. Eustathius was full of foreboding, which was not misplaced, even

though Constantine exiled Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis probably shortly after Eustathius gave his sermon (if that is what it is) on Proverbs 8: 22.

We do not know exactly why Constantine turned against Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis and exiled them some three months after Nicaea, though the reason he gave was Eusebius' support for Licinius. This may have begun to rankle as Constantine turned it over in his brain, or kind friends (such as Ossius) may have pointed out to him just how closely Eusebius had been involved with the previous regime. Eusebius probably contributed to

end p.94

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [95]-[99]

---

his own downfall also, thinking himself safe rather too soon in beginning negotiations for Arius' eventual restoration. If it seems shockingly inconsistent for Constantine to spout the technical terms of Eusebius of Nicomedia and praise him as a virgin and a saint in April,<sup>246</sup>

<sup>246</sup> If Eusebius is the referent of the phrase in Constantine, *Oration to the Saints* 2 (p. 155.21 Heikel).

save him from his enemies in May and June, and then exile him three months later, Constantine had been inconsistent before. He could change his mind utterly, suddenly, and violently about a person, a policy, or a situation; he certainly seems to have done so here.

So Eusebius and Theognis were sent, three months after the great final banquet at Nicaea, 'as far away as possible',<sup>247</sup>

<sup>247</sup> Constantine to the Church of Nicomedia = *Urk* 27.16 (p. 62.8 Opitz).

to somewhere in Gaul, while others replaced them in their sees. At this point, the triumph of a theology of the eternal existence of the Son, with all that that entailed, together with the party who stood for it, must have seemed fairly secure. This was, as we have seen, by far the most widely expressed view at this point in the East, although by no means the only one. The anti-Eusebian coalition, particularly Marcellus, despite no doubt inevitable relief at Eusebius' being exiled after all, must have viewed Constantine's involvement in the affair with less than complete joy, and felt that, whatever the disadvantages of persecuting emperors, Constantine's attitude to the Church looked as though it would not be without its difficulties either. But for the present, Eusebius was gone, Alexander was safe, Eustathius' presbyters had lost their voice (and probably soon their churches, for the time being), the imperial capital was about to move from hostile Nicomedia to friendly Byzantium, and the churches could return to a state of peace. It was the last time they were to be at peace with one another for a considerable period.

end p.95

---

## 3 From Nicaea to the Death of Constantine

---

### Sara Parvis

**Abstract:** This chapter argues that Eustathius of Antioch's deposition took place in autumn 327 as a result of real or faked evidence of sexual misdemeanour, triggering a reversal by Constantine of his previous ecclesiastical policy. It is suggested that Marcellus wrote his *Against Asterius* partly in response to this event and to the subsequent return of Eusebius of

Nicomedia. It is argued that Marcellus, like Athanasius, was trapped by a summons to the Synod of Tyre in 335 when he refused to accept Arius' reception back into communion at Jerusalem, despite Constantine's orders. Marcellus' trial is examined from the accounts of Sozomen and Eusebius of Caesarea, and his innocence established of the theological charges brought.

**Keywords:** Eustathius of Antioch, Constantine, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Against Asterius, Athanasius, Synod of Tyre, Arius, Eusebius of Caesarea, Sozomen

The years between Nicaea and the death of Constantine saw a series of events which completely changed the balance of ecclesiastical power in the East. Unfortunately, although a clear picture of both the nature of these events and their relationship to one another is crucial to making sense of the period, both the nature and the timing of many of them are in fact disputed, as indeed they were even at the time of the controversy itself. Nonetheless, it is possible to see the two alliances that had been formed before Nicaea still clearly in action. Throughout the next twelve years, the two Eusebii, Theognis, Maris, Narcissus, Theodotus, Patrophilus, and Paulinus (until his death) act in one another's interests and against those of the old pro-Alexander alliance; Eustathius, Alexander, Athanasius, and Marcellus (we have no news of Macarius, Hellanicus, and Eutropius on this point) act against them in return.

Historians from Socrates onwards have admitted to being confused by the uncertainty of the sources concerning much of this key dozen-year period. It is important, however, not to read their confusion back into the events of the time, still less its theology. Confusion reigns in the earliest sources which the later historians make use of (the works of Eusebius of Caesarea and Athanasius, the letters of the 'Eastern' and 'Western' synods of Serdica, and what we know of Sabinus of Heraclea) only because their authors all have strong motives for distorting and suppressing much of the action in which they or their allies were involved at this period. All the indications are, however, that the leading actors on both sides (who were all extremely intelligent) knew exactly what they were doing at every stage, and were almost equally well informed about the thoughts and actions of their opponents.

This is also true of the theological debate, however much the succeeding generations attempted to obfuscate it or ignore its subtleties (modern theologians are well used to the passionately disputed questions of one generation becoming passé non-problems to the next, or their exciting, daring theological

end p.96

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

moves looking overblown and ridiculous, only fit to be laughed at, to their successors, or even, thirty years later, to the people who originally advocated them). The fact that Socrates declared he could not understand why Eustathius of Antioch and Eusebius of Caesarea (in letters which unfortunately do not survive) called one another 'polytheist' and 'Sabellian' when they agreed on so much shows his ignorance, not theirs.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.23.8, claims Eusebius and Eustathius both confessed that God is One in three hypostases. Sozomen (*HE* II.23), who presumably also had access to

the correspondence, significantly omits the claim that both believed in three hypostases.

As we can see from the similar debate of Eusebius and Marcellus ten years later, the theologians of the time knew perfectly well what they were fighting about. If they loathed each other's theology, it was not because they did not understand it, even if they did caricature it unfairly.

The following are the important events from these twelve years attested in one or more of the ancient sources. Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea were deposed and banished by Constantine;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Urk 27 (= CPG 2055).

Eustathius of Antioch and Eusebius of Caesarea held a pamphlet war;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.23.6–8; Sozomen, *HE* II.18.3–4.

the empress Helena Augusta toured the East;<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Eusebius, *VC* III.42–47.

Eustathius of Antioch was deposed by a synod presided over by Eusebius of Caesarea, and replaced, probably by Paulinus of Tyre.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.24; Sozomen, *HE* II.19; Theodoret, *HE* I.21.

Alexander of Alexandria died, and was replaced as bishop by his secretary, the deacon Athanasius.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>*Festal Index*, Preface, in Annik Martin, with Micheline Albert, *Histoire 'Acéphale' et Index Syriaque des Lettres Festales d'Athanase d'Alexandrie*, Sch 317 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1985), 226–7.

A synod which probably met in Bithynia, encouraged by the Emperor, pardoned first Arius and the deacon Euzoius and later also Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Urk 31 (= CPG 2048).

Eusebius and Theognis held a large synod at Nicomedia which supposedly deposed Alexander of Alexandria and Eustathius and issued a creed and various letters;<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* II.7 (p. 18.21–p. 19.10 Bidez).

the Cappadocian layman Asterius the Sophist circulated a writing in defence of a letter Eusebius of Nicomedia had written to Paulinus.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.36; Sozomen, *HE* II.33; Marcellus, Re 29–30, 77; KI 34–35, 87; S/V 2, 9, 18; P 2–3, 7; Eusebius of Caesarea, *Contra Marcellum* I.4 *passim*.

A further synod at Antioch presided over by Eusebius of Caesarea, a synod of the civil Diocese of the East, attempted to elect him bishop of Antioch, and issued a number of canons strengthening the power of the metropolitan bishop.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Eusebius, *VC* III.60–62. Joannou, *Discipline générale* i.2, 102–26; see Hess, *Early Development*, p. 48 n. 45 for identification of these canons, which Joannou assigns to the Dedication synod of 341, with the synod in question.

Marcellus wrote and circulated an attack on Asterius and other Eusebians, particularly Eusebius of Caesarea.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.36; Sozomen, *HE* II.33; Eusebius, *CM*, *passim*.

A synod at Tyre, which was investigating various



misdeeds of Athanasius with a view to deposing him, having temporarily adjourned and reconvened at Jerusalem for the consecration of a new basilica there, received Arius back into communion and censured Marcellus for refusing to communicate with him, as well as formally or informally warning him over the theological content of his work against Asterius.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 21; Socrates, *HE* I.36.

Marcellus sent his work against Asterius to the Emperor, but Constantine handed the work over to a synod of bishops for trial by them;<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Eusebius, *CM* II.4.29.

the synod, which met at Constantinople in the presence of the Emperor, deposed Marcellus.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Hilary, *FHA* IV 1.3.1–3 (p. 50.18–p. 51.11 Feder).

Arius was scheduled to be received into communion at Constantinople, but died the day before the ceremony.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Athanasius, *De Morte Arii*.

Constantine died; after his death, Eusebius of Caesarea published two works against Marcellus, at least one of which had been written before it: *Against Marcellus* and *Ecclesiastical Theology*. One further event from this period can be deduced from the sources in general, although none spells it out or explains it: Ossius of Corduba, for so long at Constantine's side, left the court and returned to Spain.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Victor C. De Clercq, *Ossius of Cordova: A Contribution to the History of the Constantinian Period*, The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity 13 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1954), 282 ff.

Among these various events, the interpretation of which is so vital to making sense of the progress of the controversy past its initial stages, only a few have certain or generally agreed dates, many are uncertain as to relative order, and some are disputed altogether. The date of the death of Constantine (22 May 337) is, of course, widely attested;<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See *PLRE* I, 'Fl. Val. Constantinus 4', 224.

the dates of the death of Alexander (17 April 328), the consecration of Athanasius (8 June 328), and the synod of Tyre (July–October 335) are known from the *Index* to Athanasius' Festal Letters.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Festal Index*, Preface (Annik and Martin, 226–7); Year 8 (Annik and Martin, 232–5).

Philostorgius' assertion that Eusebius and Theognis were deposed and exiled three months after Nicaea is now fairly widely accepted (although there remains widespread doubt, given the lack of any corroborating evidence, that Maris of Chalcedon was deposed at the same time, as Philostorgius claims).

Otherwise, there are problems. The most likely occasion for Ossius' departure from court is Constantine's return to the West in 326, but the reason can only be guessed at (De Clercq, for example, suggests he left Constantine out of disgust at the execution of Crispus). The pamphlet war between Eustathius and Eusebius referred to in Socrates is undatable, except as taking place between Nicaea and the deposition of the former. The date of

the restoration of Eusebius and Theognis is generally placed between December 327 and December 328, following Philostorgius' claim that they were in exile 'three whole years' and taking into account a letter of Constantine's to Arius dated 27 November, but the sequence of events involved

end p.98

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

and their relationship to the restoration of Arius has been much disputed. The date and cause of the deposition of Eustathius of Antioch is more problematic still. Every year between 326 and 331 has been proposed, and at least four different causes; in particular, the relative order of the deposition of Eustathius and the restoration of Eusebius is much argued over. Philo-storgius' synod at Nicomedia led by Eusebius and Theognis which deposed Alexander and Eustathius is generally assumed to be a garbled version of the Nicomedian synod which reinstated Eusebius and Theognis, and is sometimes even used as evidence for a 'second session of Nicaea'. Asterius' letter in defence of Eusebius of Nicomedia is dated variously to just before and just after the return of Eusebius, and variously identified or not with the work of Asterius which Athanasius cites in *Against the Arians*. Those who think Marcellus' *Against Asterius* was originally written to and for the Emperor (for example Barnes and Seibt) assign the writing of it to the year immediately after the synod of Tyre and in reaction to its events.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 56; Seibt, *Markell*, 11.

Simonetti, Hanson, and Markus Vinzent, however, following the indications of Socrates, all place Marcellus' composition before that synod, and possibly as early as 330.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Simonetti, *Crisi*, 131; Hanson, *Search*, 217; Vinzent, *Markell*, p. xvii.

The date of the deposition of Marcellus, which Socrates fixes at 335/6, has in the past been set as early as 328 (Schwartz), or 330 (Bardy), although recent commentators have returned to 335 (Simonetti, as Gericke had earlier argued), 336 (Hanson, Barnes) or even early 337 (Seibt, Vinzent).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Eduard Schwartz, 'Eusebios', *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, ed. A Pauly, G. Wissowa, and G. Kroll, 3rd edn., vi (1907), 1370–439, at 1421; Gustav Bardy, 'La politique religieuse de Constantin après le concile de Nicée', *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 8 (1928), 516–51, at 534; Simonetti, *Crisi*, 131–2; Hanson, *Search*, 217; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 56; Vinzent, *Markell*, p. xviii. For a summary of dates suggested by earlier scholars, see Seibt, *Theologie*, 241–4.

The date of the death of Arius has been tied to the same synod which deposed Marcellus by, for example, Barnes and Rowan Williams, although it necessarily alters with the proposed date of that synod.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Barnes, *Constantine*, 241–2; Williams, *Arius*, 80.

Finally, most commentators assign both Eusebius' works against Marcellus, *Against Marcellus* and the *Ecclesiastical Theology*, to the same time, some (for example, Simonetti, Hanson, Lienhard) to the period immediately after the synod of Constantinople,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Simonetti, *Crisi*, 132; Hanson, *Search*, 217–18; Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, 4.

some (Barnes, Seibt) to the period after Constantine's death,<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 56; Seibt, *Markell*, 243.

but Vinzent has identified *Against Marcellus* (surely correctly) as Eusebius' expert witness from the synod of Constantinople itself.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Vinzent, *Markell*, p. xix.

Three important missing pieces of information stand out among these disputed events. Why were Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia recalled from exile? Why was Eustathius deposed? And what is the relative order of these two key events? Other crucial questions are not so much of fact as of

end p.99

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [100]-[104]

interpretation—were the synod of Tyre that deposed Athanasius and the synod of Constantinople that deposed Marcellus validly convened, and did they produce valid judgements? Dependent on the answers to all of these is the period's biggest question: was there a conspiracy by a group of 'those around' Eusebius of Nicomedia ('the Eusebians'), many of whom were former allies of Arius, to depose as many as possible of their opponents from the period before Nicaea? The rest of this book will bring to bear previously ignored but vital evidence to demonstrate that there was.

My proposed interpretation and dating of the events outlined above, which will be argued for below, is as follows:

**October 325:** Eusebius and Theognis exiled, probably to Gaul, perhaps to Trier.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* I.10 (p. 11.6–7 Bidez), II.1<sup>b</sup> (p. 12.25–26), II.7 and 7<sup>a</sup> (p. 18.21–p. 19.1 and p. 18.31–p. 19.18).

**Autumn 325–Autumn 327:** Pamphlet war between Eustathius of Antioch and Eusebius of Caesarea.

**Autumn 326–Winter 327:** The empress Helena Augusta, now in her late seventies, carries out a royal tour of the East in lieu of her son.

**Summer–Autumn 327:** Plot to unseat Eustathius is conceived and executed, culminating in October 327 in his deposition for fornication (hushed up at Constantine's request) at the autumn provincial synod of Coele Syria, to be replaced by Paulinus of Tyre. Riots in Antioch, fed by universal confusion and rumours about what has actually happened.

**Autumn 327–Spring 328:** Constantine, horrified at Eustathius' impurity, loses his faith in the Nicene agreement concerning Arius, dismisses Ossius of Corduba from his court, and recalls Arius and Euzoius. They are reinstated at his instigation by the autumn provincial synod of Bithynia; Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis take the opportunity to write to the next scheduled Bithynian provincial synod, meeting in Lent, to engineer their own pardon by Constantine. Paulinus dies and is replaced as Bishop of Antioch by Eulalius, once again with much rioting.

**17 April 328:** Death of Alexander of Alexandria.

**8 June 328:** Athanasius consecrated Bishop of Alexandria.

**September 328:** Following the death of Eulalius after only a few months in office, Eusebius of Caesarea presides over a synod of the civil diocese of Oriens at Antioch, which deposes a number of bishops and issues canons. A large synod convenes at Nicomedia at which the Melitians are present and present their complaints about Athanasius' ordination, and which issues a creed similar to or perhaps even identical with the Second Creed of Antioch, and various theological letters, including one by Asterius the Sophist, *In Defence of Eusebius*, defending the

end p.100

theology of Eusebius of Nicomedia by means of a commentary on the creed which has just been issued.

**Spring–Summer 329:** Asterius tours Syria and elsewhere, giving readings from *In Defence of Eusebius*.

**329–330:** Marcellus composes *Against Asterius* and circulates it to churches in Galatia and probably much more widely.

**July–October 335:** Synod of Tyre, including consecration of the new basilica at Jerusalem. Preliminary condemnation of *Against Asterius*.

**Winter 335/6:** Marcellus sends *Against Asterius* to Constantine with a covering letter full of flatteries which he ignores, summoning a synod to try it for heresy.

**July 336:** Synod of Constantinople deposes Marcellus on the basis of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Against Marcellus*, which he composes for the occasion and publishes later, supplemented by an appendix.

**Saturday 24 July 336:** Death of Arius.

**Sunday 25 July 336:** Constantine's thirtieth anniversary celebrated.

**22 May 337:** Constantine dies.

## 1. Eustathius' Deposition and Eusebius' Return

Every year from 326 to 331 has been suggested for the deposition of Eustathius of Antioch, and a whole variety of reasons.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The evidence for the dating is well summarized in three articles: H. Chadwick, 'The Fall of Eustathius of Antioch', *JTS* 49 (1948), 27–35; R. P. C. Hanson, 'The Fate of Eustathius of Antioch', *ZKG* 95 (1984), 171–9; R. W. Burgess, 'The Date of the Deposition of Eustathius of Antioch', *JTS* 51 (2000), 150–60. Burgess has brought some interesting and important new sources to bear on the question, but as we shall see they are not quite as conclusive as he claims.

Athanasius claims he insulted the emperor's mother Helena;<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *History of the Arians* 4.1.

Socrates claims Eustathius was deposed for Sabellianism on the indictment of Cyrus of Beroea;<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.24, adducing an encomium of Eusebius of Emesa by George of Laodicea, which is usually dated to the 350s.

everyone else adduces some sexual misdemeanour or other, whether real or trumped up, all different in their details. Schwartz, Chadwick, Simonetti, and Barnes all conclude that Eustathius' deposition preceded Eusebius of

Nicomedia's return;<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Simonetti, *Crisi*, 107; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 17.

Hanson, Burgess, and the fifth-century historians reverse the order of these events.

The reason for the deposition of Eustathius is perhaps more important than the date, but I would favour October 327, for the following reasons. Firstly, the securest piece of information we have is still the one which comes from the two rival synodal letters of Serdica in 343: the 'Eastern' letter says that

Asclepas of Gaza was deposed seventeen years previously<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV 1.11.1 (p. 56.19–20 Feder).

and the

end p.101

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

'Western' one speaks of his being deposed at Antioch in the presence of 'his enemies and Eusebius of Caesarea'.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Hilary, *FH B* II.1.6 (p. 118.3–5 Feder).

This implies the presidency of Eusebius at a synod in Antioch, which is highly unlikely to have happened during Eustathius' reign, whereas we know that it did happen a few months after Eustathius' deposition. Since the Antiochene calendar began on 1 October, and the 'Eastern' letter of Serdica may well have been written after that date, this gives us September 328 as the latest possible date, counting inclusively, for Asclepas' deposition,<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> If the Easterners sent their letter after 1 October 343, the Asclepas evidence actually allows a date in January–September 328, it should be noted, and may demand one after 1 October 327, if one assumes they are using the Antiochene calendar, with its New Year on 1 October, to reckon the years.

and hence also the *terminus ante quem* of Eustathius' deposition. Burgess sportingly admits this, and is forced to conclude that the Easterners must have been out by one year in order to privilege his hypothetically reconstructed lost continuation of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Chronici canones*—not very likely if, as his narrative assumes, they are employing the fifteen-year indiction cycle to make the calculation.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Burgess, *Chronography*, 196.

This, however, if it was composed as he argues in Antioch around the year 350, would still not be as good a witness—even if it were still extant—as the Easterners' letter (which I will argue was written by Eusebius' successor Acacius).<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Burgess (*Chronography*, 193) thinks he also has 'a contemporary Antiochene source and what appear to be two independent witnesses to the date of the council' which deposed Eustathius (640 Seleucid era = Oct. 328–Sept. 329, Antioch reckoning), but since his account allows that it was possible for a reader of this source to date the synod to the time of Julian, confuse Eustathius of Antioch with Eustathius of Sebaste, and confuse the synod with the synod of Gangra, it cannot have been very clear.

Secondly, Athanasius connects Eustathius' deposition to the empress Helena, and Theodoret's depiction of the circumstances surrounding the event fits well with her return from her tour of the Holy Land in 327. Helena died in the presence of Constantine apparently in late 327, but it must have been very late, to allow her time to travel from Rome to Jerusalem and back to Nicomedia starting only in July or August 326, making the stately progression of an empress of nearly eighty, and honouring all the cities along the way with appropriate dignity.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Even on the journey from Rome to Nicomedia, before the pilgrimage actually began, she is unlikely at her age to have managed an average of more than 100 miles per week (and probably rather less), resting at least every other day; assuming her rate of progress slowed considerably once she left Nicomedia and began journeying as a full-blown imperial representative, properly honouring each town she passed through, this means she must have left her journey to Antioch until the spring of 327, to avoid crossing the mountain pass through the 'Cilician gates' in winter weather.

Theodoret's account suggests that those who depose Eustathius join a synod already in progress, which must be the scheduled Syrian synod of October 327.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> For the timing of the twice-yearly synods that all provinces are required to hold, see Nicaea canon 5.

Thirdly, Burgess cites a Syriac chronicle (*Chronicon miscellaneum ad annum Domini 724 pertinens* (= *Liber Calipharum*)) which states that Eustathius was bishop for four years.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Burgess, *Chronography*, 192.

Burgess himself sees this as evidence that Eustathius

end p.102

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

was deposed in 'late 328 or early 329', but if we date Eustathius' election to early 324 and count inclusively, this would allow a deposition any time from early 327 to early 328. Even dating Eustathius' term from late 324 or early 325 can allow a terminus in the last three months of 327, if the Antiochene calendar beginning on 1 October is the basis of the calculation.

If we turn to the question of the relative order of Eustathius' deposition and Eusebius' return, the argument that all the church historians place the latter before the former is much weaker than it seems at first sight, because no one except Theodoret seems to have more than the barest evidence that the former event took place, together with some general gossip. Socrates does not state that Eusebius of Nicomedia was actually involved in the deposition of Eustathius, and explicitly states that he has very little information on it, other than rumour and what he inferred from Eusebius' *Life of*

*Constantine*.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.24.1–9.

Sozomen, clearly relying on the same source, gives us all the information he actually has in one sentence:

A synod having happened in Antioch, Eustathius was taken away from the church of Antioch, the true reason being, as the general view has it, that he approved the faith drawn up in Nicaea and rejected those around Eusebius and Paulinus, bishop of Tyre, and Patrophilus of Scythopolis, whose opinion the priests around the East followed, and openly accused them of thinking like Arius; but the pretext was that he had been detected bringing shame on the priesthood by unholy

acts.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Sozomen, *HE* II.19.1.

This mention of 'Eusebius' may well be what has triggered both historians to place the events in this order, but it looks likely that Eusebius of Caesarea was meant in the original, and the names are not closely attached to the account of the synod in any case. Neither has any names of those actually involved in this until they begin following Eusebius of Caesarea's account of a synod which tried to make him bishop of Antioch some months later.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.24.5–8 and Sozomen, *HE* II.19.2–6, simply follow Eusebius, *VC* III.59–62.

Philostorgius' account, meanwhile, clearly cannot be taken at face value, as he claims that the same synod (at Nicomedia) that deposed Eustathius also deposed Alexander of Alexandria.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* 2.7 (p. 18.21–p. 19.10 Bidez).

It is likely that he is elaborating on some vague reference to the downfall of both in his source. Theodoret, meanwhile, claims that Eusebius (whom Theodoret blames for the whole) is by now bishop of Constantinople, a



translation which did not happen until the death of Constantine nearly a decade later: clearly this account is not unproblematic either.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Theodoret, *HE* I.21.1.

More light can be shed on the question by the evidence concerning the date of the return of Arius and Euzoius, and Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis, from exile. Philostorgius tells us that Eusebius and Theognis (and Maris, whom he claims was exiled at the same time) returned from exile after

end p.103

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

'three whole years'.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* II.7 (p. 18.21 – p. 19.1 Bidez).

We also have a letter from Constantine to Arius of an unspecified year, dated 27 November, asking why he has not availed himself of the emperor's previous invitation to him, and instructing him to come to court immediately by imperial post.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *Urk* 29, dated '5 days before the Kalends of December' (p. 63.7).

In addition, we have a letter from Eusebius and Theognis, petitioning an unspecified synod of bishops which has already accepted Arius back into communion to allow the petitioners back also, and to petition the Emperor to the same end.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Urk* 31 (pp. 65–6).

The balance of probability is that when Philostorgius said Eusebius and Theognis were in exile 'three whole years', he meant three complete years,<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> T. D. Barnes claims ('Constantine's *Speech*', 33) that μετὰ τρεῖς ἔτους ἐνιαυτοῦς 'does not mean... "after three complete years"', but that in late Greek idiom, ἔτη/ἐνιαυτοὶ (whole + number + years) designates 'a period which can be significantly less than that number of full calendar years'. In fact, late Greek idiom is ambiguous, and often does mean 'x complete years'. In Eusebius of Caesarea's usage, for example, besides many occasions where the term is used ambiguously, there are a number of negative examples in particular which must mean this: Gaius ruled for 'not four whole years', according to *HE* II.8.1 (the *Chronicle* gives him three years and ten months (p. 177.11 Helm) ); the Appendix to Book VIII of the *HE* records the fact that Diocletian and Maximian relinquished their rule 'not two whole years into the persecution' (p. 796.11 Schwartz)—the same piece of information is presented at *HE* VIII.13.10 in the expression 'the second year was not yet completed'. As a general rule, the shorter the time involved, the more likely the author is to mean 'complete years'; a passage such as *HE* III.7.8, where God held back the punishment of the Jews for 'forty whole years after their rash deed against the Christ', does indeed mean 'a whole forty years', that is, thirty-nine and a bit, rather than 'forty complete years'.

either from the end of Nicaea (July/August) or from the time they were exiled (September/October).<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> 'And banishment befell Eusebius, three months from the synod' (Philostorgius, *HE* I.10 (p. 11.6–7 Bidez)).

This would take us to some time between July and October 328. If this is the case, we may imagine that Eusebius and Theognis had petitioned the spring synod of Nicomedia (assuming Bithynia was following the custom of a

twice-yearly provincial synod laid down at Nicaea)<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Williams (*Arius*, 73) makes this suggestion.

to allow them to return. If the synod was meeting in Lent (March), it would probably have taken a month or so to deliberate, petition Constantine, and receive a reply. If Eusebius and Theognis were in Trier, they might have received word of their pardon by about the end of May (Trier is thirty days even by imperial post from Constantinople), and managed to return to Nicomedia perhaps in mid-July (assuming they combined a desire for speed with a certain care for their own comfort, and made an average of thirty miles a day).

When, then, did Constantine write Arius the letter dated 27 November? Presumably the previous winter. The letter itself claims that Constantine had previously written to Arius asking him to present himself at court, and had been surprised that he did not do so immediately. If he wrote from Nicomedia or Constantinople to Illyricum, he could have expected Arius to receive his letter in a fortnight or so (depending on where exactly in Illyricum

end p.104

---

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006

pp. [105]-[109]

---

he was),<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Illyricum is identified as Arius' place of exile by Philostorgius, *HE* I.9c (p. 11.15 Bidez); see also Chapter 4, below.

and might have expected that Arius would present himself at court perhaps a month later. All in all, the latest he might reasonably have first written to Arius which would allow him to be irritated at Arius' non-appearance would be about the middle of September.

What might have happened before the middle of September 327 to cause Constantine to write to Arius recalling him to court? Perhaps the same thing that led to the fall of Eustathius that same autumn.

All the sources agree that Eustathius was deposed at a synod, as might be reasonably expected. But details about the synod are remarkably unclear for an event of such importance; there is no account of who called it, or why. We know far more, surprisingly, about the synods which deposed Paul of Samosata than we do about this one. Since the timing fits, it was presumably the ordinary twice-yearly provincial synod laid down by Nicaea.

Let us return to Theodoret's account of the event, despite its problematic 'Eusebius of Constantinople', because many of its circumstantial details are persuasive. A party comes from the imperial court, at Constantinople, claiming to be going to visit Jerusalem (where the empress Helena, aged nearly eighty, is probably just finishing her long, slow pilgrimage of the East and the Holy Land).<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Helena, with limitless funds at her disposal and a train of imperial officials to arrange everything, enjoying more power and prestige than she probably ever had in her life before, had no incentive to return to Nicomedia more quickly than necessary (cf. Eusebius, *VC* III.45).

They pass through Antioch, where they are given the appropriate honours by Eustathius, and go on to Palestine, where they congregate with Eusebius of Caesarea, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, Aetius of Lydda, Theodotus of Laodicea, and others. These all make a show of honouring the imperial party (now Helena's party) by escorting them back to Antioch. On their return to Antioch, there is a synod taking place. (They presumably let Helena go on ahead at this point, to spare her the embarrassment of what is about to happen, and the church the publicity of losing its bishop while she is in the city.) They order all the spectators to retire, and produce a woman of low degree, who announces that Eustathius is the father of her baby. They depose him for adultery; when the other bishops present object, they retire to the emperor and persuade him to banish Eustathius.

The most plausible part of this account is the secrecy in which the event takes place. It is clear that almost no one, including the close allies of those who deposed him, really knew why Eustathius had been deposed. Rumours abounded, but they were all very vague. Two things strongly suggest the

involvement of the emperor: this secrecy, and the absoluteness of the sentence. The success of the secrecy (enormously difficult in this kind of case), furthermore, suggests the emperor had agreed to Eustathius' deposition in advance, and was therefore in a position to demand silence on the matter from all those involved.

end p.105

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Why? I suggest that Eusebius' allies at court had shown Constantine proof, real or trumped-up, of some sexual transgression of Eustathius', and in his characteristic fashion where anything of the sort was concerned, Constantine took extreme and instant measures to sweep the impiety off the face of the earth. It was not much more than a year since he had executed his own son Crispus, followed by his wife Fausta, for something similar, which was shrouded in similar secrecy (and provoked similar levels of gossip).<sup>52</sup>

<sup>52</sup> On the mysterious affair (and the gossip it provoked), see Barnes, *Constantine*, 220–1.

At Nicaea, Theodoret reports, Constantine was said as he burned various petitions against bishops without reading them to have declared that the faults of priests should not be made manifest to the multitude. 'And they say that he also added that, if he became an eye-witness to a bishop corrupting another man's marriage, he would cover that which was being lawlessly done with his purple, lest the sight of what was happening do harm to those who saw it.'<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Theodoret, *HE* I.11.6.

That is essentially what he seems to have done in the case of Eustathius. One rather wonders what happened to the putative mother of his baby.

On the furnishing to Constantine of evidence of Eustathius' iniquity, I posit, he would have issued a warrant for his exile, urging the greatest of secrecy, but leaving his deposition to be organized by the bishops. A party seems, according to Theodoret's account, to have left Constantinople with great pomp to journey to Palestine and meet with key bishops there [as well as Helena, presumably]; Theodoret names them as 'Eusebius of Constantinople' and Theognis, but he must be supplying the first of these names, at least; perhaps this initiative was actually taken by some of Eusebius' secular connections at court. Secular officials would doubtless have handled the warrant; the bishops themselves would have handled the actual deposition, but with imperial officials at hand to hush the matter up instantly and escort Eustathius away under guard (as was done with Paul of Constantinople on a similar occasion),<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> On the exile of Paul, see Barnes, *Athanasius*, 212–17.

the whole thing would be neatly sewn up. Eustathius' friends might never have seen him again, after he was escorted away into Illyricum;<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Theodoret claims that 'he was led away through Thrace to an Illyrian city' (*HE* I.22.1).

certainly we hear little more of him than the cities he was rumoured to be in. In the legends of Eustathian circles, the courtiers close to Eusebius of Nicomedia would have become Eusebius of Nicomedia himself with the passage of time, since the names of the imperial officials concerned would

make a much less smoothly rounded story, and the Eustathians must have concluded that Eusebius' malevolence lay behind it all, particularly after the events that followed. But Eusebius of Nicomedia himself may in fact have had nothing to do with it at all.

Meanwhile, however, presumably at the prompting of appropriate persons at court, Constantine would have come to doubt the whole Nicene settlement, and set about recalling Arius (he may have dismissed Ossius as his special adviser at the same time, or Ossius may simply have decided not to return East

end p.106

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

with Constantine after the latter's twentieth anniversary in Rome). He would not have needed an ecclesiastical synod simply to recall Arius from exile, without sending him back to take up ecclesiastical office again; he presumably persuaded the autumn synod of Bithynia to show 'philanthropy'<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> 'It seemed good to your piety that he be shown philanthropy and recalled' (*Urk* 31 (p. 65.15)).

to Arius (while not denying his past heresy) by accepting him back into communion. Arius, not surprisingly, was wary. But Eusebius and Theognis, getting wind of the pardon of Arius, wrote to the spring synod of Bithynia pointing out that, since they had been condemned for refusing to accept that Arius was guilty, it hardly made sense for them to stay in exile once he was pardoned, and asked the synod to petition the emperor on their behalf. The emperor seems to have accepted the petition, which was no doubt couched in slightly more gracious terms than the letter of Eusebius and Theognis<sup>57</sup> which we have.

<sup>57</sup> *Urk* 31 (pp. 65–6), transmitted by both Socrates (I.14.2) and Sozomen (II.16.3).

This account of the deposition of Eustathius and of its relationship to the pardoning of Arius, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Theognis of Nicaea is inevitably speculative, but it would explain a number of difficulties in the evidence for Eustathius' fall as we have it. It would explain the confusion about what actually happened: if Constantine decreed that the affair should be completely hushed up, it would explain why even Eustathius' enemies other than those who were actually present never heard the full story, though of course that would not have precluded a plethora of hints and arch innuendo, soon to be developed into rumours of all kinds. It would explain why Eustathius' departure was greeted with such spectacular and long-lasting popular unrest: his supporters knew only that he had been toppled, wrongly as they no doubt would have presumed, because the full story necessary to quell the rumours could not be made known. It would explain why Athanasius could claim twenty years later without fear of definite knowledge to the contrary that Eustathius' only crime had been to speak ill of the emperor's mother. It would explain why even Eustathius' opponents could not agree on whether his crime was Sabellianism or fornication, and if the latter, what the details were. And it would explain an otherwise utterly inexplicable volte-face in Constantine's ecclesiastical policy only two years or so after Nicaea.

## 2. Reactions to the Reversal

### (i) Antioch

In the wake of Eustathius' deposition, Antioch suffered a series of riots so serious that imperial troops had to be sent in to quell them. Paulinus of Tyre, now presumably recognized as having been the true bishop of Antioch ever

end p.107

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

since the death of Philogonius,<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> This is the solution Paul Parvis and I propose to the Paulinus problem, adumbrated in his 'Constantine's Letter?', according to which some bishop-lists place Paulinus before Eustathius, and some after. Some chronicles (see Burgess, *Chronography*, 186) do actually give him the five years he would have if Eustathius were removed from the reckoning.

lasted six more months, and his successor Eulalius three; at each death there were further riots. After the death of Eulalius, we have a very interesting snapshot of the situation, including a synod which must have taken place in mid-328, from Eusebius of Caesarea. As usual, he is in allusive mode, and utterly ignores his own role in these events:

Once more Envy...lit a great flame and plunged the church of Antioch into disasters of tragic proportions, so that the whole city was all but completely destroyed. The church people were split into two factions, while the general population of the city including the magistrates and military personnel were stirred up to warlike attitudes, and even swords might well have been used, had not God's oversight and fear of the Emperor quelled the passions of the mob, and once more the Emperor's patience, in the manner of a saviour and physician of souls, applied the medicine of argument to those who were sick.

He negotiated very gently with the congregations, sending the most loyal of his proven courtiers who held the rank of *comes*, and he exhorted them in frequent letters to adopt a pacific attitude. He taught that they should behave in a manner befitting godliness, and used persuasion and pleading in what he wrote to them, pointing out that he had personally listened to the one who caused the sedition. These letters of his too, which are full of helpful instruction, we would have produced at this point, but they might bring discredit on the persons accused. I will therefore set these aside, determining not to renew the memory of evils, and will include in my work those which he composed in satisfaction at the unity and peace of the rest. In these he urged them not to try to obtain a leader from outside, inasmuch as they had achieved peace, but by the rule of the Church to choose as pastor that person whom the universal Saviour of the world would

himself designate. (VC 3.59.1–4)<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, tr. with commentary by A. Cameron and S. G. Hall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 147.

Eusebius goes on to give three letters in which Constantine notes that 'the people of Antioch' and a group led by Theodotus of Laodicea, Theodore of

Tarsus, Narcissus of Neronias, Aetius of Lydda, and Alphaeus of Apamea have elected Eusebius of Caesarea bishop of Antioch, and refuses to accept the election; he commends Eusebius of Caesarea himself for writing to refuse the transfer as uncanonical.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> The three letters are reproduced in *VC* III.60–62.

Constantine recommends two alternatives to them, both presbyters: Euphronius of Cappadocian Caesarea and George of Arethusa. They clearly chose Euphronius.

What must be the canons of this synod, since the provinces and names match so well, survive in the various canonical collections based on the 'Antioch collection', together with a short synodal letter which is as follows:

The holy and most peaceful synod which has been gathered by God in Antioch from the provinces of Syria Coele, Phoenicia, Palestine, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Cilicia,

end p.108

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Isauria, to our like-minded and holy fellow liturgists throughout the provinces, greetings in the Lord. The grace and truth of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, having visited the holy church of Antioch, and joining us together with concord and harmony and a spirit of peace, accomplished many other things, and among them all accomplishes this also, at the prompting of the Spirit of holiness and peace. For we have related for your information that these things are well, all of us bishops having assembled together in Antioch from different provinces with much discrimination and discernment, trusting in the grace of Christ and the holy spirit of peace that also you will agree as if you were effectually here with us and as cooperating by your prayers, or rather, being united with us and being present together with the Holy Spirit and agreeing and decreeing the same things that we do, and sealing the things that seemed to be right, and confirming them by the harmony of the Holy Spirit. And the ecclesiastical canons which were appointed are those subjoined.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Joannou, *Discipline général* i.2, 102–3; Turner, *EOMIA* ii.2, 231, 312–15.

The emphasis on peace and harmony is almost painful. But the synod's thirty-two signatures,<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> See Appendix Table 3.

headed by Eusebius of Caesarea, are well below even the fifty-five who signed at the 324 Antioch synod, and Constantine was not impressed: he observed to the Antiochene laity that the choice of Eusebius was calculated merely to cause further disorder and violence.

The canons of Antioch 328<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Joannou, *Discipline général* i.2, 104–26.

reflect the divided situation in the city at the time: clergy are not to set up separate altars, out of communion with the bishop, nor lay people to attend



such gatherings; it is not permitted to come and listen to the readings and then leave without taking part in communion, or to go and pray with a schismatic church, on pain of excommunication. The divide between the loyal followers of Eustathius, who refuse to communicate with his successors, and the rest of the church in Antioch, is to be total; no fudging of any sort is allowed. Metropolitan bishops are given considerable addition of power: Canons 9, 14, 16, and 20 of Antioch 328 lay down that the metropolitan bishop is in overall charge of all ordinations in the province and of the affairs of a province generally (no provincial synod is valid without his presence, and no synods are to be held in the province without it), and has the right to call bishops from a neighbouring province to support him in case of disagreement among his own bishops on the deposition of one of them. Essentially, no ordination is valid unless the metropolitan agrees to it, and he has a great deal of control over depositions, too.

It is presumably as a consequence of this sort of legislation that we know of so many depositions from the provinces of Syria and Phoenicia about this time: Euphratius of Balanea, Cymatius of Paltus, Cymatius of Gabala, and Cyrus of Beroea from Coele Syria, Hellanicus of Tripoli and Carterius of Antaradus in Phoenicia.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 5; *De Fuga* 3.3 (see E. Honigmann, *Patristic Studies*, Studi e Testi 173 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1953), 366, for a rationalization of these lists).

Asclepas of Gaza in Palestine, deposed 'in the

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### **Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [110]-[114]

---

presence of his enemies and of Eusebius of Caesarea' some time in the year 327–8, may well have been condemned at this very synod.

It can be seen from this synod how key was the fall of Eustathius of Antioch to the shift of power in the East. Because Eustathius' supporters in Antioch could not accept the emperor's ruling on his case, or communicate with his successors, they could not hope to influence the election of subsequent bishops of Antioch, and they necessarily by their opposition drove these into the arms of the survivors of the old pro-Arian alliance. Constantine, too, had to support this alliance in Antioch, at least tacitly, since their opponents were flouting his authority, although he might try to put brakes on their more divisive actions.

The definitive alienation of the see of Antioch from the supporters of the old pro-Alexander alliance in turn tipped the balance of power in those provinces in the diocese of Oriens—Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine—which were politically and theologically divided between the two sides. The bishop of Jerusalem had enough prestige to resist this change, at least for the time being, and other bishops, particularly in the more remote cities, were doubtless able to stay clear of the developing politics of the civil diocese at this stage. But from this point on, the alliance which had been defeated at Nicaea would control ecclesiastical events in the East, and for the next thirty years their opponents could do little more than fight rearguard actions.

#### *(ii) Alexandria*

If Eustathius was deposed in October 327, Alexander would have known of it before he died on 17 April 328, and although he may not have known by then that Eusebius of Nicomedia had been recalled from exile, he would doubtless have guessed that this was likely to happen. Whether this knowledge played any part in it or not, Alexander must have done all he could before his death to recommend the candidacy of his favoured deacon, Athanasius, as his successor. His support must have been key to enabling a man of uncertain background, and slightly under the canonical age, who was absent at the time of Alexander's actual death, and surrounded when he returned by natural enemies and no doubt rival claimants, to attain the empire's second most prestigious ecclesiastical see. One key act, or non-act, of his was to ignore Constantine's letter asking him to receive Arius back into communion, and to play for time.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> *Urk* 32 (p. 67). Even if this fragment is not genuine—its source is only 'Gelasius' of Cyzicus—the existence of some such letter is implied by (and may have been suggested to Gelasius by) Eusebius, *VC* III.23.

Arius and his followers were still excommunicated on Alexander's death, and as such unable to influence the election. The latter was theoretically also true of the schismatic Melitians, except in cases where they succeeded the

death,<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> *Urk* 23.7 (p. 49.4–10).

but a later settlement may have reversed this decision. In any case, the Melitians did their best to prevent Athanasius' election, but he outmanoeuvred them. Supporters of his (presumably) managed to hold up the elections until he returned from a diplomatic visit to court,<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Epiphanius, *Panarion* 67.7.2, 68.11.4.

and then consecrated him bishop without further ado. With the keys to the church coffers, which Alexander had presumably secured for him, and with an omnipresent band of vigilante monks and virgins as bodyguard, Athanasius was not now going to be removed by anything short of imperial might. The old pro-Alexander coalition had achieved its one successful handing-on of power, and had now only to defend it—a far from easy task.

Athanasius spent the next seven years fighting attempt after attempt to depose him.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 20–2. I have assumed throughout this chapter Barnes's narrative of the attempts to unseat Athanasius before Tyre.

In later years, he was a close ally of the pro-Eustathian schismatic party at Antioch, but he seems at this stage to have signed letters agreeing, if not directly to Eustathius' deposition, at least to that of Asclepas a few months later,<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.13.1 (p. 57 Feder).

presumably to avoid giving immediate and powerful ammunition to his enemies, though he still firmly resisted all attempts to force him to accept Arius back into communion. Meanwhile, he worked to secure his authority at home, allowing (at the very least) a number of his opponents in Alexandria and the Mareotis to be subjected to a ruthless series of violent campaigns by his rougher supporters.

### (iii) *Nicomedia*

The fifth-century Eunomian historian Philostorgius gives us an account of a very interesting synod in Nicomedia about this time:<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* II.7 (p. 18.21–p. 19.10 Bidez).

After three whole years [Philostorgius says that] Eusebius and Maris and Theognis, having obtained a return by the decree of the Emperor Constantine, put forth a symbol of heretical faith and everywhere sent letters for the overthrow of the synod in Nicaea; and deposed Alexander of Alexandria and excommunicated him, because reverting he had turned again to 'homoousios'. But also they laid a charge against Eustathius of Antioch of intercourse with a slave girl and enjoyment of shameful pleasure; the Emperor sentenced him to

banishment, making him an exile to the West. And he says that the full complement of this lawless assembly was two hundred and fifty, and that they made Nicomedia the workshop of their lawless deeds. (Philostorgius, *HE* II.7 (Photius; p. 18.21–p. 19.10 Bidez)) But after three whole years he [Constantine] also decreed return for those around Eusebius. And indeed, having returned from the Gauls, they assembled a synod of two hundred and fifty bishops in Nicomedia, and excommunicated Alexander and all those preaching 'homoousios'. (Philostorgius, *HE* II.7<sup>a</sup> (Nicetas; p. 18.31–p. 19.20 Bidez))

end p.111

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

This 'synod of two hundred and fifty bishops in Nicomedia' which is supposed to have undone the work of Nicaea has sometimes been used as evidence for a putative 'second session of Nicaea' which accepted Arius, Eusebius, and Theognis back into communion, returned to the Melitian problem, and deposited Eustathius, if not Alexander.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> See Hanson, *Search*, 174–6, for a summary of the evidence adduced in favour of this view.

I think it makes sense to see these rather as separate events, for the reason that this would better explain their low position on the ecclesiastical historians' radar. It would be astonishing that Eusebius of Caesarea, in particular, should not have described such a synod, called by Constantine and overturning all that he disliked about Nicaea, in the same glowing terms he uses for the synod of Tyre/Jerusalem: 'this second synod, the greatest of those we know, the Emperor assembled in Jerusalem, following that first synod, which he brilliantly made in the city of the Bithynians...which in the twentieth year of his reign offered prayers of thanksgiving...at the very Place of Victory (Nike/Nicaea).'

<sup>72</sup> Eusebius, *VC* IV.47 (tr. Cameron and Hall).

On the other hand, a large synod at Nicomedia on the return of Eusebius and Theognis that attempted to draw a line under Nicaea now that Alexander was dead and Eustathius deposed would be very plausible, once we allow that Constantine does not seem to have been involved in it (he was at Trier in the early autumn of 328).<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 77–8.

It seems unlikely that there were 250 bishops at it, however, since the pro-Eusebian alliance never gathered even half that number at any other synod they led. Nicetas has supplied the word 'bishops' in his summary, but Photius probably quotes Philostorgius more accurately when he says that the 'full complement' (πλήρωμα) of the synod is 250. This suggests that the number includes all those present, priests, deacons, and perhaps even laity. Nonetheless, it must still have been a grand gathering, though we can only guess who was there. The bishops of Bithynia would seem to be a given, the Melitians of Egypt and the Egyptian friends of Arius a possibility; any number may have come from the provinces in between. It could even have been largely a local synod, made up mainly of Eusebius' illustrious friends.

The 'excommunications' of Eustathius and Alexander which Philostorgius ascribes to this are presumably a formal ratification of Eustathius' deposition by all those present, and an informal condemnation of the dead Alexander for supporting him by championing a Gnostic word that was clearly heretical. The 'symbol of heretical faith' and the letters sent for the overthrow of Nicaea, meanwhile, are particularly plausible, as it just so happens that there are two very good candidates for these documents.

Asterius, the lay theologian of Cappadocia, wrote a letter in defence of a pre-Nicene letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre (*Urk.* 8).

end p.112

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Marcellus' *Against Asterius* was a refutation of this letter, as we can see from the following extracts:

But I will remind you of those things which he himself [Asterius] has written, allying himself with the things written badly by Eusebius, in order that you may know that he clearly departs from his earlier promise. For he wrote thus in these words: 'For the point of the letter is to refer to the will of the Father the begetting of the Son, and not to declare the generation of God a passion.' (Re 29 K 34 S/V 2 P 2) For, wanting to defend the Eusebius who wrote the letter badly, he says 'First of all, he composed the letter by unfolding the dogma in a non-teacherly way, for the letter was not addressed to the Church or to the ignorant, but to the blessed Paulinus', calling him blessed for this reason, that he held the same opinion as Asterius. (Re 77 K 87 S/V 18 P 7)

As well as obviously being some sort of a commentary on this letter, however, Asterius' work, which we might entitle *In Defence of Eusebius*, seems to be a commentary on some sort of a creed:

He has written that he 'believes in God, the Father Almighty, and in his only-begotten Son, God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit', and he says that he had learned this mode of Godly piety from the divine Scriptures. And I accept heartily what is said whenever he might say *this*, for this mode of Godly piety is common to all of us, to believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. But whenever, having guessed at the power of the divine, he might say more humanly for us, by means of some clever analysis, 'the Father is Father and the Son Son,' it is no longer safe to praise such an analysis. For through such an analysis it comes about that the heresy currently thought up by them grows, which is easy, I think, clearly to demonstrate from his writings. For he said that 'it was necessary to acknowledge the Father to be truly Father, and the Son truly Son, and the Holy Spirit likewise.' (Re 59 K 65 S/V 1 P 1)

The affinities of *In Defence of Eusebius* with the Second Creed of Antioch (the so-called 'Dedication' creed) have, in fact, long been recognized.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> For a summary of scholarly views on the affinities between the two, see Vinzent, *Asterius*, 164–6.

This creed, which Athanasius claims was written at the 341 synod of Antioch,<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 23.

but which Sozomen tells us was alleged to have been written by the martyr Lucian of Antioch,<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Sozomen, *HE* III.5.9.

is as follows (significant agreements with *In Defence of Eusebius* are underlined):

We believe, as following evangelic and apostolic tradition, in one God the Father Almighty, the fashioner of and maker of and provider for the universe, from whom are all things; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, God, through whom are all things, who was begotten before the ages from the Father, God from God, whole

end p.113

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

from whole, One from One, Perfect from Perfect, King from King, Lord of Lord, living Word, living Wisdom, true Light, Way, Truth, Resurrection, Shepherd, Door, unalterable and unchangeable, unvarying image of the Godhead—both essence and will and power and glory—of the Father (τῆς θεότητος οὐσίας τε καὶ βουλή-ς καὶ δυνά-μεως καὶ δόξης τοῦ πατρὸς ἀπαράλλακτον εἶ-κόνα), the first-born of all creation, who was in the beginning with God, divine Word (θεὸν λόγον), according to what is written in the Gospel: ‘And the Word was divine’, ‘through whom all things were made’, and in whom all things have their being; who in the last days came down from above and was born from the Virgin according to the Scriptures, and became a human being, a mediator between God and human beings, both an apostle of our faith and Prince of Life, as he says, ‘I have come down from heaven not in order to do my will, but the will of the one who sent me’; who suffered for us and rose on the third day and ascended into the heavens, and took his seat at the right hand of the Father and is coming again with glory and power to judge living and dead; and in the Holy Spirit, given to those who believe for comforting and sanctifying and perfecting; just as also our Lord Jesus Christ commanded the disciples, saying, ‘Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; the Father being manifestly truly Father, and the Son being truly Son, and the Holy Spirit being truly Holy Spirit, the names not given without meaning or effect, but accurately signifying the particular hypostasis and rank and glory of each of those who are named; so that they are three in <sup>77</sup> hypostasis, but one in harmony.

<sup>77</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 23.2–6; text also in August Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, 3rd edn. G. Ludwig Hahn (Breslau: E. Morgenstern, 1897), 184–6.

Fragments of the *In Defence of Eusebius* which parallel this creed (besides the fragment cited above) are as follows:

As for saying, ' he was begotten before the ages', he seems to have spoken consistently; for the one who came forth becomes offspring of the Father who brought forth. (Re 31 K 36 S/V 66 P 5)

For Asterius having said, 'the Word was begotten before the ages', the phrase itself exposes him as lying; so that he misses not only the fact, but even the text. For if Proverbs says 'He set me as a foundation before the age,' how did he say, ' he was begotten before the ages'? For it is one thing for him to have been 'set as a foundation' before the age, and another to have been 'begotten before the ages'. (Re 15 K 18 S/V 36 P 41)

For he says, 'the Father who begot from himself the only-begotten Word and first-born of all creation, is one [of two contrasting masculine subjects]— One begetting One, Perfect begetting Perfect, King begetting King, Lord begetting Lord, God begetting one who is God, an unvarying image of both essence and will and glory and power.' (Re 85 K 96 S/V 113 P 62)

For when he, after the assumption of the flesh, is proclaimed Christ and also Jesus, Life and also Way and Day and Resurrection and Door and Bread and if there be any

end p.114

---



---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 0199280134, 2006  
pp. [115]-[119]

---

other [thing] named by the divine Scriptures, because of this is it fitting for us to be ignorant of the first name, which is Word. (Re 37 K 43 S/V 3 P 18)

So then, before the coming down and the being born of the Virgin there was only Word. Since what else was there before that which came down in the last days, as he also wrote, and that which was born from the Virgin assumed human flesh? There was nothing other than Word. (Re 42 K 48 S/V 5 P 12)

These similarities are too great for coincidence, and they have led to a wide range of theories. Those who accept Athanasius' claim in *On the Synods* that the Second Creed of Antioch was indeed made up at the Dedication Synod of 341<sup>78</sup>

<sup>78</sup>*Syn* 23.1.

have explained the similarities by assuming that Asterius, who was apparently present at the synod, composed it then and there, basing it on his own favourite theological expressions.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup> e.g. Hanson, *Search*, 289.

Those, such as Gustave Bardy, who accept Sozomen's ascription of the creed to Lucian of Antioch, martyred at Nicomedia under Maximin Daia, as at least probable, would have it (or a prototype) as a model for both the creed of Asterius and that offered by Eusebius of Caesarea in his own vindication at Nicaea.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Bardy, *Lucien*, 119–32.

Markus Vinzent argued rather that it was Asterius himself who was the author of what would later be known as the Second Creed of Antioch, probably well before Nicaea—Vinzent sees Asterius as the main theologian and teacher of all the Eusebians, including Arius.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Vinzent, *Asterius*, 166.

Despite the claim of Athanasius, the Second Creed of Antioch, or something very close to it, clearly existed long before that synod began. The proof of this comes from the fact that, alone among the four 'Antioch' creeds of 341, it has no deliberately anti-Marcellan clause, such as 'whose kingdom shall have no end'. In the atmosphere of that council, and given the 'anti-Sabellian' tone of this creed itself, that would be extremely surprising, unless Sozomen rather than Athanasius is right, and the creed predates not only the synod itself but even the deposition of Marcellus in 336.

Another possibility, then, which could be combined with either Bardy's or Vinzent's theory, is that this is the creed which was issued by our 328 synod of Nicomedia. This would explain why Asterius' letter seems to be a

commentary on an already existing creed, a creed whose authority could be taken for granted, and why such a commentary should be considered an appropriate means of defending Eusebius. If it was the creed which had just been issued by the Nicomedian synod, it stood, for those at this synod, as the new standard of orthodoxy, the replacement for the creed of Nicaea.

It might be objected that the theology of the Dedication Creed is very different from the radical theology espoused by Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia prior to the synod of Nicaea. It looks, in fact, much more like the theology of Eusebius of Caesarea: the Son is 'mediator', 'begotten from

end p.115

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

the Father', and 'unvarying image', not 'out of non-being'. Nonetheless, it looks as though Eusebius of Nicomedia and Arius had made some adjustments of this sort to their theology even before Nicaea, probably under the influence of Asterius. Arius' *Thalia* already uses the kind of image theology the Creed employs here ('Wisdom came to be by Wisdom, by the will of the wise God'),<sup>82</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* I.5.5 (cf. *Syn* 16).

while if Athanasius' picture of the discussions of Arius' allies concerning the Nicene Creed is at all accurate, 'begotten from the Father' was no longer a problem either. Whether or not Vincent is right about Asterius' centrality, we know at least that it was the theology of Asterius that was used to defend Eusebius after his return. Both Asterius' use of this creed's language now, and its promulgation at Antioch in 341, suggest that Eusebius of Nicomedia was at the very least content that it would be attractive to a broader audience than Arius' original formulations.

Asterius' *In Defence of Eusebius* would then have been one of the synodal 'letters [sent] everywhere for the overthrow of the synod in Nicaea'. This would explain why the defence was in letter form,<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Re 59 Kl 65 S/V 1 P 1.

which is otherwise difficult to make sense of. This would be one of the synods, therefore, which his enemies sneeringly claimed Asterius attended in the hope of being made a bishop—although even his friends stopped short of such a move with a known apostate, who had sacrificed during the persecutions.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.36.3, amplifying Athanasius, *Syn* 18.3.

We cannot ultimately say how important this synod was, even if I am right to believe that it did actually take place. The synod at Antioch which met around the same time (earlier or later, presumably, if there was an Oriens presence at the Nicomedian synod) seems to have had more of an impact; we do not hear of depositions in the province of Bithynia or nearby at this stage, except of Eusebius' and Theognis' replacements in the sees of Nicomedia and Nicaea. But it must have been of great psychological importance to Eusebius of Nicomedia and his allies. Alexander was dead, Eustathius was gone, Antioch was in friendly hands, and Nicaea could be largely put behind them. It looks, though, as if they wanted more than that. For all the remaining nameable figures of the old pro-Alexander alliance—Hellanicus of Tripoli, Macarius of Jerusalem, Athanasius of

Alexandria, and Marcellus of Ancyra—as well as their theological allies  
Eutropius of Adrianople<sup>85</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 5. Julius Julianus' daughter Basilina, who was apparently instrumental in Eutropius' deposition, died in 332, shortly after the birth of her son Julian (*PLRE* I, 148).

and Alexander of Constantinople, would be either dead or deposed within the next ten years.

#### (iv) *Ancyra*

Whatever relations were between Marcellus and Eustathius (they may have been close friends or merely acquaintances conscious of their theological

end p.116

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

affinities), and whatever Marcellus thought in his heart of hearts about Eustathius' guilt or otherwise as an alleged fornicator, he looks to have bitterly resented the part played by Eusebius of Caesarea, who had presided over the deposition of the great Antiochene, and by Paulinus of Tyre, who replaced him. This can be seen from the fact that although Marcellus' *Against Asterius* has in its sights Asterius' defence of Eusebius of Nicomedia, he appears to be far more vitriolic in his attacks on Paulinus and the other Eusebius, if the latter's citations are at all representative. Among other swipes, Marcellus attacks Paulinus for changing sees in defiance of the Nicene canons (as can be seen from Eusebius' elaborate defence of this),<sup>86</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Eusebius, *CM* I.4.2.

and accuses Eusebius himself of believing Christ to be a mere man (a compliment Eusebius would return with interest).<sup>87</sup>

<sup>87</sup> e.g. Eusebius, *CM* II.2.44.

There is one passage in particular which seems to link Marcellus' vitriol against Eusebius and Paulinus with Eustathius' deposition:

(Saying that he (Marcellus) had learned from report that Eusebius preached some things, when he was in Laodicea once, and concerning things which he did not know, as having learned from report, he writes, and adds, saying,) it was necessary on the contrary [for Eusebius] to call out to the Lord with tears and grief, 'We have sinned, we have been impious, we have been lawless, and we have done evil in your sight, and now repenting we ask to obtain clemency from you.' These things were fitting for him, these things it was advantageous to say, because of the measureless kindness and clemency of God—although it was consequent for God, giving heed with clemency and justice, to reply, saying, 'If an enemy had reproached me, I would have borne it, and if one who hated me had boasted against me, I would have hidden from him. But you, O equal-souled man, my leader and my friend; who sweetened food for me when we were together, we went in fellowship in the house of God' (for that he is with us his priests, we know from his saying so, for he said, 'Lo, I will be with you for all the days of your life until the end of the age'). Then

consequently I suppose he would assuredly also have added to the foregoing the words which follow: 'Let death come upon them, and may they go down alive to Hades; because evil is in their hearts.' For the Scripture says, 'Those being dead in the ignorance of impiety are swallowed up by Hades'; for they were dead, though seeming to be alive. (Re 88 K 99 S/V 119 P 80)

This is an extraordinary passage, based for the most part on LXX Psalm 54, whose application to Eusebius at first sight seems staggering in its viciousness. But there are some clues in the text as to what might have given rise to Marcellus' words.

Firstly, there is the word *παρὰ τὸ* ('on the contrary'). This implies that Marcellus had previously quoted what

end p.117

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Eusebius actually did say in his sermon (or what Marcellus heard that he had said), which was quite different from the words of contrition which Marcellus sarcastically follows with. What Eusebius actually did say, in fact, or was supposed to have said, was quite possibly the words Marcellus then puts into the mouth of God: 'If an enemy had reproached me, I would have borne it, and if one who hated me had boasted against me, I would have hidden from him. But you, O equal-souled man, my leader and my friend; who sweetened food for me when we were together, we went in fellowship in the house of God.'

Words such as 'O equal-souled man, my leader and my friend' (*ὁ ἰσὺ ψυχῆς ἰσόμενον μου καὶ ἡγούμενον μου*) are somewhat unlikely ones for God to address to Eusebius of Caesarea, and they would be rather inapposite for Marcellus to have plucked out of thin air as an insult. But they would be entirely unsurprising coming from Eusebius as he shed crocodile tears over the moral downfall of Eustathius of Antioch.

If I am correct in my guess that Marcellus has simply reascribed to God, weeping over the sins of Eusebius of Caesarea, the words Eusebius used to weep over the sins of Eustathius, this sermon would have been preached in Laodicea in Syria, the seat of Theodotus of Laodicea, whose 'leader'—metropolitan bishop—Eustathius had certainly been. It was Theodotus who, with Eusebius and Narcissus, had been placed under a provisional ban at the pre-Nicene Synod of Antioch, led by Ossius of Cordoba and Eustathius. Eusebius may well have been taking the opportunity to gloat at the downfall of his and Theodotus' enemy under cover of pious shock at his evil deeds.

One other phrase which may give some support to this view is Eusebius' claim that Marcellus, before he adds this particular passage, writes something (which Eusebius does not quote) 'concerning things which he did not know, as having learned from report'. This would nicely fit my scenario of the deposition of Eustathius: Eusebius would have had good reason for saying that Marcellus did not know what he was talking about, because he himself clearly knew the circumstances of that occurrence (including the fact that it had been entirely hushed up) all too well. Marcellus, meanwhile, would have no real knowledge of exactly why Eustathius had been

deposed—but with Eusebius of Caesarea and his friends clearly responsible for his downfall, and Paulinus gaining the see as his replacement, it is not likely that he hesitated too long over where to place the blame. It all added to a belief that a new heresy was in full swing, running both politically and theologically out of control—and that any reply to it needed to tackle both the individuals concerned and the whole thought-system, with all its errors, that they stood for.

### 3. The Writing of *Against Asterius*

There are two basic schools of thought on when and for whom Marcellus wrote *Against Asterius*, following the apparently contradictory evidence of Socrates and Sozomen on the one hand and Eusebius' *Against Marcellus* on

end p.118

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

the other. Some view the work as composed directly for the Emperor after the synod of Tyre/Jerusalem in 335; others argue that it was clearly already complete by the time of that synod, and had been circulated fairly widely.

Klaus Seibt presents the most detailed exposition of the former case.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Re 29 K 34 S/V 2 P 2; Seibt, *Markell*, 241.

This interpretation is part of his elaborate theory of Marcellus as a *Reichstheologe* (imperial theologian) who was in many ways the counterpart and rival of Eusebius of Caesarea, and had at one stage (around the time of Nicaea) a close relationship with the Emperor. He argues that the work (which he calls *Opus ad Constantinum Imperatorem*) was written directly for Constantine, after the synod of Tyre,<sup>89</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Seibt, *Markell*, 243.

appealing to their former friendship in an attempt to persuade him to return to his former support of the anti-Arian party.

The main evidence for this view comes from Eusebius of Caesarea. He tells us scathingly, 'So, reasonably, these things [the faults Eusebius has pointed out in Marcellus' theology] moved the Emperor, so truly God-beloved and thrice-blessed, against the man [Marcellus], although he had flattered endlessly and gone through many encomia of the Emperor in his composition (ὁ γγρᾶμμα)' (Eusebius, *Against Marcellus* II.4.29). Seibt takes Eusebius' comment on the flatteries and encomia addressed by Marcellus to Constantine as evidence that Marcellus' book itself was originally written to the Emperor (as do other scholars such as Timothy Barnes).<sup>90</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Barnes, *Constantine*, 241.

Confirmation for this view can be found in the work's use of the second person singular, in phrases such as 'But I will remind you (σε) of those things which he himself has written, allying himself with the things written badly by Eusebius, in order that you may know that he clearly departs from his earlier promise' (Re 29 K 34 S/V 2 P 2). But there is no trace in the surviving fragments of Marcellus' work of flatteries of the Emperor. On the contrary, there are some expressions which it is virtually impossible to imagine him directly addressing to Constantine, so brusque are they and

devoid of any of the little politenesses which would simply have to accompany them in addressing the Emperor directly in this period:

For the name of 'dogma' depends on human will and judgement. And that this is so the 'dogmatic' skill of doctors sufficiently bears witness for us, and the things that are called 'dogmata' of the philosophers bear witness too. But that also 'those things which seemed good to the senate' still, even now, are also called 'dogmata of the senate', no one, I think, is ignorant. (Re 76 K 86 S/V 17 P 6)

The Senate is Constantine's own proper sphere: Marcellus cannot have referred to it as though Constantine would have no more knowledge of it than anyone else. Marcellus would have had to have made the final phrase at the very least something like 'You, O Most Illustrious Emperor, are not, I think, ignorant that...', unless he wanted to be read as grossly insulting.

end p.119

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [120]-[124]

Such examples might be multiplied: the tone throughout the work is completely inappropriate as a work addressed directly to an emperor. Rather, Eusebius' phrase concerning Marcellus' gross flattery of the emperor (one of the world's great pieces of chutzpah, it might be remarked) must surely refer to a covering letter, submitting a work for the emperor's perusal which is acknowledged to have been written for a different audience. Since Marcellus would presumably have had a good copy of his work retranscribed for the occasion, it would have formed one codex (and hence one αἱ γράμματα) with the work he was forwarding with it. Nor need the second person singular address imply that the work was designed only for one recipient: it was a common rhetorical device. Eusebius' *Against Marcellus* also makes use of the second person singular,<sup>91</sup>

<sup>91</sup> For example at *CM* I.3.13, σκέψαι δὲ καὶ ἄλλως ἔξ αἰπῶν τῶν παραθέσεων ἥσον τῇς ἀληθείας διήμαρτεν.

despite being clearly addressed to a wide audience.

Others, such as Simonetti, Hanson, and Vinzent, follow the indication in both Socrates and Sozomen that the book had already been written by the time of the synod of Tyre/Jerusalem.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Simonetti, *Crisi*, 131; Hanson, *Seach*, 217; Vinzent, *Markell*, p. xvii.

Socrates tells us that the bishops who had convened at Jerusalem in 335 asked Marcellus to give an account of the book he had written attacking Asterius the Cappadocian.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.36.5–6.

He goes on to say that Marcellus promised to burn his book, but that the emperor's summoning of the principal parties to Constantinople to meet the complaints of Athanasius left the matter unresolved until it was taken up again in Constantinople.

Sozomen's account, meanwhile, draws on what must be the synodal letter of the synod which deposed Marcellus. This, like Socrates' account, implies a work which had a wider circulation than one recipient, at least in Galatia:

At that time also, having come together in Constantinople, they deposed Marcellus the bishop of Ancyra in Galatia as the introducer of new dogmas, saying that the Son of God received his beginning from Mary, and that his kingdom will have an end, and having composed a certain writing about this, and they threw him out of the Church. And they entrust the episcopacy of the church of the Galatians to Basil, clever at speaking and taken up for his education. And they wrote to the churches there to seek out and destroy the book of Marcellus, and to convert those thinking the same things, should they find any. And because of the length of the writing, they made plain that they had



not subjoined the whole book, but they inserted certain sayings in their letter for proof of the fact that he thought these things. (Sozomen, *HE* II.33.1–2)

These two accounts can be made to dovetail rather well. Socrates has a two-stage condemnation: an initial investigation at Jerusalem, interrupted by the Emperor's dispersal of the synod, and then a trial and deposition at Constantinople. Sozomen, who begins his account at Constantinople with the

end p.120

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

summary of the synodal letter, then adds an alternative assessment from another source, favourable to Marcellus. This claims that 'those around Eusebius' had become angered with Marcellus for refusing to consent to the definitions of the Synod of Tyre and the re-acceptance of Arius at Jerusalem, and consequently absenting himself from the consecration of the Great Martyrium at Jerusalem, to avoid communicating with Arius. Those around Eusebius therefore wrote to the Emperor, charging Marcellus with a personal insult to Constantine, since it was he who had ordered the construction of the new church at Jerusalem.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Sozomen, *HE* II.33.2–3.

Both of these stories have the ring of authenticity, and can be reasonably reconciled, with each other and with the evidence of Eusebius of Caesarea. Athanasius gives us further evidence about this reconvening of the synod of Tyre at Jerusalem in the form of a letter from 'the holy synod which was gathered in Jerusalem by the grace of God' (ἡ ἁγία σύνοδος ἡ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις θεοῦ χάριτι συναχθεῖσα) to the churches of Alexandria, and throughout Egypt, the Thebaid, and Libya, and to bishops, priests, and deacons throughout the world.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 21.2.

This letter explains that Constantine sent the synod letters demanding that Arius and his friends be received, saying that he had inquired into their orthodoxy and been satisfied, and presenting their confession of faith for the bishops to ratify, which they did. This was presumably intended to be a rubber-stamping operation. Marcellus appears to have prevented this, and forced a debate, presumably on the eve of the consecration itself, but not surprisingly he was unable to carry his point, choosing instead to absent himself from the consecration ceremony rather than be part of the undoing of Nicaea. The appearance of Marcellus' book late on the agenda at Tyre/Jerusalem, after he had committed the *faux pas* of refusing to attend the great ceremony at Jerusalem, would make sense: he had given his enemies the rope they needed to hang him. Constantine's letter effectively setting aside the decisions of the synod of Tyre (Socrates, *HE* I.34) would then have arrived early enough to prevent a final decision on Marcellus. A debate had begun, however, and Marcellus could see that he was to be the next target of 'those around Eusebius'. His promise to burn his book is presumably a pro-Eusebian fabrication: Eusebius of Caesarea makes no mention of any such promise, and Marcellus is extremely unlikely to have made it.

Instead, in a last desperate attempt to outmanoeuvre his opponents, Marcellus sent the disputed book to the Emperor with a flattering covering letter, presumably recalling the Emperor's mind to the agreed orthodoxy of Nicaea, and defending his writing in that light. The strategy of suggesting to Constantine that Marcellus had personally slighted him was successful, however, and the Emperor turned Marcellus' book over to 'those around

end p.121

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Eusebius', including the flattering covering note of which Eusebius of Caesarea was so scornful, for them to sit in judgement over.

This scenario assumes that Marcellus wrote *Against Asterius* exactly when he might have been expected to: soon after the great synod of Nicomedia in autumn 328, when, according to my surmise, Asterius' *In Defence of Eusebius* was first unleashed on the world.

*Against Asterius*, the theology and structure of which were considered in Chapter 1, was a brilliant work. It took the whole theological system espoused by the old pro-Arian alliance to pieces, tracing its ideas from the bald statements of them in Eusebius of Nicomedia's letter to Paulinus, to their subtler expression in the 'Lucianic'/'Dedication' Creed, and their defence by Asterius, and showed how these same ideas had been expressed by various of the other bishops of the alliance (Eusebius of Caesarea, Paulinus of Tyre, and Narcissus of Neronias, at least). He included a detailed alternative exegesis of every one of the scripture texts on which these theologians drew, finding creative ways to undermine their interpretations by showing why their understandings of the texts were impossible, accepting Arius' insistence on strict adherence to a belief in One God, which Marcellus saw as demanded by the Old Testament, but insisting that the Word and the Spirit were not separate from that One God. He took on the philosophical claims of the Eusebian alliance as well as their scriptural exegesis, countering the notion of Father and Son as First and Second Cause by insisting that the First Cause must be Father and Son together, and countering the notion of three Gods, or first principles (as Marcellus saw them as teaching) by claiming that the Monad must be logically prior to the Triad, if the three are truly united as a Monad. He did all of this with dashing invective, striking imagery, showmanship, mordant wit, sometimes an almost fey hilarity, and from time to time grim determination.

Marcellus' very originality can make his writing look strange, idiosyncratic, oddly dated, as it no doubt struck his younger contemporaries as being. It has plenty of vulgarity, rough edges, sometimes even notions which are frankly bizarre. In this he has much in common with Irenaeus, from whom he seems to have learned so much. But those who see only the oddness have missed something great, something wonderfully inventive, something powerfully new and yet also old, rooted in the earliest traditions of Asia Minor, in the immediacy of Revelation, in the stark poetry of Melito, in the prophetic energy of Montanism, in the exuberant, crazy humanity of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. It was that tradition which Marcellus harnessed to try to put a stop to what he saw as the fatally damaging theology and politics of the Eusebians. If he failed to do so, he at least left his friends something inspirational with which to arm themselves against that deadly (as Marcellus saw it) theology and hugely destructive political power, as well as something

to make them laugh.

end p.122

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

On the other hand, it must have made Eusebius of Caesarea, at least, incandescent with rage when he read it, as it was probably intended to. But it should not surprise us that, even if he and his friends came to know of its existence in the year 329 or so, they were unable to depose Marcellus on the basis of it for a further six years. Marcellus was a bishop of long standing and a respected figure. He was also metropolitan of his own province, and as far as we can tell supported by most of the neighbouring provinces.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Most of the provinces of central and southern Asia Minor, including Galatia, Paphlagonia, Isauria, Pisidia, Pamphilia, Caria, Lycia, and Lydia, took no part in the synod which deposed Marcellus, and bishops from several of them wrote in his support to Julius of Rome.

In the cases of Eustathius and Athanasius, those who deposed them had matter for deposition (the sexual wrongdoing, or what could be made to look like it, of the one, and the violence of the other), as well as disgruntled local figures who could be counted on to bring or support complaints to the Emperor. There is no evidence that any of these could be found in the case of Marcellus. The charge of 'heresy' with which Marcellus was eventually indicted was only sustained, as we shall see, by the anger of the Emperor, stirred up on entirely different grounds, however sincere the Eusebian alliance were in branding his views as beyond the pale.

For the time being, Eusebius of Nicomedia and his friends concentrated their fire on Athanasius, although he managed to elude their best efforts to depose him for another five years. In the event, his downfall was to deliver Marcellus, too, into their hands.

## 4. The Synod of Tyre

By the winter of 331, Athanasius was defending himself before the Emperor on charges of uncanonical election as bishop, extortion, bribery, and sacrilege.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 60.4 (sacrilege and bribery (with treasonable intent) ); *Festal Index* III (331) = Martin and Albert, 228–9 (age at election); Socrates, *HE* I.27.7–9, and Sozomen, *HE* II.27.7–8 (extortion and bribery).

Having heard both sides of the case, Constantine dismissed the charges. In the spring of 334, a synod was called at Palestinian Caesarea by Constantine to investigate the same charges against Athanasius of sacrilege (breaking the chalice of the schismatic presbyter Ischyrus), plus accusations of murdering Arsenius, bishop of Hypsele.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.27.13–21, and Sozomen, *HE* II.23.1.

Arsenius, however, was found alive (an occurrence out of which Athanasius was able to make endless capital), and the charges dismissed. An attempt to indict Athanasius for sleeping with a prostitute (unless this is simply a colourful fiction) failed when she was unable to tell who he was.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Sozomen, *HE* II.25.8–10; Theodoret, *HE* I.30.1–5; Philostorgius, *HE* II.11 (p. 23.15–p. 24.3 Bidez).

and Arius wrote to Constantine in a body, nevertheless, with new charges of violence and intimidation (not unfounded, it should be said), and Constantine called the Synod of Tyre.

The Synod of Tyre was in antiquity and still is among modern scholars the keystone of the debate as to whether or not there was a conspiracy against Athanasius and his allies. Was it a valid synod, and did it validly depose Athanasius and attempt to try Marcellus? Or was it simply a kangaroo court whose deliberations should never have been taken seriously? The answer no doubt partly depends on one's ecclesiology. But there are one or two points that should be taken into account in coming to a conclusion.

The first is the composition of the synod, which was not the open affair that is often imagined. Eusebius of Caesarea gives a very interesting letter in the *Life of Constantine*, which the editor entitles 'Constantine Victor Maximus Augustus to the Holy Synod at Tyre'. The letter, however, has clearly been sent before the synod to some unspecified person or persons; Eusebius of Caesarea must be one. One passage is particularly significant:

Nothing that falls to my particular care will be lacking to you. Everything you mentioned in your letter has been done by me. I have written to the bishops you wished me to, that they should come and take part in your deliberations; and I have sent Dionysius, a man of consular rank, who will also notify those who ought to attend the synod with you, and will be present to observe the proceedings, with a particular eye to good order. Should anyone (which I do not expect) attempt even now to thwart our command and refuse to attend, somebody will be sent from me from here to expel him by imperial mandate, and to make it clear that it is not right to oppose decrees of the Emperor promulgated on behalf of the truth. (Eusebius of Caesarea, *VC* IV.42.3–4 (tr. Cameron and Hall))

According to this letter, some unspecified person (who must be Eusebius of Caesarea or one of his friends) has drawn up a list of bishops the emperor is to invite to the synod. They have no right to refuse the invitation; they are threatened with expulsion if they do so. When we match this information with the names and provinces of those who actually attended, it quickly becomes clear that the membership of the synod was somewhat selective:

The Macedonians sent the bishop of their metropolis, the Pannonians and Mysians fair blossoms from among them of God's younger generation; a sacred member of the Persian bishops was present, a man very learned in the divine oracles; the Bithynians and Thracians enhanced the dignity of those attending the synod. The more important Cilicians were not missing, and the leading Cappadocians also excelled among the rest for their scholarly learning. All Syria and Mesopotamia, Phoenicia and Arabia with Palestine itself, Egypt and Libya, the inhabitants of the Theban area, all together made up the

great divine band... (Eusebius of Caesarea, *VC* IV 43.3–4)<sup>100</sup>

<sup>100</sup> This is a list of those who attended at Jerusalem rather than Tyre, but Eusebius makes plain that they are the same people (*VC* IV.43.1–2).

end p.124

---

Parvis, Sara, Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [125]-[129]

Socrates gives us a number for those who attended Tyre (or at least those who signed the synod's *acta*), which he presumably has from Sabinus' lost pro-Eusebian synodal collection: sixty. We also have the names of individuals who are mentioned in various documents given in Athanasius' *Apology Against the Arians*,<sup>101</sup> as well as the accounts of the church historians.

<sup>101</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.28.2; Eusebius, *VC* IV.43.2–4; Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 72–81.

From all of this information we can name a third of the bishops at Tyre, and assign provinces to the rest.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>102</sup> See Appendix Table 4.

Eusebius tries to make out that Tyre/Jerusalem was a second, and greater, Nicaea (calling it 'the greatest [synod] of those we know'),<sup>103</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Eusebius, *VC* IV.47.

but it is clear from the list of provinces that it was basically a synod of the civil diocese of Oriens (Cilicia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Arabia, and Palestine), with the Isaurian bishops conspicuous by their absence, supplemented by a handful of bishops from the Egyptian provinces (mainly Melitians) and Libya, and a few others from further afield. Eusebius speaks of 'all Syria and Mesopotamia' being present (which would have been twenty-seven on the basis of the Nicene names), and the comprehensiveness of the adjective may extend also to some of the provinces mentioned next; thirty-two from these provinces had already supported Eusebius of Caesarea at Antioch 328. Those from the other provinces Eusebius mentions look, meanwhile, to have been hand-picked. The 'fair blossoms of God's younger generation' sent by the Pannonians and Moesians are the young former pupils of Arius Ursacius of Singidunum and Valens of Mursa (the Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of the Arian controversy). The 'metropolitan of Macedonia' is Alexander of Thessalonica, a more interesting case: he had attended Nicaea and signed against Arius. Athanasius tells us both that 'those around Eusebius' counted him as one of their own, and that he wrote to the *comes* Dionysius at Tyre to defend Athanasius against what he saw as dubious in the unfolding of judicial proceedings there.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 16, 80.

From 'Thrace' (the diocese rather than the province, in Eusebius' usage)<sup>105</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Eusebius, *VC* III.7.1; cf. Gelzer, *Patrum Nicaenorum Nomina*, end map.

came Theodore of Heraclea, who emerges at Tyre, like Ursacius and Valens, as one of 'those around Eusebius' of Nicomedia, although all three may have been active earlier. He was chosen, with Ursacius, Valens, Maris of Chalcedon, Theognis of Nicaea, and Macedonius of Mopsuestia, for the Mareotis commission (the group sent to investigate the smashing of

Ischyrus' chalice by Athanasius' dubious sidekick, the priest Macarius). The Bithynians consisted of Eusebius of Nicomedia himself, Theognis of Nicaea, and Maris of Chalcedon. The Cappadocians presumably included Dianius, the new bishop of Caesarea, as well perhaps as Asterius, who would not have been included in the bishop-count, but could be the figure Eusebius means when he says 'the leading Cappadocians also excelled among the rest for their scholarly learning'.

end p.125

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

It is important, despite Eusebius' carefully constructed impression of comprehensiveness, to note the number of Eastern provinces from the Nicene list which are not represented; Galatia (apart from the uncooperative Marcellus, as noted), Paphlagonia, Isauria, Pisidia, Pamphilia, Phrygia, Caria, Lydia, and Lycia, as well as Diospontus, Pontus Polemoniacus, Armenia, and Asia, Cyprus, the Isles, and a number of the Balkan provinces. The percentage of Egyptian bishops invited must also have been small, since Egypt and Libya between them had nearly one hundred bishops:<sup>106</sup>

<sup>106</sup> For the figure, see *Urk* 4b.11 (p. 8.12–13) and Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 71.4 (p. 149.7–8 Opitz).

it seems unlikely that more than the Melitians were invited, since Athanasius brought forty-eight Egyptian bishops with him who were not allowed to participate.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>107</sup> The letters of these bishops to 'the bishops assembled at Tyre' and to Dionysius (*Ap c Ar* 77–79) make clear that they were neither invited nor permitted to join the synod.

Athanasius may sound hysterical when he says, in the *Apology Against the Arians*, 'What sort of a synod of bishops was it that was then held? What sort of truth-bound assembly? Who of the majority among them was not our enemy?',<sup>108</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 8.2.

but he is absolutely right, on the evidence of who actually attended it. By the canons of Antioch 328, which Eusebius of Caesarea himself had promulgated, a bishop was to be judged first of all by the bishops of his own province. The bishops of Tyre were clearly not a fair choice of judges, either for Athanasius or for Marcellus.

Athanasius fought like mad to break free of the trap, using every delaying, discrediting, or disturbance-producing tactic he could possibly think of. The synod, therefore, took so long to deliberate that it was still in full swing when it came time to repair to Jerusalem to dedicate the church. Athanasius was left under guard at Tyre, but Marcellus went with the others. Here, however, it was Marcellus' turn to be caught in a cleft stick. At some point, Constantine sent letters to those gathering at Jerusalem, asking that Arius be received into communion as orthodox at the consecration there.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>109</sup> These letters are referred to in the synodal letter of the bishops at Jerusalem given in Athanasius, *Syn* 21.

This left Marcellus, as we have already seen, with a stark choice between communicating with Arius, and offending the emperor. He chose the latter option.



It looks, therefore, as though the synod had been primed to bring about Marcellus' downfall, as well as Athanasius': why else would he have been invited, in the absence of any other bishops from central Asia Minor, when he had made himself the sworn enemy of most of the synod's leaders? As we have already seen from Constantine's letter, Marcellus' presence at Tyre would not have been his own choice—he was as subject to the threat of deposition for non-attendance as Athanasius.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>110</sup> T. D. Barnes somewhat harshly calls Marcellus' attendance at the synod 'an error of judgement which rapidly led to his downfall and exile' (Barnes, *Constantine*, 241). In fact, he clearly had no choice.

Marcellus' book seems not to have been dealt with before Jerusalem, since he went up with the others.

end p.126

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

But once he had refused to take part in the liturgical celebrations, he was caught. He had spurned the emperor's festival of peace: from now on, he was extremely vulnerable, and the investigation of *Against Asterius* for heresy immediately afterwards reflects that.

The synod returned to Tyre to continue its deliberations, and found Athanasius guilty. But he, meanwhile, had escaped and fled to the emperor to appeal against the conduct of his trial. Six of the leading Eusebian allies, the two Eusebii, Theognis of Nicaea, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, and Ursacius and Valens, followed him to Constantinople. Their absence must have slowed proceedings somewhat, as well as robbing them of some of their force: before the case of Marcellus had been fully dealt with, if indeed the synod intended to do more than intimidate him at this stage, word came that the Emperor had listened to Athanasius and was effectively disallowing the synod's decrees.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>111</sup> The letter is given in Socrates, *HE* I.34, and Sozomen, *HE* II.28.

Once the six who had set out in pursuit of Athanasius arrived in Constantinople, they were swiftly successful in having Athanasius banished on a new charge, that of treasonously threatening to prevent the Alexandrian grainships sailing to Constantinople.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>112</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 9.3 and 87.1.

Athanasius departed into exile on 7 November 335.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>113</sup> *Festal Index* VIII (Martin and Albert, 234–5, with 285 n. 24).

Constantine himself may have spent most of the following spring campaigning on the Danube;<sup>114</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 80.

the next synod, however—this time summoned directly against Marcellus—he attended himself.

## 5. The Synod of Constantinople

Whatever Marcellus had thought of Athanasius prior to the synod of Tyre, whether or not they had been friends or even acquaintances, whether or not

*Against Asterius* was in some sense meant as a blow on behalf of the beleaguered young bishop of Alexandria as well as the disgraced former bishop of Antioch, the bishop of Ancyra would have known after the synod of Tyre and the banishing of Athanasius that his turn was undoubtedly next. He made one last move to prevent his own downfall, as Athanasius had done: he appealed to the Emperor, sending him the disputed writing *Against Asterius* with a suitably deferential covering letter.

It is unlikely that, had Marcellus not done so, he would never have been  
deposed.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>115</sup> In Barnes' *Athanasius*, 56, it is Marcellus' presenting of the *Against Asterius* to Constantine that is his great mistake, but this view depends on the work's having been originally written for Constantine and not already known otherwise.

Socrates' account shows that the Eusebian alliance were already onto Marcellus at the synod of Tyre, once they knew they had leverage with

end p.127

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Constantine against him. His deposition was only a matter of time. With, now, Eutropius, Hellanicus, and Athanasius gone, and Macarius of Jerusalem dead (his replacement, Maximus, had been one of the signatories of Tyre), there were only two prominent anti-Eusebians left to deal with: Alexander of Constantinople and Marcellus. The Eusebian alliance immediately moved on both of them.

The occasion to do so was the celebration of Constantine's tricennalia, for which he returned to Constantinople. Marcellus' letter to him had no effect whatever: he may not even have read it. Instead, furious at Marcellus' refusal to accept his proposals for theological peace by communicating with Arius, we may imagine, he handed the work over to the Eusebians to be judged for heresy, but mindful no doubt of the debacle of Tyre, he resolved to be present at the trial himself.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Hilary, *FHA* IV.1.3.1 (p. 50.19–21 Feder).

Barnes fixed the date of the synod which deposed Marcellus as July 336,  
shortly before the celebrations on the 24th,<sup>117</sup>

<sup>117</sup> T. D. Barnes, 'Emperor and Bishops, A.D. 324–344: Some Problems', *American Journal of Ancient History* 3 (1978), 53–75, at 64–5; repr. in Barnes, *Early Christianity and the Roman Empire*, Collected Studies Series CS 207 (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), no. xviii.

and this still remains the most plausible date for a number of reasons,  
despite the fact that Seibt and Vinzent have both since argued for 337.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>118</sup> Seibt, *Markell*, 243; Vinzent, *Markell*, p. xviii.

It is likely that the Eusebians would have moved as quickly as possible after his non-appearance at Jerusalem to have Marcellus condemned; otherwise Constantine's wrath might have evaporated. The violence which greeted Marcellus' return in the amnesty of 337 suggests that Basil, Marcellus' successor, had had time to establish himself as a presence in the see. The Eusebians' attempted move against Alexander of Constantinople required the same tactics—the cleft stick of acceptance of Arius or deposition—which had worked successfully against Marcellus, but those tactics would be more

effective if Marcellus had already been made an example of. Seibt and Vinzent both believe that Eusebius of Caesarea's *Against Marcellus* was published after Constantine's death, but Barnes also believes this,<sup>119</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Barnes, *Constantine*, 263.

and thinks the ten months which elapsed between the trial and Constantine's death do not preclude other bishops' wanting documentation on Marcellus' heretical teachings after that period, particularly since Marcellus then returned from exile and a further excuse for his re-expulsion was called for.

Once again, it appears that the bishops attending Marcellus' trial were hand-picked. Eusebius of Caesarea, as before, gives us the provinces of those who attended, and once again, they exclude Marcellus' potential supporters. Eusebius tells us that 'the holy synod that came together in the royal city from the different provinces of Pontus and Cappadocia, Asia and Phrygia and Bithynia, Thrace and the parts beyond' was moved 'to condemn the man

end p.128

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

through the writing against him'.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>120</sup> Eusebius, *CM* II.4.29.

We can fairly easily supply names for the bishops of Asia and Bithynia, Thrace and 'the parts beyond': Menophantus of Ephesus, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, Ursacius and Valens. The presence of bishops of Pontus and Cappadocia need not surprise us either: both had a history of bishops who leaned towards a Eusebian type of theology.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Philostorgius, *HE* I.8, I.8a (p. 9.4–5 and 19 Bidez).

Presumably Dianius of Caesarea attended from Cappadocia, accompanied by Asterius, who must have wanted a front-row seat; from Pontus, all three of those who signed the Easterners Letter of Serdica might well have come. Only a bishop from Phrygia eludes us from among the ranks of the Eusebian alliance: it is not unlikely that one or more of the four from the Phrygias who signed the encyclical of the Eastern synod of Serdica are meant. We should perhaps add Protogenes of Serdica and Cyriacus of Naissus to this list, also from 'the parts beyond Thrace', since the Easterners' letter at Serdica claims both signed condemnations of Marcellus, though it does not actually state that either attended this synod.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Hilary, *FHA* IV I.3.4 (p. 51 Feder).

It might reasonably be objected that these fifteen or so bishops represent the minimum possible number who might have attended the synod to depose Marcellus, but since we have no number of those who did attend, the total could be much higher. Alexander of Constantinople, for example, would presumably have had to attend, unless he managed to feign illness or be away. This is true (and Alexander may indeed have subscribed to Marcellus' deposition, just as Athanasius most likely subscribed to Eustathius'). But this does not change the fact that nearly all the Central Asia Minor provinces—Paphlagonia, Pisidia, Pamphilia, Isauria, Lycia, Lydia, and Caria, as well as Marcellus' own province of Galatia—are missing from the list. Once

again, the canons of Antioch 328 are being flouted.

Eusebius of Caesarea had been asked, as he tells us himself, to prepare a case against Marcellus.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>123</sup> Eusebius, *CM* II.4.29.

Markus Vinzent has recognized that Eusebius' *Against Marcellus* represents precisely this 'expert witness'.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Vinzent, *Markell*, p. xix.

Eusebius added an epilogue (*CM* II.4.29–31) to the speech he had given at the trial, briefly describing Marcellus' condemnation, and published it, carefully waiting until after Constantine's death. Ironically, Marcellus owes whatever chance he has of being vindicated by modern scholarship of the opinions he was deposed by this synod for holding to Eusebius' meticulous working over of the text of *Against Asterius*, which uses all the skills of documentation and classification, the categorization of a text into short passages and the arranging of them under broad headings for easy reference, and above all, the citing of them at great length, which he had developed in writing the *Demonstration of the Gospel*, and inventing the first ecclesiastical history.

end p.129

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [130]-[134]

Eusebius' *Against Marcellus*, very much unlike his *Ecclesiastical Theology*, is an extremely well organized and well drawn-up indictment, which makes its deeply tendentious case with meticulous care. There is a good reason for this: its primary audience is Constantine.

It begins by accusing *Against Asterius* of misquoting and misunderstanding various passages of Scripture (I.1.37–2.30), and then proceeds to detail how Marcellus maliciously and unfairly, out of sheer envy and ill-will, attacks various bishops, including the saintly Paulinus of Tyre (I.4.1–66). Eusebius knew his audience well: like the child of a dangerously explosive parent or schoolmaster, he knew what interested Constantine, and particularly knew what angered him, and he knew how to direct that anger away from himself and onto another. Constantine had written time after time to groups of bishops with which Eusebius was involved, admonishing them to stop giving way to factionalism, strife, and ill-will. Eusebius' case is that this is what is clearly driving Marcellus.

Eusebius then proceeds to the theological part of the case. It should be noted that his case is completely unfair, as the Western synod of Serdica recognized, but also very clever. Marcellus was condemned, it may be remembered, on two counts: that he said that the Son of God received his beginning from Mary, and that his kingdom will have an end.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Sozomen, *HE* II.33.1–2 (quoted in full above, section 3).

Both of these are well calculated to infuriate Constantine. Eusebius was to give a panegyric in the next few days likening Constantine to the Word of God, and claiming that the length of Constantine's reign mirrored the Word's eternity of rule.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>126</sup> See esp. Eusebius, *De Laudibus Constantini* 2.1 (p. 199.4–8 Heikel). On the date and occasion, see Barnes, *Constantine*, 253.

The subtext of his claim that Marcellus taught that the Word's reign had an end is clear enough. So is the subtext of the claim that Marcellus believed that the Son of God received a beginning from Mary. Constantine had always been adamant that the Son had no temporal beginning.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>127</sup> In Constantine's *Oration to the Saints*, the Son is said to have an 'eternal (αἰδιος) cause' and to be of 'eternal (αἰώνιος) nature' (11 (p. 168.11 and 25 Heikel)).

These were the headlines. Because Eusebius knew Constantine was apt to be dismissive of what he saw as futile, hair-splitting theological arguments, he had to claim that Marcellus' theological aberrations were the most serious possible, so serious as to make him not really a Christian at all. And of course, Marcellus did believe that the Son of God first had a beginning from Mary—because he believed, like Athanasius and Alexander and the rest of the anti-Arian coalition, that the eternal Son had no beginning.

The second claim could be made to sound plausible too. Marcellus taught that the partial kingdom of the man Jesus would have an end, but that the Word would reign eternally. This position had never been condemned; a thousand-year reign of Christ on earth was a long-standing tenet of much

end p.130

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

apocalyptic literature, and of course of Irenaeus and the Montanists and other second-century Asia Minor theologians, and Marcellus could cite 1 Corinthians 15: 28 in his favour. Eusebius hated this theology, and excised it from his *Ecclesiastical History* as far as possible, but he would have known perfectly well that it was a very different thing from believing that the Son's eternal reign would have an end.

Eusebius underpinned these two claims with as many shocking-sounding passages as he could find. While a fluent Greek-speaking theologian with the text in front of him would easily have seen that, whatever there might be in Marcellus' theology to disagree with, he certainly did not teach either of the points for which he was condemned in the sense implied, someone who was less than completely fluent in either Greek or theology and was merely listening to Eusebius' account, no doubt punctuated with histrionic gasps of shock from the Eusebian alliance,<sup>128</sup>

<sup>128</sup> The histrionic howl of outrage was part of the armoury of a synod called to deal with alleged heresy. Eusebius of Nicomedia was probably subjected to it at Nicaea, by the looks of Theodoret, *HE* I.8.1–2.

would be less likely to notice that even the extracts themselves give the lie to these two claims.

Eusebius, of course, also attacked Marcellus for things he actually did teach, which many theologians, ancient and modern, think ought to be attacked. Eusebius' claim that, by insisting on calling the Son of God only Word before the Incarnation, and making the Word a mere faculty of God without a separate subsistence, Marcellus in practice did away with the Word altogether, would be accepted by many of those from the Origenist tradition. Likewise, Eusebius certainly identified a problem with Marcellus' Christology in pointing out the absurdity of the idea that the flesh, the man Jesus, might live on throughout eternity after the Word has withdrawn back to the Father. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that these were not the reasons given for Marcellus' deposition. Both the Western letter of Serdica and the summary of Sabinus given by Sozomen make clear that the two charges mentioned above were the ones cited for his condemnation, and Marcellus taught neither of them in the way that is implied, as Julius of Rome and the 'Westerners' at Serdica clearly agreed.

The synod of Constantinople appears to have produced a list of condemned statements of Marcellus', according to the letter of the Easterners at Serdica.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>129</sup> Hilary, *FHA* IV.1.3.4 (p. 51.11–16 Feder); Sozomen, *HE* II.33.2.

The one which was to stick to Marcellus' name above all, and even to be enshrined negatively in the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan creed, was the statement (which Marcellus himself never made as such) that Christ's kingdom would have an end.



The deposition of Marcellus is irrefutable proof, if any more were needed, of the political brilliance of the Eusebian alliance. Like Athanasius before him, he was utterly outmanoeuvred. With no apparent reference either to his congregation or to the other bishops in his province, he was expelled from

end p.131

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

the church where he had presided for over twenty-two years. But he presumably felt it was a price worth paying for continuing to resist his opponents' theology and politics.

## 6. The Death of Arius

With Eustathius, Ossius, Alexander of Alexandria, Macarius of Jerusalem, Eutropius of Adrianople, Hellanicus of Tripoli, Athanasius, and Marcellus all either dead or disposed of, the final opponent of the rehabilitation of Arius with a major position in the East left in place was Alexander of Constantinople. We know little about Alexander, other than Athanasius' claim that death appeared to him to be preferable to accepting Arius back into communion. He was not, apparently, at Nicaea, and his presbyter Paul appears to have subscribed to Athanasius' deposition at Tyre,<sup>130</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Hilary, *FHA* IV.1.13.1 (p. 57 Feder).

perhaps conscious that Alexander need not consider himself bound by this action. But it does seem likely that he had at least theological affinities with the old anti-Arian alliance.

The friends of Arius, it appears, now tried a repeat of the tactics which had worked so well at Jerusalem: a choice between communicating with Arius or spoiling Constantine's tricennalia celebrations with a gratuitous display of love of strife. This may have been a less formal demand to receive Arius back into the church than at Tyre and Jerusalem, despite the starkness of the choice Alexander faces in Socrates' and Sozomen's accounts<sup>131</sup>

<sup>131</sup> Socrates, *HE* I.37.4; Sozomen, *HE* II.29.2.

—the story ultimately derives only from Athanasius, who knows how to heighten the drama.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Athanasius, *De Morte Arij*, was written to show that Arius was never received back into communion. Hanson, *Search*, 265, following Opitz, dismisses the account as largely fictional; Williams (*Arius*, 81) allows Arius' death may have been 'embarrassingly sudden', but doubts whether it occurred in quite the manner or with the timing Athanasius suggests. If it is assumed that Athanasius is deliberately playing up this story to distract attention from the fact that Arius was received into communion by a good many bishops long before this event, however, it need not be seen as so inherently implausible—the venue in question is not an unusual one for a sudden death, and the constant battle for acceptance, including public rejection by high-profile bishops such as Alexander, who could no doubt count on mob support for his views, must have been extremely stressful for Arius.

Arius, already accepted by Constantine as orthodox, may simply have been brought to the celebration as part of the Nicomedian party. But the *modus operandi* of the Eusebian alliance is clear enough, and there is nothing unrealistic about Alexander's fear of deposition if he absented himself from liturgies of major political significance in his own see, or refused to



communicate because Arius would also be communicating. Athanasius' picture of a desperate Alexander praying for death rather than having to communicate with Arius and so accept the final triumph of the Eusebian party is not unconvincing in the circumstances.

end p.132

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

For once, luck returned to their opponents. The day before the tricennalia celebrations were due to begin,<sup>133</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Athanasius, *De Morte Arii* 2–3. 24 July 336, the day before Constantine's celebrations began (Barnes, *Constantine*, 253), was indeed a Saturday, as Athanasius' account claims.

Arius died a sudden and shameful death (expiring in a public lavatory, presumably of a heart attack), which carried overtones of divine disfavour, and definitively excused Alexander from having to communicate with him. Constantine was clearly not so unnerved by this circumstance as to make any change in his ecclesiastical policy (Athanasius stayed in exile, as did Marcellus), but it definitively put an end to the device of using communion with Arius as a shibboleth against the anti-Eusebian alliance. The dead Arius now moved from being a weapon in the hands of the Eusebian party to being a weapon in the hands of their opponents, and one which they made very successful use of.

## 7. Conclusion

The decade of 327 to 337 saw a complete reversal of fortunes for what had been the pro-Arian and the pro-Alexander alliances. The remains of the first group ended the decade in virtual control of the churches of the East; the prominent members of the second all ended it dead or in exile. It has been the argument of this chapter that the latter outcome is unlikely to have been an accident, and that it was achieved by some brilliant political manoeuvring.

The deposition of Eustathius was the important first step. In this case, I have argued, the operation was largely carried out by Eusebius of Caesarea in support of his friend Paulinus of Tyre, probably with the help of Eusebius of Nicomedia's connections at court, perhaps after the emergence of real evidence of Eustathius' improper sexual conduct. This, the death of Alexander, and the return of Eusebius of Nicomedia put him and his allies in a very strong position, and they were then able to move on the remains of the old pro-Alexander alliance and pick them off one by one. It seems difficult to assign any other motivation for these actions in Eusebius of Nicomedia's case, at least, than sheer revenge, a desire to control the Church across the East, or a mixture of both; it is hard otherwise to explain the thoroughness of the operation.

The old pro-Alexander alliance and their friends had largely been disposed of by the early 330s. Only Marcellus and Athanasius and Alexander of Constantinople were able to hold out longer, and in Marcellus' case, to carry on the theological fight. Of the exiled leaders of the pro-Alexander alliance, only Marcellus and Athanasius would survive Constantine's death and return to offer their opponents any more resistance. It was they who became the basis of a new alliance, and found new friends in both East and West.

## 4 From the Exiles' Return to the Dedication Synod of Antioch

---

### Sara Parvis

**Abstract:** This chapter examines the complex events of 337-341, arguing that the returning exiles were probably not re-deposed on the basis of new synods, but of the earlier ones. The Dedication Synod of 341 was, if not the voice of the 'moderate majority' of Eastern bishops, at least a breath of fresh air on the Eastern ecclesiastical scene, allowing new voices to be heard such as that of Basil of Ancyra. The synod's creeds and its reply to the letter of Julius of Rome are examined and given a context. It is argued that the synod found its unity in condemning the theology of Marcellus of Ancyra, lampooned in a speech by Acacius of Caesarea, though on somewhat different grounds from those on which Marcellus had originally been deposed.

**Keywords:** Dedication Synod, Basil of Ancyra, creeds, Julius of Rome, Acacius of Caesarea

Constantine's death, as the death of each emperor during the controversy was to do, brought a moment of opportunity for those whom he had turned against, and a moment of danger for those whom he had favoured. Both sides moved quickly to secure the favour of his successors. Constantine was initially succeeded by four emperors (two of them barely adult and one a teenager), although these were soon whittled down to three and then two. Even though Eusebius of Nicomedia and his allies quickly secured the support of the twenty-year-old ruler of the East, Constantius, the rivalries of the different emperors lent themselves to exploitation by different ecclesiastical parties, which would allow the anti-Eusebian coalition some crucial room for manoeuvre in the next few years.

### 1. The Return of the Anti-Eusebian Alliance

Thanks to Constantine's death and to some swift action on their part, Marcellus and Athanasius were not, on this occasion, in exile very long—some nineteen months in Athanasius' case, around eleven in Marcellus'. One or two of their fellow exiles were able to return at the same time, and possibly through their agency—at least Asclepas of Gaza (who may have been exiled for supporting Eustathius of Antioch) and Lucius of Adrianople (Eutropius' successor, who had also been deposed). It looks as though the exiles made contact with one another, and agreed on a common strategy in the event of a return. For the battle to remain in their sees once they had returned to them began even before they had started on their journeys home.

Parvis, Sara, Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [135]-[139]

### (i) *In exile*

It is possible to establish something of a pattern in the places to which Constantine exiled ecclesiastical transgressors of the East. He seems to have had two policies: the most important figures, the ones who had the most capacity to make political trouble, were exiled to Trier, Constantine's former capital, where their correspondence with their home-bases would be considerably slowed, and where the large imperial machinery could keep an eye on them. Athanasius' exile certainly comes into this category, and as we have seen, so probably did that of Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis: they were exiled to Gaul, and 'as far away as possible',<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Constantine's *Letter to the Church of Nicomedia* (Urk 27.16 (p. 62.8 Opitz)).  
a combination which would fit Trier well.

Figures apparently deemed to be less problematic, such as Eustathius, and Arius and Euzoius, were exiled to 'Illyricum', which in the usage of Theodoret and Philostorgius, the two historians who provide this information, means not the west coast of Macedonia but the civil diocese, sometimes the prefecture, of Illyricum.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Arius' exile: Philostorgius, *HE* I.9c (p. 11.15 Bidez); Eustathius' exile: Theodoret, *HE* I.22.1. The diocese of Illyricum: Philostorgius, *HE* III.24 (p. 50.17), XII.2 (p. 141.2), XII.13 (p. 149.7); *Cod. Angelicus* A (p. 179.11 Bidez). The prefecture of Illyricum: Theodoret, *HE* II.4.6, V.23.10, V.17.1; V.34.10; Philostorgius, *HE* III.1a (p. 29.16), III.5a (p. 73.10), IX.8 (p. 119.8). Either diocese or prefecture (but not the west coast of Macedonia): Theodoret, *HE* I.22.1, IV.7.6, IV.8.1, IV.9.1, II.22.1, II.22.2, V.14.1; Philostorgius, *HE* IV.3a (p. 59.25), VI.6a (p. 74.17), IX.3 (p. 116.11), I.9c (p. 11.15), V.1 (p. 66.7), III.5a (p. 73.11).

(Jerome's claim in *On Illustrious Men* that the place of exile of Eustathius was Traianopolis in the diocese of Thrace, where he was still living in 394, can surely be ignored.)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Jerome, *De Vir. Ill.* 85. The exile is also said to have taken place under Constantius rather than Constantine.

Theodoret tells us that Eustathius was 'conveyed through [the diocese of] Thrace to an Illyrian city'.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Theodoret, *HE* I.22.1.

If exile to a large city comparable with Trier is the model (again ensuring the presence of imperial agents to monitor any untoward activities), the most likely are Serdica (one of Constantine's capitals before 324, called 'an Illyrian city' by Theodoret (*HE* II.4.6)), Naissus (a strategically important city which was to be Dalmatius' capital in 335 and Constans's in 337), and Sirmium (an imperial capital since the time of Diocletian and a city specifically called 'among the Illyrians' by Philostorgius).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For these three cities as imperial residences used at some point by Constantine, see Barnes, *New Empire*, 49, 69, 74, 80, 86–7. For ‘among the Illyrians’, see Philostorgius, *HE* IV.3<sup>a</sup> (p. 59.25 Bidez).

Arius and Euzoius were also presumably sent to one of these cities, though not necessarily the same one. Sirmium would be an attractive city for us to place them in, situated as it is between Singidunum and Mursa, whose bishops Ursacius and Valens became such firm converts, theologically as well as politically, to the Eusebian party.

We have no specific information on where Marcellus was sent into exile, but it seems likely that Illyricum, and one of these three cities in particular,

end p.135

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

was his destination also. There are several reasons for thinking so. The first is negative: Marcellus is never connected with Trier in any of the comings and goings of this period. Secondly, as we shall see, about half of the so-called ‘Western synod of Serdica’ was composed of bishops from the dioceses of Macedonia, Dacia, and Illyricum, and this synod was also heavily influenced by Marcellus, which would have been easier if he already knew a number of them. Third, Sirmium, the metropolis of Pannonia, chose Photinus, Marcellus’ pupil and former deacon, as its bishop at some point (possibly after the synod of Serdica, since he is not listed as being present there), in the teeth of what must have been considerable opposition from Valens of Mursa in the same province and Ursacius of Singidunum in Moesia, a mere forty miles east, which again might suggest some lengthy connection with him. Finally, the ‘Easterners’ at Serdica tell us that Marcellus was condemned at some point (perhaps, at the request of Constantine, when he first arrived in the diocese) by the bishops of both Serdica and Naissus (Protogenes and Cyriacus, the former allegedly four times), but they subsequently both supported him, Protogenes quite strongly, at the Serdican synod.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Hilary, *FHA* IV.1.3.4 (p. 51.11–25 Feder).

This again rather suggests that he had some leisure at some point, possibly during this exile, to talk them round.

If Marcellus did sow the seeds of his later enthusiastic endorsement at Serdica while in exile somewhere in Illyricum from July 336 until June or July 337, he made good use of his time. Athanasius was meanwhile making other useful friends during his year and a half in Trier: its bishop, Maximinus, and the young Caesar Constantine II, who had been stationed in that city since 328.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 84.

Constantine II was, it turned out, the wrong horse to back among the three surviving sons of Constantine, but he was nonetheless initially important: it was he who allowed Athanasius and apparently also the other exiles a return home.

## *(ii) The decree of return*

Constantine died on 17 May 337, leaving three sons under twenty-one and a

nephew to succeed him. These four had been appointed to the rank of Caesar during Constantine's lifetime, and on the appointment in 335 of his nephew Dalmatius, the last of the four to be named, the empire's territories had been notionally divided among them, although Constantine himself still held the reins of power.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Barnes, *Constantine*, 251–2.

It is likely that Constantine, having imprudently executed his only adult son eight years earlier, was by this means attempting to provide the stablest possible succession, at least until his remaining sons were old enough to have had some experience of government. Dalmatius' age is not known, but it is

end p.136

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

likely that he was ten to twenty years older than his cousins, and that this was the reason for his appointment.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *PLRE*, i, 241, 'Fl. Iulius Dalmatius 7'. He was the son of the eldest of Constantine's half-brothers.

It may have been understood by Constantine's close associates that Dalmatius was to be quietly disposed of when Constantine's sons reached a more suitable age for government.

Athanasius claims (*Hist Ar* 8.1) that 'the three brothers, Constantine, Constantius, and Constans, caused all to return after their father's death to their own cities and churches', but it is not clear exactly what legislation and what level of administrative back-up is implied by this statement. The document Athanasius includes by way of illustration at this point<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The MSS of *Hist Ar* omit all but the beginning of the letter (8.2); they transmit the full text at *Ap c Ar* 87.4–7.

is simply a letter from Constantine II to the church in Alexandria, whose arguments have force only in his own case: Athanasius was exiled to Trier (in Constantine's territory) for his own safety, and Constantine II is fulfilling his father's wishes in returning him to Alexandria. More than one modern commentator has doubted whether Constantius, at least, had any part in ordering the return of the bishops exiled by his father.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Simonetti, *Crisi*, 137–8; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 34.

Barnes concludes that Athanasius won Constantine II's friendship and support for his return in Trier, and trusted himself to conciliate Constantius on his journey east before he actually entered the latter's territory.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 34.

But there must have been more support for the return of the other exiles than this, even if we are to assume that Constantine II did issue a decree in the names of all four of the co-emperors (the usual practice in a time of multiple emperors) permitting all the exiles, and not merely Athanasius, to return. We have no reason to think that Marcellus and the others were in Constantine II's territory (Britain, the Gauls, and the Spains) at all. If Athanasius could point to the fact that Constantine had never authorized a successor to him, this was not the case with Marcellus or Asclepas of Gaza, or presumably the others. If Athanasius felt he had to conciliate Constantius

before entering the latter's territory, *a fortiori* the others must have felt this, and they had (so far as we know) rather less experience petitioning emperors.

Most importantly of all, there must have been some instructions to imperial officials at province or city level to assist the exiled bishops who had successors in place in regaining their churches, since the disorder this would create was against the interests of the cities themselves. Simonetti makes a virtue of the fact that Athanasius only mentions permission for him to return, not for the others, and claims that the violence caused by the returns of all the exiles other than Athanasius was due to their having no official leave to repossess their sees.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Simonetti, *Crisi*, 138.

This is impossible, however: they would never have achieved repossession of their churches with no official mandate at all, and would have been extremely unwise to try.

end p.137

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

It is likely, therefore, that the exiles had support, not only from Constantine II (which Athanasius had presumably won for them), but from key figures in the East, or at least one key figure: Flavius Ablabius, Constantius' Praetorian Prefect.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *PLRE* i, 3–4, 'Fl. Ablabius 4'; Barnes, *New Empire*, 134–6, with text and discussion of the important inscription *L'Année Epigraphique* 1925, 72 = *Inscriptions Latines de la Tunisie* 814.

Ablabius is mentioned in Athanasius' Festal Letter 4 (for 332) as 'Ablabius...who fears God in truth', and as helping Athanasius send the letter from court, where he has just been acquitted after being tried on various charges, including that of breaking Ischyry's chalice.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Athanasius, *Festal Letters* 4.5, tr. Henry Burgess, *The Festal Letters of S. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria*, Library of Fathers (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1854), 35.

Ablabius was prepared at that point, in other words, to take the risk of being openly friendly with a man who had powerful enemies at court, a risk which must reflect some friendship, kinship, or shared theological position with Athanasius or one of his close supporters, or at the very least, shared enemies. It is not unlikely that he was a key figure in smoothing the path of the exiles back into Constantius' regions in the early summer of 337, and obtaining for them the necessary administrative support for their ejection of their replacements from their churches. If so, his friendship was not to be of use to the former exiles for very long. He was dismissed by Constantius not long afterwards as a prelude to being executed for treason the following year.

Dalmatius, Constantius, and Constans may have spent some of June and July campaigning together against the Sarmatians, in an attempt to win Constantine's younger sons their Victory titles (Constantine II was already *Alamannicus*).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Constantius and Constans are both *Sarmaticus* by 340 (*Corpus Inscriptionum*



Dalmatius was killed, possibly in the context of this campaign (although certainly by pre-arrangement), some time between 2 August and 9 September, and his territory divided between Constans and Constantius. One probable victim of this territorial readjustment was Paul, newly elected bishop of Constantinople shortly after Constantine's death.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> For summer 337 as the date of Paul's election, see Barnes, *Athanasius*, 212–13, and see further below.

Paul's election was presumably accepted by Dalmatius; Athanasius is unlikely to have passed through Constantinople, where he saw Paul, as late as 9 September.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Constantinople was more or less exactly halfway between Trier and Alexandria, on the route Athanasius is likely to have taken. Since Athanasius took 128 days for his journey, the chronological halfway point would have been 20 August. However, since there was presumably little politicking for him to do before Sirmium, the first 1800 miles of the journey must have passed relatively quickly and uneventfully, leaving him in Constantinople proportionally somewhat earlier.

When the city was transferred to the territory of Constantius, he deposed the major episcopal appointment made under his predecessor as he would shortly depose important civil appointments of his predecessors, including Ablabius.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Athanasius speaks of a pretext for Paul's deposition so minor that even Macedonius, who made the relevant charge, did not break off communion with Paul (*Hist. Ar.* 7.1). Athanasius blames Eusebius' desire for the see of Constantinople, but Constantius' action looks to have been the decisive one (see Socrates, *HE* II. 6–7).

We cannot be sure who suggested Eusebius of Nicomedia as

end p.138

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

a replacement for Paul, but his appointment marks the beginning of a firm policy in favour of the Eusebian alliance at Constantius' court.

### *(iii) Athanasius' return*

Athanasius is the only one of the exiles whose precise whereabouts, path of return, and length of time in his see before being removed again are known with certainty. His path and manner of return are worthy of some remark.

We have already seen that Athanasius and probably also Marcellus were pursuing a policy of building up as much support as possible in areas outside the provinces currently led by bishops favourable to the Eusebian alliance. This was vital if they were to have any chance of remaining in their sees once they returned to them. It is probable that they corresponded during their time in exile, and began at this point, if not before, to coordinate their strategies to some extent. They were certainly likely to have need of one another's power-bases in central Asia Minor and Egypt, as well as potential supporters in Adrianople and in the diocese of Oriens, in any future attacks on their legitimacy as bishops.

Athanasius' return journey through the whole Eastern half of the empire presented a perfect opportunity for building up support. It took him just over five months to return from Trier to Alexandria, from the date of Constantine



II's letter to the churches in Alexandria (17 June 337) to the date given in the Festal Index for his re-entry of the city (23 November).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup>*Festal Index* X (Martin and Albert, 236, with 286 n. 30).

The Easterners at Serdica raged over his activities at this point:

Through the whole route of his return journey he was overturning the churches, restoring some condemned bishops, promising hope to others of a return to the episcopacy, constituting others from among the pagans bishops, though there were priests<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup>*Sacerdotes*; since *episcopi* is used for bishops above, it seems likely that the word here means 'presbyters', which seems to give the argument more force: long-standing, distinguished candidates for the episcopacy were ignored in favour of neophytes.

who had remained sound and whole throughout the attacks and murders of the gentiles, in no way respecting the laws and relying wholly on desperate measures.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Hilary, *FH* A IV.1.8.2 (p. 54.28–p. 55.4 Feder: my translation). For a helpful translation of the whole of Feder's edition, see Lionel Wickham, *Hilary of Poitiers: Conflicts of Conscience and Law in the Fourth-century Church, Against Valens and Ursacius: The Extant Fragments, Together with His Letter to the Emperor Constantius*, Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), though it occasionally trusts the Latin grammar of a text which imperfectly renders a Greek original rather too far (e.g., p. 27, which translates *Sed et iudices, qui illum digne sententiaverunt, credere noluerunt* as 'But the judges who pronounced a fitting sentence upon him, refused to believe him', whereas it must in the context mean, 'But they refused to believe even the judges who rightly pronounced sentence upon him.'

It seems clear from this that Athanasius took the overland route, passing through the Balkans, Constantinople, Asia Minor, Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine: from Trier, this route would have taken two months even by imperial courier, and so five months would represent a reasonable leisurely

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [140]-[144]

journey with a stop for several days at major centres.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Journey times based on a figure of 50 miles per day by imperial courier, 25–35 miles for an ordinary traveller (as given in Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, 185, 188). Distances are based on the most likely routes (cf. the Bordeaux pilgrim in 333 (Cuntz, *Itineraria Romana*, i, 86–102), the Antonine Itinerary (Cuntz, *Itineraria Romana*, i, end map), the Peutinger Table (Miller, *Itineraria Romana*), and the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, ed. R. J. A. Talbert (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000)).

It is during these stops that he must have spent time pursuing the activities the Easterners so objected to; it is worth considering where they took place.

He certainly had an audience with Constantius (probably organized by Ablabius) at Viminacium in Moesia Prima.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 34.

He would have taken the road through Sirmium to get there, and may have spent time with bishops there and in the other main cities of Illyricum and Dacia on his route, perhaps primed by Marcellus. Much seems to have taken place of which we know very little in these dioceses and that of Macedonia, between the synods of Nicaea and Serdica. The Eusebian alliance recruited Ursacius and Valens, Alexander of Thessalonica aligned himself with the Eusebians, distanced himself from them, and then realigned himself with them again,<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Alexander, invited to Tyre presumably in expectation of his support for the Eusebian side, writes to the *comes* Dionysius in support of Athanasius (Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 80); by 339 Athanasius is claiming that the Eusebians again, 'though they count him with themselves and size him up as one of their plot, show nothing other than violence against him' ('Encyclical Letter of the Bishops of Egypt', in Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 16.1).

and a number of bishops were deposed and reinstated, as we learn from the sneers of the Easterners' letter at Serdica.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Hilary, *FH A IV* 1.20 (p. 61.9–30 Feder).

It was clearly becoming an important battle-ground. The same was true of the diocese of Thracia, where Eustathius' friend Eutropius of Adrianople 'often exposed Eusebius and advised those passing through not to be persuaded by Eusebius' impious words',<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 5.1.

to which Lucius of Adrianople was returning, and whence several bishops were exiled in the years that followed.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 19.1.

Athanasius probably visited Lucius at Adrianople (unless Lucius had been with him at Trier); he certainly spent some time in Constantinople with Paul.

Barnes convincingly assigns Paul's election to this summer (against

Schwartz, Opitz, Klein, Hanson, and others) by correlating the internal information in Socrates' account (*HE* II.6–7) with Constantius' known whereabouts in the period 337–340.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 213; Schwartz, *GS* iii, 274; Opitz, *Athanasius' Werke* ii, 186.11 n.; Richard Klein, *Constantius II. und die christliche Kirche*, *Impulse der Forschung* 26 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977), 31 and 70–7; Hanson, *Search*, 265; F. Winkelmann, 'Die Bischöfe Metrophanes und Alexander von Byzanz', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 59 (1966), 47–71, at 61; W. Telfer, 'Paul of Constantinople', *Harvard Theological Review* 43 (1950), 30–92, at 55. It might be added that the emperor in Socrates' account must be Constantius, since his journey to Antioch immediately after installing Eusebius in Constantinople is incompatible with Constantine's movements at any of the alternative dates.

Barnes's suggestion that Athanasius played an active role in Paul's consecration is perhaps unlikely (Athanasius

end p.140

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

had no particular reason to trust Paul, who had consented to his deposition while a presbyter representing Alexander at Tyre),<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 36 and 212–13; Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.13 (p. 57.20–22 Feder). Paul's signing need not prove that he was convinced of Athanasius' guilt; he might have played safe, and reckoned that Alexander could consider himself bound by his presbyter's action or not as he chose.

but at the very least, Athanasius is likely to have courted Paul on his way through Constantinople shortly after the latter's installation, worked hard to convince him of his own innocence if he still needed convincing, and tried to secure his support for the future on the basis of Alexander's rejection of the movement to rehabilitate Arius.

The next major stop, after a hurried journey past Nicomedia and Nicaea, would have been Ancyra (if Marcellus was indeed exiled to Illyricum, he would have been back there long since). Marcellus and Athanasius may well not have seen each other since Tyre, and they presumably had much to discuss. We can imagine the two of them at dinner together, drinking wine or beer or some local Celtic drink,<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Athanasius does not seem to have been fond of wine; no other commentator I know of thinks that the point of Jesus turning water into wine at Cana is merely to demonstrate his power over Alexandrian water deities (*De Incarnatione* 18 (p. 178.37–39 Thomson) and 45 (p. 248.16–18 Thomson)). As a man of uncertain birth, perhaps a Copt, beer was presumably his drink. Marcellus' tastes are unknown. It is not impossible that the local Galatian population enjoyed a distillate they called οἶν σκη, whose name was also in use around this time as an alchemical term in the sublimation of metals (cf. Zosimus the Alchemist (Berthelot, p. 222b), cited in LSJ).

sharing jokes (both had a sense of humour often bordering on the outrageous) and cursing the two Eusebii and all their works. But they also had some strategic planning to do, and it is likely that they did it now.

Julius tells the Eastern addressees of his irritable letter of 341 that 'Athanasius and Marcellus have many who speak up and write on their behalf.'<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> In *Ap c Ar* 23.

Some of those whom Athanasius mentions are clearly more likely to be Marcellus' natural friends. He cites 'nearly sixty-three' (ἑξήκοντα ἑξ—an odd

phrase) out of Asia, Phrygia, and Isauria who wrote in his support prior to Serdica.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 50.4.

These may be the same people whose written support the Easterners at Serdica complain bitterly that Athanasius enlisted before going to Rome to pursue his case there.

Athanasius also claims bishops from Isauria, Pamphylia, and Lycia as signatories to the Serdican documents in his (and Marcellus') favour.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 1.2.

These again are likely to have been initially Marcellus' friends. Athanasius may have met or visited some of them on his way through Asia Minor on this occasion. It is at least likely that he and Marcellus drew up lists of each one's potential supporters, and prepared to recommend to them each other's case.

Athanasius probably also visited the schismatic supporters of Eustathius as he passed through Antioch in Syria. This may well have been the occasion

end p.141

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

of the ructions in Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine which Theodoret has Eusebius of Nicomedia and his friends Theognis and Theodore of Heraclea use as an argument for persuading Constantius to exile Athanasius a second time.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Theodoret, *HE* II.3.8; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 36.

Antioch was highly volatile, and Athanasius' mere presence might easily have set off riots there. His untoward activities in Phoenicia were presumably connected with grieving supporters of Hellanicus of Tripoli, and in Palestine with the return of Asclepas of Gaza; Asclepas is the only bishop we know of to have successfully returned at this stage to a see in the diocese of Oriens. It is also not at all impossible that his retinue was barracked and jeered in these provinces by mobs supporting his opponents. Since Alexandrian friends probably met him on the road, there could well have been pitched battles between supporters.

The installations of new bishops he presumably performed in Egypt; they may have been waiting for confirmation throughout the time of his exile. Once he was back in Alexandria, he set about seeking wider support, for his enemies were already moving against him again.

#### *(iv) Marcellus' return*

If Marcellus was banished to a city of Illyricum, he could have been home in Ancyra in three to four weeks, even before Paul's election in Constantinople.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Serdica was about 650 miles from Ancyra, Naissus about 100 miles further, Sirmium about 220 miles further again.

Since the only civic disturbance Marcellus is accused of causing took place in Ancyra itself, we can assume that he was not part of a long triumphalist returning tour like that of Athanasius, but that he returned home as quickly

as possible. As mentioned above, he must have had imperial documents granting leave not just to return from exile but to repossess his see, and hence the right to request support from the provincial governor in so doing.

Unlike Athanasius, however, whose see was empty and waiting for him,<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 29.3.

Marcellus and the other returning exiles had to worry about ejecting their successors.

The letter of the Easterners at Serdica, which accuses Athanasius of a campaign of violence over many years, also charges Marcellus, Paul of Constantinople, Asclepas of Gaza, and Lucius of Adrianopole specifically with causing violence on their returns from exile. The following is the account it gives of violence in Ancyra:

For indeed there were also in Ancyra of the province of Galatia after the return of the heretic Marcellus house-burnings and various sorts of pitched battle. Presbyters were dragged naked to the forum by him, and (which is to be mentioned with weeping and lamentation) the consecrated body of the Lord, hung at the necks of priests, he openly and publicly profaned, and most holy virgins dedicated to God and

end p.142

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Christ, their clothes having been dragged off, with foulness to be abhorred he denuded publicly in the forum and in the centre of the city, as the people ran together.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Fuere namque et in Anquira provinciae Galatiae post reditum Marcelli haeretici domorum incendia et genera diversa bellorum. Nudi ab ipso ad forum trahebantur presbyteri et, quod cum lacrimis luctuque dicendum est, consecratum domini corpus ad sacerdotum colla suspensum palam publiceque profanabat virginesque sanctissimas deo Christoque dicatas publice in foro mediaque in civitate concurrentibus populis abstractis vestibus horrenda foeditate nudabat.* (Hilary, *FH A IV.1.9.1* (p. 55.10–19 Feder)).

At face value, these are serious charges, in one case even more serious than those which Athanasius faced during this period. If they could be brought home to Marcellus, they would constitute a considerable stain on his character. They deserve, therefore, to be investigated as carefully as possible. A closer look will show that they are not necessarily all that they seem.

The Easterners' letter makes both general and specific accusations against Marcellus. The specific charges are three: that he dragged presbyters naked to the forum, that he profaned the consecrated host by having it suspended at the necks of priests in public (or perhaps profaned it in some way while it was hanging there), and that he stripped consecrated virgins in the forum (or brought them there having stripped them already). In addition, the letter imputes to Marcellus by implication ('after the return of the heretic Marcellus') a general riot, which included arson attacks.

The 'house-burnings and various sorts of pitched battle' described by the Easterners' Letter fit into a clear pattern of violent behaviour in cities of the

East throughout the fourth century and beyond.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Timothy E. Gregory, 'Urban Violence in Late Antiquity', in R. T. Marchese (ed.), *Aspects of Graeco-Roman Urbanism* (Oxford: BAR, 1983), 138–61.

The underpoliced cities of the Empire in late antiquity were subject to constant riots, sparked off initially by religious controversy, sporting rivalries, political demands, or the fear of famine, but quickly becoming indiscriminate rampages against whatever property or people caught the mob's eye. Agents provocateurs could be involved, stirring up the crowd for the benefit of one party or another, or purely to cause trouble, but often the riot simply took on its own momentum and continued for days, completely losing sight of its initial impetus.

In the case of religious rivalries, the situation was potentially worse because of the larger number of factions involved. Besides the rival groups of Christians, there were also militant pagan and Jewish gangs, and no doubt subdivisions within these latter also. The balance of power of a city must have depended, as it does in vigilante-controlled cities today, on there being firm unwritten rules as to who protected whom and when and how. A high-profile replacement at top level would signal a renegotiation of those rules, and the way to test them, and to try to alter them in favour of one's own faction, was to riot. The riots would very likely have been joined in, not only by the rival Christian factions but by the other gangs also.

end p.143

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

There were riots throughout the fourth century to which ecclesiastical causes were assigned in such cities as Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople, as well as many lesser ones; these cities also rioted for other reasons, most famously Antioch in the Riot of the Statues in 387, where an uncontrollable mob attacked and ill-treated imperial statues, and it looked for a time as though the city would be razed in punishment. The number of fatalities was often high, including sometimes the lynching of important officials or even bishops (as in the cases of the *comes* Hermogenes in Constantinople in 342 or Bishop George in Alexandria in 361).<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Hermogenes: Ammianus, XIV.10. 2; Socrates, *HE* II.13.1–4. George: *Hist. Aceph.*, 2.8–10 (Martin and Albert, 148); Socrates, *HE* III.2–3, esp. III.2.10; Sozomen, *HE* V.7; Ammianus, XXII.11.1–11, esp. 8–10.

The forces at hand to put down such riots were small, given the imperial policy of starving prefects and governors of troops.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> See Ramsay McMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest and Alienation in the Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), 163–6.

Riots were therefore often left to burn themselves out.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Gregory, 'Urban Violence', 155.

In the most serious cases, such as in Antioch at the time of Eustathius' deposition, or at the lynching of Hermogenes in Constantinople, imperial troops were sent in, and the city as a whole was punished.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Eusebius, *VC* III.59.2–3.

But a common means of dealing with more small-scale outbreaks of unrest

was to send in a small group from the personal force of the Prefect or other responsible official to target a few individuals marked out as ringleaders or scapegoats, extract them, and have them made an example of.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> See Ammianus Marcellinus, XV.7.1–10, where Leontius, prefect of Rome 355–356, abandoned by his subordinates, rode his own carriage into the middle of an angry crowd and picked out a ‘ringleader’ and had him arrested and flogged there and then. The crowd dispersed immediately. The same prefect used *apparitores* (police agents) to extract and punish possibly random members of the crowd on another occasion (Ammianus, XV.7.2).

This seems to have happened on many occasions throughout the Arian controversy. When we hear, therefore, as we frequently do, particularly in the writings of Athanasius, of beatings and floggings of monks, presbyters, and virgins, this is generally likely to be linked with rioting and disturbance of the peace.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> e.g. Athanasius, *Ep Enc* 4.3.

Virgins are presumably often also the victims of crowd aggression, either just because they are women, or from pagans scornful of their calling. But we should not necessarily therefore assume that they were never themselves aggressors. Their frequent mention in catalogues of this nature may suggest that, like the monks, some of them might have been tough characters not averse to joining in a fray in defence of a revered bishop. Certainly they seem to have been out and about to a surprising degree, suggesting that many of them were not exactly ladies. Such lower-class Christian women had always been subjected to the cruellest of state violence.



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [145]-[149]

Were the virgins and presbyters of Ancyra of this sort?<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> In later years, Palladius would praise Ancyra for its large number of (well-born) virgins ('In this city, Ancyra, there are many other illustrious virgins, about two thousand or more, chaste and noteworthy women': Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca* 67). It would be interesting to know when this tradition began. The synod of Ancyra of 314 mentions virgins (canon 19), but seems to find it likely that they will want to marry later.

Is their stripping some form of judicial punishment for disturbing the peace? Probably, as it happens, not. No further violence against them seems to have occurred, since otherwise Basil, present at the Eastern synod of Serdica, would certainly have reported it. If the Greek words behind *nudi* and *nudabat* are γυμν οἱ and γυμν οὗ, these do not necessarily imply total stripping, possibly merely the stripping off of an outer layer of garments. The action described may in fact be the ejection of the presbyters and holy virgins from their offices of priest and deaconess by the removal of the garments that marked them off as such—an outer layer of dark clerical wear in the case of the presbyters<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> See the references collected in Joseph Bingham, *The Antiquities of the Christian Church*, book VI, chapter 4, sections 18–20 (in *The Works of the Rev. Joseph Bingham*, new edn. R. Bingham, 10 vols. (Oxford: University Press, 1855), esp. Socrates, *HE* VI.22.5–7.

and their veils in the case of the virgins (as Athanasius complains was done to virgins in Alexandria).<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Athanasius, *Ep Enc* 4.3.

If Marcellus did even this in public in the forum, it says little for his character. But it is rather more likely<sup>49</sup> that it was done, as such actions nearly always were, by the civil authorities.

<sup>49</sup> e.g. Athanasius, *Ep Enc* 4.3.

Marcellus might have stood by watching with satisfaction, with resignation, or with horror, but even if he intervened, it is unlikely that he could have prevented it, once the guards had made their minds up concerning the appropriate course of action.

What of the consecrated hosts hung from the necks of priests? This, too, is likely to be part of Basil's removal by the civic authorities. The ejection of Basil and his presumably newly appointed church officers was unavoidable if Marcellus was to repossess the principal Ancyran church, and if these protested (as no doubt they did), a certain level of rough handling would also have been unavoidable. The profanation of the hosts hung round the priests' necks may well be an account of an attempt by Basil and his presbyters to secure protection for themselves against the soldiers by tying pyxes round their necks—if so, the soldiers were presumably pagan, and manhandled them anyway, thus 'publicly and openly profaning' the consecrated body of the Lord.

In the case of all three of the specific charges against Marcellus, the most important piece of evidence in his favour is this: the writer of the Easterners' Letter at Serdica does not actually believe these events can really be laid convincingly at Marcellus' door.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> This despite his strength of language, which is no guarantee of his veracity. The same writer claims that Athanasius smashed the chalice of Ischyryus 'with his own hands' (*propriis manibus*, Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.6.1 (p. 53.14 Feder)), when the official charge had only ever been that his presbyter Macarius had done so.

The kind of sacrilege implied by personally

end p.145

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

suspending a consecrated host from the neck of a priest as an act of violence, for instance, would have condemned Marcellus utterly and irrevocably, had there been any real chance of making the charge stick. Athanasius was haunted for over two decades by the charge that one of his presbyters (not even he himself) had merely smashed a sacred chalice when it was empty. Marcellus' alleged action would have been far more serious, had it been established with anything like credibility. But even within the Easterners' Letter itself, the author never refers to these charges again in his summing-up against Marcellus. They are only mentioned in passing in a list of disreputable events connected with all the exiles. It is clear that they never formed a part of any charges made against Marcellus individually: there is no hint of them in any of the documents connected with the Dedication Synod, for example. Julius, in his letter to the leaders of that synod, does not think that he needs to defend Marcellus against such accusations in the way he needs to defend Athanasius against similar ones. Instead, he sees Marcellus and his friends as the victims of what violence there was:

And in Ancyra of Galatia too not a few things took place; indeed, the same things that happened in Alexandria happened there again. This we have heard from others as well, and Marcellus the bishop attested the fact.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 33.3.

Violence was endemic in the ancient world, including both mob violence and judicial violence. The evidence that Marcellus was closely involved in either of these is not strong. He is never accused in any other context of using violence against an opponent, but rather of failing to pursue heretics with sufficient vigour.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea, *ET I*.1.1.

The evidence against Basil is rather stronger—he was himself deposed from the see of Ancyra for deeds of violence, some twenty years later.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Sozomen, *HE* IV.24.4–8. The charges against Basil may also have been to some extent trumped up: see T. D. Barnes, 'The Crimes of Basil of Ancyra', *JTSNS* 47 (1996), 550–4, who points out the similarity between these and other such charges used to depose one's enemy bishops.

## 2. The Events of 337–341

If Constantius' Praetorian Prefect Flavius Ablabius had been a vital champion for the exiles in their return to the East, his dismissal from office by Constantius soon after the latter's proclamation, along with his two brothers, as Augustus on 9 September left the returning exiles in a horribly exposed position. Their opponents seem to have begun to move against them almost immediately, before Athanasius even re-entered Alexandria.

The sequence of events during the next four years, 337 to 341, has been much disputed. The exiles were all deposed again, but when, by how many,

end p.146

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

and in what circumstances? When was Paul of Constantinople deposed? When and how did Julius of Rome become involved? In which order were the synod of Rome which exculpated Athanasius and Marcellus, and the Dedication synod of Antioch which did not? I propose the following timetable of events, which will be argued for below.

**Autumn/winter 337:** Eusebius of Nicomedia, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, Theognis of Nicaea, Menophantus of Ephesus, and Ursacius and Valens assemble at Constantinople at the request of Constantius, presumably with some others, in order to depose Paul. They replace him with Eusebius.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Names: Hilary, *FH B* II.1.2.1 (p. 106.2–3 and 9–10 Feder); Theodoret, *HE* II.8.6; *EOMIA*, i.2.4, 645.33–35. Deposition of Paul: Socrates, *HE* II.7.2; Sozomen, *HE* III.4.3; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 212.

Constantius ratifies their decision and leaves; the seven Eusebian allies (plus Stephen, later of Antioch) remain. They write to Julius of Rome and probably other bishops against Athanasius, Marcellus, and Asclepas of Gaza:<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Hilary, *FH B* II.1.2.1 (p. 106.2–p. 107.1 Feder); Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 19.3, 5; 42.5; Theodoret, *HE* II.8.6; *EOMIA* i.2.4, 645.36–41.

it may be at this stage that they compile the book of condemned Marcellan propositions to which the Eastern Synod of Serdica refers.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.3.4 (p. 51.11–16 Feder).

They may at this point also send a presbyter and two deacons—Macarius, Martyrius, and Hesychius—to Rome with the letter attacking both Athanasius and Marcellus and asking Julius to accept Pistus as bishop of Alexandria;<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 22.3; 24.1.

if so, the messengers do not make the full journey until the early spring.

**Spring 338:** The Eusebians send letters to the three Augusti against Athanasius and probably also Marcellus and the others.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 3.5–7; *Hist Ar* 9.1 mentions only Constantius and Constans—even in treasonable mode, Athanasius followed the official *damnatio memoriae* of Constantine II.

Athanasius gets wind of these moves and arranges a synod of Egyptian and Libyan bishops to write in his defence (or rather, issue a letter he has composed) to Constantine II and Constans and to send presbyters to head off Macarius and his companions at Rome.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 3–19; 22.3–4, 24.1–3.

Athanasius, meanwhile, departs for Cappadocia to defend himself before Constantius, and possibly to have another meeting with Marcellus.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 41–2.

He also arranges a visit in his defence to Alexandria by the desert hermit Antony.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Athanasius, *Festal Index* X (Martin and Albert, 236); *Vita Antonii* 69–71. See Martin and Albert, 75–6, and Barnes, *Athanasius*, 45, for the date.

**Late spring:** Julius, increasingly worried by events in the East, and more and more convinced that the Eusebian party are up to no good, listens to the Alexandrian presbyters' version of events and goads the Eusebian envoys into boasting that they can make good all their accusations at a Roman synod.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 22.3.

He writes to the Eusebians, agreeing to this 'proposal', as well as

end p.147

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

to Athanasius (and presumably Marcellus), proposing the same.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 9.1; *Ap c Ar* 22.3; 22.4; 29.2; 30.1.

Julius is quite sincere and definite in this request, although he does not set a definite date.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Schwartz, *GS* iii, 285.

**Autumn 338:** Athanasius and Marcellus, who dare not leave their sees for so long, presumably write friendly letters to Julius, agreeing in principle to a new synod, but do not commit to a date. The Eusebians either do not write, or write putting Julius off.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> All of this is surmise based on the political realities and on Julius' subsequent attitude to the parties in question.

**Winter 338/9:** A group of Eusebian-supporting bishops, including a number of Arians and probably some Melitians and other victims of Athanasius' violent tactics in Alexandria,<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 9.3; *Ep Enc* 6.1.

assembles in Antioch and petitions the emperor against Athanasius, Marcellus, and the rest, this time successfully, presumably all on the same grounds: that they retook possession of their sees unlawfully, without permission of an episcopal synod; that there were riots when each returned to his church; that some of them had punished those who supported their depositions by denouncing them to magistrates; and that they had committed whatever crimes they were originally deposed for.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Socrates (*HE* II.8.6–7) gives these as the charges which toppled Athanasius, but they sound like part of a job lot of charges intended to cover all the exiles, since they are applicable to all of them, with modifications.

Constantius issues letters to the relevant magistrates, requesting Philagrius, newly reappointed Prefect of Egypt (who had already been Egyptian Prefect until 337), to install his countryman Gregory as bishop of Alexandria (Pistus

had proved too much of a liability) and deal with Athanasius.

**Spring 339:** The bishops who returned from exile in 337 are all redeposed, the magistrates using their usual strong-arm tactics.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 33.1–3, 35.2, 6; *Hist Ar* 12.2.

Athanasius writes to his former protector, Constantine II.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Barnes deduces this letter in a neat piece of exegesis of the *Apology to Constantius* (Athanasius, 50–2).

**August 339:** Athanasius arrives in Rome, after a circuitous journey to avoid being apprehended. Julius writes again to the Eusebians, pressing them to name a date for a Roman synod to retry Athanasius' and Marcellus' cases.

**December 339:** Marcellus arrives in Rome after unknown activities elsewhere (Barnes' suggestion that he went to Illyricum is attractive).<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 57.

**First half of 340:** Constantine II invades the territory of his brother Constans and is killed.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> *PLRE* i, 223–4, 'Fl. Val. Constantinus IV'; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 218.

Constans pays a visit to Rome, meets and is petitioned by Athanasius and Marcellus there, and takes up their cause, writing to his brother on their behalf.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> See Chapter 5.

Julius also writes to the Eusebians an extremely irritable letter by two presbyters, Philoxenus and Elpidius,

end p.148

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

giving them an ultimatum to come to a synod in Rome before the following March.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 20.1; 21.2; 22.1; 22.6; 25.1.

Constantius, anxious to ensure he is indeed pursuing a policy that is defensible to the wider church, though not prepared to allow interference from either his brother Constans or ecclesiastical powers outside his own territory, determines to use the occasion of the dedication of the newly built Holy Concord church at Antioch the following winter to hold a large and representative synod and assure himself that the Eusebian policies have widespread support.

**Summer 340:** Constantius sends invitations for the dedication of the church of Holy Concord the following winter to bishops throughout his half of the empire. Philoxenus and Elpidius arrive in Antioch with their request, which (not entirely unreasonably) enrages the Eusebian alliance. They maliciously detain the presbyters, 'inviting' them to attend the synod which will take place in Antioch instead of allowing them to carry out their task of escorting the Easterners to Rome.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.3. Julius, in expecting the Eusebians to travel two thousand miles during winter, and the Eusebians, in forcing the Roman presbyters to

do so, were being at the very least extremely inconsiderate, as both make clear in their reactions. Winter travel by road over mountain passes such as the Cilician Gates was not impossible, except in periods of exceptionally heavy snowfall (Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, 176) but was more difficult and much more uncomfortable than at other times (cf. Libanius, *Or* 59.96, on Constantius' winter journey to Constantinople in early 342), as well as more dangerous (roads were more deserted and robbers and wild animals hungrier, besides the dangers the weather presented).

**November 340:** Bishops from Constantius' territories on the wrong side of the Cilician Gates (those from the dioceses of Thracia, Asiana, and Pontica) begin to assemble in Antioch before the winter sets in.

**December 340:** Ninety-seven bishops attend the Dedication synod at Antioch, which will end in the dedication itself on 6 January 341. (The synodal letter is dated the year of the consuls Marcellinus and Probus, or 341, having been written at the end of the synod.)<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.8.5; Athanasius, *Syn* 25.1.

**March 341:** The presbyters arrive back in Rome and make their report to Julius. Marcellus hears it and decides to leave without waiting any longer for the Easterners. He leaves a written statement of faith and indictment of his opponents for the synod, whether it happens with or without Eusebian representatives.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Marcellus, *Letter to Julius*.

Julius waits a little longer to see if the Eusebians still might come, and then holds the synod without them in the church of the presbyter Vito, who had been one of the two presbyters sent to represent Silvester at the synod of Nicaea sixteen years before.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 20.3. See Chapter 5 below for discussion of these events.

From this proposed summary of events, my views on various points at issue will be clear. Firstly, I will argue that while there was no 'home synod' as such at Antioch in the years when Constantius held court there, neither were there two 'large and representative' synods meeting there in the winters of



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [150]-[154]

337/8 and 338/9; rather, the actions usually ascribed to a synod in Antioch in early 338 probably took place partly in Constantinople, and those which did take place at Antioch may not have involved a formal synod at all. The synod which did meet there in early 339, which appointed Gregory and sent him to Alexandria, would not have been particularly 'large and representative', I would claim, except of Athanasius' enemies in Egypt and Libya and elsewhere.

Secondly, Julius presumably wrote at least twice to the Eusebians and received unsatisfactory answers or no answer at all, before he sent his final ultimatum. That ultimatum must have been to appear within a certain length of time, I would argue, rather than on a certain day, to make sense of what seems otherwise to be a completely unreasonable proposal for a synod two thousand miles from Antioch right at the end of the non-travelling season. The unreasonably short amount of time Julius gave the Easterners to come to Rome would therefore have been a gaffe produced by his irritation at the Eusebians' treatment of him and his desire to tie them down. Constantius must have been involved in the planning of the alternative synod, the Dedication Synod; it is likely to be his answer to criticism from the West, possibly from his brother Constans, possibly from the bishop of Rome, possibly even from both.

Finally, I will argue, the Dedication synod must have been in December/January 340–341, ending on 6 January, and must have taken place before the synod at Rome. Julius' letter to the Easterners given by Athanasius, which was written after the synod at Rome, must therefore have been written in response to letters from the Dedication synod, and not to the assembling synod itself.

### (i) *The second depositions of Marcellus and Athanasius*

The notion of a 'home synod' at Antioch along the lines of the  $\alpha\lambda\nu\omicron\delta\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\nu\ \delta\eta\mu\omicron\sigma\alpha$  of fifth-century Constantinople was first suggested by Schwartz;<sup>78</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Schwartz, *GS* iii, 265–334, at 279.

it seemed to him to be the best solution to the problem of the constant flow of ecclesiastical-juridical action which seems to have taken place in Antioch during Constantius' residence there, including Julius' letter addressing various of the Easterners as a body who were from fairly widely scattered sees. Opitz and Hanson followed him in this path.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Opitz, *Athanasius' Werke* ii, 89 line 18 n.; Hanson, *Search*, 266.

As a solution to the problems mentioned, however, its virtues are more apparent than real, as Wilhelm Schneemelcher made clear.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> W. Schneemelcher, 'Die Kirchweihsynode von Antiochien 341', in *Bonner Festgabe*



If the relative dates of the Dedication synod and the Roman synod are reversed, Julius need not be seen as writing to a synod he knows in advance will be assembling in the Eastern

end p.150

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

capital. In addition, it is far from clear, as I will attempt to show, that all the juridical actions perpetrated by Eastern bishops during these years took place in Antioch; their weight and degree of imperial sanction also varied considerably.

Schneemelcher counselled despair: 'Wir können nichts darüber aussagen, wie denn der Kreis um Eusebius, mit dem man von Rom aus in diesen Jahren verhandelte, sich zusammensetzte, wann und wie oft er zusammentrat und welche Kompetenzen er hatte.'<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Schneemelcher, 'Kirchweihsynode', 331.

Barnes tidied the events of 337–339, as witnessed by the Alexandrian synodal letter, Athanasius' Encyclical Letter, and Julius' letter, into two Antiochene synods in the winter of 337/8 and 338/9.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 36–7, 45–6.

I shall now propose a rather different reading of the evidence.

Athanasius quotes in the *Apology against the Arians* a letter from a synod of Egyptian and Libyan bishops held in Alexandria in 338 (a letter which, as Barnes neatly demonstrates, he had composed himself).<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 3–19; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 37.

This letter complains about the activities of 'those around Eusebius' against him since his return from exile: they have written to the three Augusti and to various bishops, charging him with murder, abrogating an imperial donation of corn to the widows of Egypt, and a campaign of violence against his enemies in Alexandria and Egypt since his return from Trier, being hated by his congregation, and the old charges of the smashed chalice of Ischyrus and improper election to the episcopacy (a point which, as Athanasius indicates, it ill becomes the newly transferred bishop of Constantinople to make).<sup>84</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 3.7; 5.1–3; 6.4–5; 6.6; 7.1; 7.4; 14.3; 18.1–4; 19.3, 5.

At this same period (that is, between the exiles' decree of return and the winter or spring of 339, when the Eusebians decided to drop Pistus as their candidate for the episcopacy of Alexandria, and adopt Gregory instead), an embassy of a presbyter and two deacons was sent to Rome to persuade Julius to accept Pistus as bishop of Alexandria, where they were soon joined by presbyters sent from Athanasius, probably from the Alexandrian synod of spring 338. Julius refers to the incident in his letter to the Dedication synod, describing the embassy as sent from 'you, the Eusebians'.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 24.1.

Schwartz was adamant that this embassy was not sent from a synod proper as such, and the letter of the bishops of Egypt and Libya bears out his

view.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>86</sup> 'Eine Synode im strengen Wortsinne war es nicht', Schwartz, *GS* iii, 279.

All its references are to the letters the Eusebians are writing, not to any synods they are holding: it several times implies that the synod of Tyre is the only synod they have so far held, and makes the point that, since from that time on the Eusebians have made their assertions without even bothering to hold a synod or a trial, how can they expect the proceedings of the trial and the synod

end p.151

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

they did hold (the synod of Tyre) to be believed?<sup>87</sup>

<sup>87</sup> 'So, then, when it is the case that now too they go on shouting about things that have not happened—done neither by him nor because of him—as if they had happened...let them say from what sort of a synod was it that they learned about these other matters? From what sort of proofs? From what sort of a judgement? But if they have nothing of the sort and simply affirm it, we leave it to you to look into the earlier charges—how they happened or how they talk about them' (Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 5.5). 'Many times did they threaten synods, and finally (τέλος) they came together in Tyre. And to this day they have not left off writing against him' (*Ap c Ar* 6.3–4). 'What sort of credence does that synod or judgement [Tyre] they talk so much about have? For those who thus dare to assail things they did not see, on which they did not sit in judgement, for which they did not meet together [Athanasius' election] and to write as if with full assurance—how can they be believed on those questions for which they say they did meet together? Will it not be believed that both those things and these they did out of enmity?' (*Ap c Ar*. 1.8).

Instead, it seems that the Eusebians have written at least two rounds of letters, one to the Augusti and one to the bishops throughout the world, since Athanasius' return.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> 'In their letter [presumably that to the Emperors, which Athanasius is refuting point by point] they openly confess that the Prefect of Egypt passed judgement against some people [while Athanasius was still on his journey back from Tyre], but again they are not ashamed to ascribe these judgements too to Athanasius' (Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 5.4).

One synod around this time, however, which we know did happen is the synod in Constantinople which deposed Paul as bishop and installed Eusebius of Nicomedia in the autumn of 337.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.7.2; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 213.

We would expect this synod to have begun to attempt to counteract the decree of return for the exiles almost immediately, particularly since Flavius Ablabius had probably already been dismissed by this point. We would expect this synod to have included the Eusebian party from the areas around Constantinople, such as Eusebius himself, Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, and perhaps Ursacius and Valens. And this is exactly the group whom the Westerners at Serdica claim wrote to Julius against Athanasius and Marcellus, and who were refuted by bishops who 'wrote from other places in order to testify to the innocence of Athanasius our fellow bishop, and that those things done by Eusebius were full of nothing other than falsehood and lies',<sup>90</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Hilary, *FH B* II.1.2.1 (p. 106.5–p. 107.1 Feder).

a fair description of the contents of the synodal letter of Alexandria (*Ap c Ar* 3–19).

If there was a second condemnation of Marcellus at Constantinople (perhaps a solemn anathematizing of a book of condemned propositions of his, presumably in his absence), this was presumably the occasion on which it occurred.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>91</sup> The account given in the Easterners' letter at Serdica is confused: 'But, indeed, these were the first things according to the impiety of Marcellus the heretic; worse ones then followed. For who of the faithful would have believed or suffered those things which were badly done and written by him and which were rightly anathematized already with Marcellus himself by our parents in the city of Constantinople?' *Sed haec quidem secundum impietatem Marcelli haeretici prima fuerunt; peiora sunt deinde subsecuta. Nam quis fidelium credat aut patiat eam, quae ab ipso male gesta atque conscripta sunt quaeque digne anathematizata sunt iam cum ipso Marcello a parentibus nostris in Constantinopoli civitate?* (Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.3.4 (p. 51.11–15 Feder)). Several scholars—e.g. Zahn (*Marcellus*, 46), Gericke (*Marcell*, 13), and Hanson (*Search*, 218)—interpret it as meaning that Marcellus was condemned a second time at Constantinople. I would argue there cannot have been a second formal deposition of Marcellus, because it would imply that the authority of the first no longer stood. A formal condemnation of a book of propositions of his, mentioned in the Easterners' letter (*FH A* IV.1.3.4 (p. 51.12–16 Feder)), would make sense as a further way of driving home his heretical status.

If the letter to Julius against Athanasius and Marcellus

end p.152

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

referred to by the Westerners at Serdica is the same as the one brought by Macarius, Martyrius, and Hesychius to Rome, it may well have been brought not from Antioch but from Constantinople.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>92</sup> If so, they apparently did not reach Rome much before the spring of 338, when Athanasius' presbyters found them there. This is not as surprising as it sounds. The meeting after Constantius' departure would not have finished before November; if they took the normal route across the Via Egnatia, the sail across the Adriatic from Dyrrachium to Brindisi would not have been attractive at that time of year. Although the crossing was sometimes done in winter despite the danger from the weather (see e.g. Cicero, *Ep ad Familiares* xvi.9.1–2), the envoys' comfort may have dictated a stop-over somewhere hospitable until they could do that part of the journey in late February or early March.

On the other hand, the latter events seem to have a different status in Constantius' eyes than the deposition of Paul. Constantius had apparently assembled the synod to depose Paul and elect a successor to him,<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.7.2.

which happened immediately, but he never seems to have formally ratified the replacement of Athanasius by Pistus, and he left Athanasius, and probably also Marcellus, in office for over a year. It seems likely, then, that the letter to Julius was written by a group who remained in Constantinople together after Constantius had ratified the acts of the synod (which would therefore have been formally closed) and left the city on his way to the East. They might have reconvened in so small a group (the Westerners' letter mentions only six) that Athanasius felt he was safe in denying their actions synod status, or not formally convened themselves as a synod at all, but presented themselves merely as the defenders of the synods of Tyre 335 and Constantinople 336.

The other Eusebian activity the Alexandrian synodal letter mentions, besides the writing of letters 'to various bishops', is the writing of letters against Athanasius (the other returned exiles may well have been included) to the three Augusti.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 3.5–7.

These cannot have been sent until December 337 at the very earliest: the charges they made included accusations about Athanasius' conduct in his see since his return on 23 November. Athanasius has clearly by the time of the Alexandrian synod seen a copy of a letter sent to at least one of the three (given his specific knowledge of the charges involved), and knows also that the Eusebians have written to Rome.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 4.1; 5.4; 6.4; 19.3.

Eusebius of Constantinople is probably by this stage at the court at Antioch, petitioning Constantius against Athanasius in person,<sup>96</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Athanasius' claim that the Eusebians shrink from no journey, however long, to take their charges to the most solemn tribunals on earth (*Athanasius, Ap c Ar* 3.7) probably implies that Eusebius went to Antioch in person to pursue charges against him.

and putting forward claims that Athanasius is appropriating imperial corn supplies meant for Egyptian widows. Athanasius has already received a warning letter on the subject from Constantius by the time of the synod of Alexandria.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 18.2–3.

end p.153

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

It is worth considering here Timothy Barnes's alternative timetable for these events (the letter and envoy to Julius, the letters to the Augusti, the petitioning of Constantius) and also for the election of Pistus. Barnes assigns them to one synod in Antioch in the winter of 337/8, which would seem indeed to be the most economical theory.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 36–7.

There are two reasons—besides the suggestive list discussed above of those who originally wrote to Julius—however, why this is unlikely.

Firstly, there is the evidence of Athanasius. Barnes argues that, as the letter of the Alexandrian synod makes no complaints about the composition of the synod which replaced him by Pistus, it must have been 'a large and representative conclave of bishops from throughout the eastern provinces'.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 36.

If so, it would be the first such synod since the time of Licinius to be called with no involvement from an emperor, and it would be extraordinary that the sources were all silent on the subject.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Sabinus clearly makes no mention of it, since this synod is not picked up by either Socrates or Sozomen; the letters of both Eastern and Western synods at Serdica are silent on the subject, as is the homoiousian synod of Ancyra of 358

(Epiphanius, *Panarion* 73.2.1–11.11), which mentions the 336 synod which first deposed Marcellus and the Dedication synod in a list of canonical synods and creeds recognized by the party (*Panarion* 73.2.2,10).

A rather more satisfactory reason for Athanasius' silence on the composition of this synod may be that there was no synod as such at all. As mentioned above, Athanasius polemicizes against Tyre by arguing that the Eusebians are now making new accusations without bothering to have a synod at all.

Secondly, Constantius' attitude to the synod would be extremely peculiar if it was as official as Barnes assumes. If it took place in Antioch in winter, it would have taken place under his very nose; he would have had to ratify it or nullify it. If the synod had elected Pistus without the emperor's agreement and written to Julius on the subject, it would have been, in imperial eyes, presumptuous; if they did have the emperor's agreement, on the other hand, it is hard to imagine why he took so long to move against Athanasius, at a period when every day in office was strengthening Athanasius' hand.

If Pistus was not elected at this stage, however, who elected him and when? Hanson is probably right in his suggestion that this was done during the lifetime of Constantine.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Hanson, *Search*, 263.

He suggests a unilateral action by Secundus of Ptolemais; Schwartz suggests that Pistus was made bishop of the Mareotis rather than of Alexandria.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Schwartz, *GS* iii, 164 and 278.

Neither of these suggestions is really convincing, despite the superficial support of Athanasius' accusation that the Eusebians established Pistus 'over the Arians (τοῖς Ἀρίστοις)' in Alexandria (rather than over the church of Alexandria):<sup>103</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Athanasius, *Ep Enc* 6.2.

the Eusebians were too clever to have espoused a unilateral action with no basis, even an apparent one, in

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [155]-[159]

imperial or synodal legislation, and it is clear that Julius was being asked to recognize him as bishop of Alexandria in place of Athanasius.

What seems most likely is that Pistus was indeed elected at Tyre, but the election, like the synods' *acta* in general, was never ratified by Constantine. The action of the six Constantinopolitan Eusebians in writing to Julius was an attempt to profit from the ambiguity of the situation. Julius had only been Bishop of Rome since the previous February; he must have been, to say the least, confused about the exact situation in Alexandria, and to whom precisely he should send letters of friendship as its bishop. The Eusebians could pretend Tyre had been ratified by Constantine, and that Athanasius' exile showed as much;<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Julius' counter-argument, that Athanasius found his see empty on his return (*Ap c Ar* 29.3), which shows that he had not really been deposed by Constantine, indicates that the Eusebians had used the argument from exile to deposition.

Pistus must therefore be the true bishop of Alexandria. If Julius would agree to write to Pistus (not elected under Constantius, and therefore not an insult to his authority as such), the Eusebians would then have an extremely strong case for petitioning the emperor to recognize him according to the precedent of Aurelian's recognition of Paul of Samosata's successor on his being written to by the bishop of Rome.

Julius was not fooled; Athanasius' presbyters arrived, and made mincemeat of their opponents. Julius wrote to all parties, calling for a synod at Rome. The Eusebians must have ignored him, or replied in self-righteous dudgeon as they were to continue to do.

The other prong of the Eusebians' attack was rather more successful, although by proceeding on two different fronts with two different arguments, they were giving hostages to fortune which would prove impossible to ransom. Constantine II supported Athanasius (Constantius' reaction to the Eusebian letters and Athanasius' embassy refuting them is not known); Athanasius successfully defended himself before Constantius in the short term.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 41–2.

But by the following winter, Constantius had had enough of Athanasius and agreed to expel him (and presumably also the other exiles).

Although Constantius could have expelled the former exiles purely on the basis of the synods which had originally deposed them, there must have been some sort of a synod at this point to elect Gregory, and it was probably this synod which formally petitioned Constantius for the former exiles' removal also (quite possibly on his direction, as in the case of the deposition of Paul).<sup>106</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Cf. also Constantius' reinstatement of Philagrius as Praetorian Prefect of Egypt on



the basis of an Egyptian petition (*Hist Ar* 9.3).

Julius may even have petitioned Constantius himself, calling for a synod to review the cases of Athanasius and Marcellus, and pronouncing Pistus beyond the pale. If so, Constantius answered the letter of this petition, not the spirit. The synod reviewing the cases of the exiles was clearly a strictly

end p.155

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Eastern, presumably Eusebian affair, and the discredited Pistus was simply replaced by someone else.

The make-up of this synod is unknown, although it is likely to have been much smaller than the Dedication Synod would be, since it made no real impression on the sources (Sabinus apparently did not record it, and Basil of Ancyra makes no mention of it).<sup>107</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Socrates' account includes all the actions of the synod of 338/9 as part of the Dedication Synod at this point, suggesting that his source made no distinction between the two (Socrates, *HE* II.8.6–7). Basil (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 73.2.2, 10) lists the synods recognized by his own party: he includes the first synod which deposed Marcellus, and the Dedication Synod, but says nothing of any synod in between.

Flacillus of Antioch presumably presided, Eusebius of Constantinople would not have been absent, and there are likely to have been as many dissident bishops of Egypt, Libya, and the Thebaid as could be procured,<sup>108</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Athanasius (*Ep Enc* 6.1) tells us that the Arians in Alexandria had petitioned for Gregory.

besides the usual suspects from the diocese of Oriens: the bishop of Caesarea (Eusebius, or Acacius if Eusebius was already dead),<sup>109</sup>

<sup>109</sup> Eusebius' death can be dated to 30 May, probably in 339: J. B. Lightfoot, 'Eusebius of Caesarea', in *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrines*, ed. William Smith and Henry Wace, 4 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1877–87), ii (1880), 308–48, at 318–19, and Barnes, *Constantine*, 263.

Narcissus of Neronias, George of Laodicea, and Patrophilus of Scythopolis. If Eusebius of Caesarea was still alive, this may have been the occasion for which he composed the *Ecclesiastical Theology*, which he dedicated to Flacillus.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Barnes (*Athanasius*, 56), and Seibt (*Markell*, 243) are probably right in dating the *Ecclesiastical Theology* to the period after Marcellus' return to Ancyra; the fact that it is dedicated to Flacillus indicates an Antiochene provenance rather than a Constantinopolitan one, which would suggest it was not part of a second condemnation of Marcellus at Constantinople (if there was one), but rather composed as general ammunition to be used against him at any fitting opportunity. The opportunity may have come in Antioch in the winter of 338/9.

If so, he had been preparing it for such an occasion for some time: it has none of the hastiness of the *Contra Marcellum*, but is a long, laboriously written and carefully shaped work, deliberately written in three books for the three hypostases, against Marcellus' one book making known the one God.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Eusebius, *ET*, dedication to Flacillus.

It is, however, emphatically not the case, I maintain, that Athanasius was deposed and Gregory appointed by 'a council of bishops convened and



conducted according to due form',<sup>112</sup>

<sup>112</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 50.

any more than the synod of Tyre had been convened and conducted according to due form. The bishop of Alexandria, by power as well as precedent, was one of the three great prelates of the Church.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>113</sup> Nicaea, Canon 6.

The succession of the other two great sees, Rome and Antioch, had been disputed in the course of the third century. In the first case, that of the Novatian schism, Antioch supported Novatian, but was unable to prevail against the combined authority of Alexandria, Carthage, and other important sees of the West. In the second, the deposition of Paul of Samosata, the judgement of a number of Oriental bishops (not including

end p.156

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Dionysius of Alexandria, who declined to get involved) was insufficient to depose the bishop of Antioch without the agreement of Rome. There was no precedent at all for the removal of a bishop of Athanasius' status without reference to one of the other two major sees (and that the more prestigious), and certainly not for doing so against the express will of that one.

The 339 synod was on firmer ground with Asclepas of Gaza (just as Julius and the Western synod of Serdica were on shaky ground in attempting to reinstate him), if indeed Asclepas' enemies waited this long to remove him once more. According to canon 14 of the 328 synod of Antioch, nothing more than a local provincial synod was needed to depose him.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Joannou, *Discipline générale* i.2, 115–16.

Of course, in practice, even this would depend on the level of support he had among the local churches and the city magistrates, not to speak of his own vigilantes; it may be that imperial power was necessary to dislodge even him.

In the case of Marcellus, there is once again the problem that we know little of the strength of his support in the city of Ancyra. If he had the friendship of the city magistrates and a broad base of support, presumably imperial force would be necessary to remove him, too. As regards any further condemnation, there is no hint of it in any of the sources. But since Basil had already been elected, Antioch had no need to enact any judgement on Marcellus' case, merely to petition Constantius on the basis of the original condemnation before Constantine. And by the same token, if that condemnation was faulty, then Julius might reasonably conclude that Marcellus was still bishop of Ancyra.

Athanasius left Alexandria for Rome on 16 April 339.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>115</sup> The date given in *Festal Index* XI (Martin and Albert, 236–7) is garbled. (See Martin and Albert, 81–3 with 287 n. 34.)

As soon as he arrived there, Julius must surely have immediately sent another request, and an urgent one, for a synod to take place at Rome.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>116</sup> This would be the letter summarized in Sozomen, *HE* III.8.3, and mentioned

briefly at *Ap c Ar* 20.1.

Athanasius would have known how little chance there was of this happening, but needed above all to be seen to do things according to the ecclesiastical canons; he must have busied himself in the mean time with writing and sending envoys to his various friends in both East and West. Marcellus, if he was simply banished again to whatever city he had been in before (rather than facing the somewhat harsher penalties Athanasius was convinced awaited him if he were taken), may have been one of the recipients of Athanasius' correspondence, which would explain his appearance in Rome three months after Athanasius'.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Marcellus himself says that he waited 'a year and three full months' for his enemies to come (*Letter to Julius*, lines 12–14 Vinzent), and had to leave Rome before the synod itself, in the end. Athanasius, in the Alexandrian synodal letter, claims to believe his opponents were seeking the death penalty for him (*Athanasius, Ap c Ar* 3.5; 3.7; 4.1; 5.3; 18.1), and had some chance of success.

end p.157

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

### *(ii) Julius and the call for a synod*

Julius, bishop of Rome since 6 February 337, had for some time now been being petitioned by bishops in the East. One party was claiming that the bishop of Alexandria had been legitimately deposed, and was looking for his agreement; another, including the bishop himself, claimed it was nothing but a conspiracy. In fact, Julius had probably long known that something irregular was happening, since there was no bishop at Alexandria for him to exchange letters with when he was consecrated Rome's new bishop. He probably at that time received a letter from Athanasius in Trier representing the situation as best he could, and if he wrote to the church in Alexandria, he doubtless also received an account favourable to Athanasius from the Alexandrian presbyters.

Emissaries from both sides had arrived at Rome in the spring of 338. Those from Eusebius of Constantinople and his allies, having left the previous winter, would obviously have got there first: the Egyptian emissaries, sailing against the prevailing wind, are not likely to have got there before mid-April, whereas the others, unless they had a bad Adriatic crossing, would have been there in early March.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>118</sup> On sailing times from Alexandria to Rome, see Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World*, revised edn. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 297–9.

Nonetheless, Julius seems to have found ways to keep the Eusebian representatives waiting, and when they arrived, Athanasius' representatives clearly outmanoeuvred them. They flourished their letter from a full Egyptian synod exonerating Athanasius, and pointed out that Pistus was ordained priest by a bishop the synod of Nicaea had deposed. Cornered, the Eusebian representatives apparently claimed that another synod would set the matter straight; Julius interpreted this as a request for a synod in Rome, and thereafter used it as an excuse not to accept the result of the synod they had already had.

Julius wrote back accepting their 'proposal', presumably sending his letter

with the returning emissaries in the late spring of 338. When Athanasius arrived in Rome the following year, he most likely wrote calling for a synod again, and somewhat more impatiently. Finally, by 340, Julius had clearly lost his patience. Quite likely with support from Constans,<sup>119</sup>

<sup>119</sup> See Chapter 5.

he gave Eusebius and the others a deadline (προθεσμία) to come for a synod in Rome to review the cases of Athanasius and Marcellus. He sent them a letter by two distinguished presbyters to try and make them come.

The question of what exactly that deadline was is an important and difficult one. Julius tells us that Athanasius waited 'a year and six months', and Marcellus that he himself has waited 'a year and three months' for his accusers to appear in Rome for a synod. Those to whom Julius is replying in the letter given in Athanasius' *Apology Against the Arians* have implied that

end p.158

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Julius has not given them enough time to make the journey; Julius seems to concede that they have a point.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>120</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.3.

How do we square these two different pieces of information?

It would seem to make sense if we assume that Athanasius' eighteen months may be either from his arrival in Rome or from Julius' first writing with an urgent proposal (as opposed to the somewhat vague proposal he had sent earlier) shortly afterwards. Marcellus' fifteen months will be from his arrival, either three months after Athanasius' or three months after Julius' letter. Athanasius insists he went directly to Rome from Alexandria, without going to the courts of either of the other two Augusti;<sup>121</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Athanasius, *Ap ad Const* 4.1.

if he took a direct sailing he could have been there by mid-May, but he is more likely to have taken a more circuitous route to avoid imperial apprehension.

At the other end of the time-line, Julius complains bitterly that his presbyters were kept in Antioch as late as January; they still did have time, however, to return to Rome before or only very shortly after the last day of the appointed term.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.3; 21.2, 4 (see also Chapter 5).

If they managed to leave Antioch on 7 January, they would just have been able to make the 2000-mile land journey to Rome (sailing, except for the short Adriatic crossing, would have been impossible) by about 14 March, if they had been lucky with the weather, and the Cilician Gates were not blocked by snow, although keeping up the necessary thirty miles per day would have been most unpleasant in winter.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>123</sup> The date of 7 January assumes that the Dedication Synod (which the presbyters certainly attended, since they reported on its content (Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 21.4), ended on 6 January, as will be argued below, and that the presbyters were then immediately released.

We may therefore posit that the period Julius appointed, which the

presbyters made it back for with so much difficulty, was about 15 March. This would make Athanasius' eighteen months of waiting commence in mid-September 339, and Marcellus' fifteen in mid-December. This is not impossible timing, despite the fact that Athanasius left Alexandria as early as 16 April. Athanasius' enemies at Serdica claim that he 'fled from the city secretly';<sup>124</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.8.3 (p. 55.8–9 Feder).

presumably the ports were watched. He may have worked his way around the coast overland or in a light craft as far as Tripolitania, safely in Constans' territory, before he made the major crossing, and not have arrived in Rome before August; if Julius, like a good Roman, was out of the city that month in the mountains or in Campania, it could well have been September before they were able to do their business and Julius was able to write to Eusebius and his friends.

To make sense of the combination of Athanasius' eighteen months' wait and the deadline that was too soon for the Eusebians, we have to assume that the deadline was not given at this point, but in a third irate letter perhaps nine

end p.159

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [160]-[164]

months or so later, when Julius' patience was really wearing thin. προθεσμία<sup>125</sup> can mean an appointed length of time as well as an appointed day.

<sup>125</sup> Julius calls the προθεσμία 'στενὴν' (narrow) and also speaks of the 'interval' (διάστημα) of the προθεσμία as being 'narrow' (25.3), both of which seem to suggest that it is a length of time rather than a date for assembly which he has given the Easterners; in other words, although the end of that time came to be itself a deadline, the Eastern bishops were not directly being asked by Julius to travel during the winter.

That would seem more likely here: March, so near Easter, would have been a peculiar time to deliberately choose for a synod involving bishops from so far away. If Julius had given a time-limit of about nine months, however, when he sent Elpidius and Philoxenus to the East, it might have seemed ample to him (particularly after Eusebius and his friends had dragged their heels for so long already), but would not in fact have given them so very much time once the presbyters had made their journey East. (Julius may also have been thinking of the relevant parties as based in or near Constantinople, whereas most of the action was now taking place at Antioch.) If Julius' request to the Easterners was unreasonable, however, they amply took their revenge on his presbyters, who had over two months of hard travelling in winter conditions to return with the news that the Easterners were not coming by the time appointed.

At some point, meanwhile, Constantius must have been persuaded, by petitions from supporters of the exiles in his own territory or by pressure from the churches in the West or by requests from one or both of his brothers (before they went to war with one another early in 340) that he had to hold a more convincing, more representative synod.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>126</sup> See Chapter 5 for the suggestion that it was pressure from Constantine in spring 340 which was most successful in this.

The completion of the great new church begun by Constantine, Holy Concord, provided a suitable occasion. The invitations must have been issued by the latest in the late summer of 340.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>127</sup> The shortest time attested between the convoking and the assembling of a large imperial-summoned synod at this period is a little under three and a half months for the Council of Chalcedon, between 23 May and 1 September 451 (*Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, ed. Eduard Schwartz, ii.1.1, p. 28.3–4 and 8–9); other synods where the interval is known (e.g. Ephesus) attest as much as six and a half months (*ACO* i.1.1, p. 115.21–23 and p. 116.7–9 (summoned on 19 November 430 for 7 June 431)).

It may not be a coincidence that this is shortly after Julius' presbyters would have arrived in the East.

### (iii) The relative dates of the synod of Rome and the Dedication Synod of Antioch

The case for 6 January as the date of the Dedication synod has been most cogently put by W. Eltester, although some scholars continue to follow the sequence proposed by Schwartz, which places the Dedication Synod after the synod of Rome, in the summer of 341.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Walther Eltester, 'Die Kirchen Antiochias im 4. Jahrhundert', *ZNW* 36 (1937), 251–86, at 254–5, followed by Schneemelcher, 'Kirchweihsynode', 330, Barnes, *Athanasius*, 57, and Seibt, *Markell*, 12; Schwartz, *GS* iii, 301 and 310–11, is followed by Simonetti, *Crisi*, 146–60, Hanson, *Search*, 270, 284–5, and Vinzent, 'Entstehung des "Römischen Glaubensbekenntnisses"', 202–6.

I would argue that 6 January is probably correct, for the following reasons.

end p.160

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

The date of the synod is given as the feast of the Epiphany in the eighth-century *Liber Calipharam*, claimed by Bidez to be here dependent on a lost Arian history.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>129</sup> Philostorgius, 'Anhang VII', fr. 16<sup>a</sup> (p. 212.19–22 Bidez).

Even if, as Vinzent claims, the *Liber Calipharam* (like most eighth-century chronicles) can be heavily unreliable,<sup>130</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Vinzent, 'Entstehung', 204–5.

the feast of Epiphany is liturgically very plausible: since Holy Concord (Hagia Homonoia), the pagan-friendly dedication of the new church,<sup>131</sup>

<sup>131</sup> For the name see Glanville Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 345–6.

would not have a corresponding Christian feast-day, the feast of Christ as Light of the Gentiles would have been eminently appropriate.

Secondly, there is the evidence of Julius' letter, given in Athanasius' *Apology against the Arians*.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>132</sup> *Ap c Ar* 21–35.

This is demonstrably replying to a letter sent from a synod in Antioch which is summarized by Sozomen (*HE* III.8.4–8). Sozomen describes the letter as 'composed in fine phrases with the flavour of the courtroom and full of a great deal of irony and threat'; Julius says, 'So if the writer dictated it to show off his verbal skills, such an exercise belongs to other occasions, for in ecclesiastical affairs, it is not a declamation that is in question, but rather the apostolic canons...'<sup>133</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Sozomen, *HE* III.8.4; Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 21.5.

Sozomen says, 'For they professed in the letter that the church of Rome received from all the prize of honour on the grounds that it had been from the beginning the school of the apostles...But it is not because of this that they thought it fitting to carry off the second prize—because it is not through their size or numbers that they have their advantage over the churches...'; Julius complains, 'So if you do truly consider that the honour of bishops is equal and the same and you do not judge bishops on the basis of the size of their cities, the one who has been entrusted with a small city should remain in the city that was once entrusted to him and not scorn that trust and transfer to a city that was not put under his care' (a palpable hit on Eusebius

of Constantinople).<sup>134</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Sozomen, *HE* III.8.5; Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.2.

'And they adduced as a charge against Julius the fact that he communicated with those around Athanasius,' Sozomen tells us, 'and were aggrieved on the grounds that their synod had been treated in an insulting manner and their sentence had been overturned. And they found fault with what had been done as being unjust and out of harmony with ecclesiastical law'; 'So who are the ones who dishonour a synod?', replies Julius. 'Is it not those who have treated as nothing the decisions of the three hundred and have preferred impiety to piety?'<sup>135</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Sozomen, *HE* III.8.6; Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 23.2.

Sozomen's letter cannot simply be an extrapolation from Julius', however, because it gives some additional information, such as the final sneer that there was no point in the Easterners trying to defend

end p.161

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

themselves, because everything they did was wrong (a taunt more suited to the lips of teenagers than of bishops, one would have imagined). The conclusion that Julius really is replying to the letter Socrates is summarizing seems inescapable.

Sozomen (following Socrates) sets this letter in a different synod from the Dedication, but his order here is impossible: Eusebius, one of the dedicatees of Julius' letter, is already dead by the time this synod to which Julius is replying supposedly takes place.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>136</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 21.1; Socrates, *HE* II.12.1; Sozomen, *HE* III.7.3. The chronology of this entire section in both Socrates and Sozomen is a mess, owing to their using Athanasius' tendentious and selective *History of the Arians* (supplemented in all likelihood by Sabinus' probably equally tendentious and selective *On the Synods*) as a base narrative into which to slot known dates and documents from other sources.

There is every reason to believe the synod involved is actually the Dedication Synod, despite the fact that Sozomen separates the two: it is large enough to claim to represent more than the Eusebians; though it takes place at Antioch, it includes bishops from a good spread of provinces, including Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, Dianius of Caesarea, and Macedonius of Mopsuestia, as well as the ubiquitous Eusebius of Constantinople; and it must have taken place in January of 341.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>137</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 26.1; 21.1; 341 is the *terminus post quem* because of the eighteen months since Athanasius arrived in Rome, and the *terminus ante quem* because Eusebius was dead by the winter of 341/2 (Barnes, *Athanasius*, 201); Julius refers to the date of January for the release of the presbyters who brought the synodal letter to which Julius is replying (*Ap c Ar* 25.3).

Sozomen must at this point be using a source (presumably Sabinus) which does not fully name and date all its documents; the source-compiler may not himself have realized that the three or more letters to Julius which he had before him were all from the same synod. If the two synods are indeed identical and the date of January correct, then since Julius' letter declares itself to be written following the synod of Rome which exonerated Athanasius and Marcellus, which itself took place shortly after the return of the



presbyters from Antioch, the synod of Rome must have taken place after the Dedication synod, and not vice versa as Schwartz, Hanson, and Vinzent claim.

### 3. The Dedication Synod of Antioch

The Dedication Synod, or at least one or more of the creeds it issued, is often considered to be the voice of the majority of moderate Easterners.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>138</sup> For example, 'The doctrine they [the creeds of the Dedication synod] taught or implied was a faithful replica of the average theology of the Eastern Church': Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 274; 'It [the Second Creed] represents the nearest approach we can make to discovering the views of the ordinary educated Eastern bishop...the Second Creed shows us how the hitherto silent majority wished to modify this [the "true blue" Arianism of the First Creed]': Hanson, *Search*, 290–1.

This is an illusion: its ninety-seven members were neither moderate, politically or theologically (as their letter to Julius as well as the creeds they issued amply demonstrate), nor were they a majority.

end p.162

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

At a minimum, the incumbents of 268 sees (including country-bishops) from the provinces which Constantius ruled in 341 signed the acts of at least one synod between Nicaea and Serdica. 185 of these signed the creed at Nicaea, of whom sixteen (besides Alexander) were bishops from the Egyptian and Libyan provinces. 80 bishops from these provinces, of whom therefore at least 64 must represent sees not included in the Nicene total, signed the letter of the synod of Alexandria of 338.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>139</sup> See Hilary *FH B II.2.2* (p. 127 Feder).

A further nineteen of those who signed the 'Eastern' letter of Serdica (excluding the Egyptian bishops, since they may have doubles among the 80 supporters of Athanasius, and Ursacius and Valens, whose sees were outside Constantius' territory) represented sees not listed among the signatories of Nicaea. At the best possible showing, therefore, the ninety-seven bishops of the Dedication synod represent just over a third (36 per cent, to be exact) of the politically active sees of Constantius' regions over the years 325–343.

This makes the theology expressed at the Dedication Synod that of a minority of the bishops active at this stage of the controversy, even in the East. They look like a representative minority, of course: they include the bishops of Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Palestinian Caesarea, Cappadocian Caesarea, and Ancyra.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>140</sup> See Appendix Table 6.

But the very occupants of these sees and the others mentioned in the sources tell us that the synod was still heavily dominated by the Eusebian alliance and people who owed their positions to them.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Dianius, Flacillus, Narcissus, Eusebius, Maris, Macedonius, and Theodore are the addressees of Julius' letter (Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 21.1); Sozomen (*HE* III.5.10) lists Eusebius, Acacius, Patrophilus, Theodore, Eudoxius, Gregory, Dianius, and George. Both Socrates (*HE* II.10.1) and Sozomen (*HE* III.6.3–5) also list Eusebius of Emesa elsewhere. Basil of Ancyra speaks of the Dedication Synod as though he had been

present at it (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 73.2.10). Theophronius need not actually have been present to clear his name with the Third Creed, but it would have been normal practice for him to be so.

Flacillus of Antioch seems to have presided, as he had at Tyre.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>142</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.8.5.

Also named are long-standing Eusebian allies, Eusebius of Constantinople himself, Maris of Chalcedon, Narcissus of Neronias, and Patrophilus of Scythopolis; the more recently involved Macedonius of Mopsuestia, Theodore of Heraclea, and Dianius of Cappadocian Caesarea; Marcellus' and Athanasius' replacements Basil of Ancyra and Gregory of Alexandria; and four figures who would be heavily involved in the next phase of the controversy, Eusebius of Caesarea's successor Acacius, Eudoxius of Germanicia, Eusebius of Emesa, and George of Laodicea. One important bishop who was coming around to supporting the opposing side, Maximus of Jerusalem, did not attend,<sup>143</sup>

<sup>143</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.8.3.

while a bishop whose theology seems to have been rather pro-Marcellan, Theophronius of Tyana, was clearly defending himself on a charge of heresy.

end p.163

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Once all of this is acknowledged, however, it may be recognized that this was still the largest episcopal gathering since Nicaea, and one which seems to have brought a breath of fresh air to the Eastern theological scene. Having won their struggle against their previous opponents, at least for the time being, the Eusebian alliance could turn to real theological debate within their own ranks and with those who were reasonably like-minded, however little room for manoeuvre there remained on the ecclesiastical-political front. New stars were also appearing, eager to prove themselves. The great gathering at the behest of the new Emperor must have been intoxicating for them, as Nicaea had been for Athanasius and even Eusebius of Caesarea: Basil of Ancyra, in particular, clearly looked back on this synod with great enthusiasm.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Hilary, *Syn* 33; Epiphanius, *Panarion* 73.2.10.

That there were some diverse shades of opinion at the synod can be seen from the three creeds (which will be discussed below), and from a remark which was evidently made in the synodal letter to the bishop of Rome, to which Julius refers in bewilderment in his reply: 'But I am amazed at that part of the letter too—how you could possibly have written that I, on my own, wrote only to those around Eusebius and not to all of you...So either those around Eusebius should not have written on their own, apart from all of you, or you to whom I did not write should not be upset if I wrote to those who had themselves written.'<sup>145</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 26.1.

Through this complaint comes the voice of the likes of Basil, straining to be recognized as more than merely an adjunct to the tight-knit group around Eusebius of Constantinople, using the letter to Julius, perhaps, as a way to make a point to those nearer home. (Basil, of course, was in the difficult

position that he owed them his place as bishop, which doubtless added to his desire to assert his independence. In later years, he would single out the synod which deposed Marcellus (and made him bishop) as the first synod of which he recognized the authority—a perilous path for anyone claiming theological objectivity.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Epiphanius, *Panarion* 73.2.10.

)

There was clearly unity at the synod, however, of two sorts, as we shall see. One was agreement in taking offence at Julius' demands. The second was in condemning the doctrines ascribed to Marcellus of Ancyra. Whatever the theological differences of the group, those who had a voice at all clearly felt Marcellus to be beyond the pale. We may imagine that even by this stage some of those not in the immediate Eusebian circle felt uncomfortable about the treatment of the bishop of Alexandria, and squirmed at Julius' imputation of 'Arianism' to the whole East: condemnations of extreme Arian statements become marked among these figures in the years that follow. But the case of Marcellus was clear; all those committed to the three hypostases of Origen (presumably nearly all of those at this synod, although not necessarily the majority of Eastern bishops in general, given the widespread support of

end p.164

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [165]-[169]

one-hypostasis theology in Antioch, central Asia minor, the Balkan peninsula, and Egypt)<sup>147</sup>

<sup>147</sup> See Joseph T. Lienhard, 'The "Arian" Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered', *Theological Studies* 48 (1987), 415–37.

found his apparent identification of the Son with the Father as shocking as he found their apparent doctrine of the Father and his obedient created instrument with whom he lived in 'harmony in all things'.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>148</sup> See Marcellus, fragments Re 64, 65 K 73, 74 S/V 74, 75 P 87 and 88.

The universal opprobrium cast on Marcellus concealed, to some extent, the differences that were already present in the group that met at the Dedication synod: it would take nearly two more decades before the fissures became gaping cracks and then split the dominant Eastern party asunder. But as long as they could concentrate on attacking Marcellus and taking umbrage at Julius, through his presbyters and by letter, for his unreasonable request that they attend a synod well over two thousand miles of road-journey away in the middle of winter, the mass of those Easterners who attended the synod could continue conveniently to forget that their ascendancy was founded on the brilliant and cunning machinations of a small group of people over the previous thirteen years, who had in that time expelled bishops from all three major Eastern sees, ignored the views of the major Western see, and left such a trail of depositions of other bishops of metropolitan and lesser sees as ought to have given them, as it did Julius, pause.

### (i) *The reply to Julius*

The most immediate business of the synod was the reply to Julius' ultimatum that 'those around Eusebius' attend a synod in Rome by a definite date, which I have argued to be mid-March 341. As has been noted, Julius' proposal was unrealistic, and the synod took full advantage of that fact. The main points of the letter they wrote in reply, reconstructed from Julius' further letter, Athanasius' extract in *On the Synods*, and Sozomen's summary,<sup>149</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 21–35, *Syn* 22; Sozomen, *HE* III.8.4–8.

are as follows.

1. Rome's claims to honour on the grounds of the antiquity of its apostolic tradition and the teaching there of Peter and Paul do not give it precedence over the sees of the East, since the apostles came from and first taught in the East.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Sozomen, *HE* III.8.5.

2. All bishops are of equal honour, regardless of the size of their cities or the number of churches there, since it is the office which gives the dignity.<sup>151</sup>

<sup>151</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.2.

3. Julius, in receiving Athanasius and Marcellus as bishops and communicating with them, and not writing letters of friendship to Pistus, has dishonoured the synods which deposed them, 'lighted up the flame of discord', acted contrary to the canons and to church tradition, and preferred communion with criminals to communion with the bishops of the East.

end p.165

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

According to the tradition set by the cases of Novatian and Paul of Samosata, the East and the West do not interfere with one another's canonical decisions, but merely ratify them.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>152</sup> The oft-repeated claim of the 'Easterners' that the West was interfering in their affairs (Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.1; cf. Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.26.1–2 (p. 65.7–19 Feder)) was a three-card trick: no ecclesiastical distinction between 'East' and 'West' existed in this period, as the legal and hortatory correspondence cited in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* between sees in each region makes abundantly clear. Instead, advantage is simply being taken of a very temporary civil administrative arrangement. It could be argued that the ratification of the emperor provided a *de facto* higher court than the ecclesiastical, but there was no such provision in canon law at this stage.

The acts of a synod, once passed, are sacrosanct and cannot be revoked.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Sozomen, *HE* III.8.6; Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.1–2.

4. Julius wrote by himself alone, without support from other bishops in the West, and only addressed the friends of Eusebius, not the rest of the Easterners.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 26.1.

5. Julius' attempt to dragoon the Easterners into going to Rome for a synod by sending presbyters is outrageous. His proposal of a synod is unnecessary, since the cases of Athanasius and Marcellus are already closed, and in any event he has given the Easterners too little notice, and is completely unreasonable in suggesting they should desert their flocks and travel a very long way in the middle of winter in time of war.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>155</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.1, 4.

6. The Easterners will not come to the synod, and unless Julius accepts the decisions of the synods they have already held and excommunicates Athanasius and Marcellus, they will not send him letters of peace and accord.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 25.4; Sozomen, *HE* III.8.7.

7. The Eastern bishops are not followers of Arius, nor could they be, since he was a presbyter and they are bishops, but they scrutinized him and found him to be orthodox. They supply a creed which describes their faith, and is compatible with Arius'.<sup>157</sup>

<sup>157</sup> Athanasius, *De Syn* 22.

A word or two about Julius' reply to this letter may be made here. He addresses it to 'Dianius, Flacillus, Narcissus, Eusebius, Maris, Macedonius, Theodore, and their friends who have written to me from Antioch'. These must be the first seven signatories of the letter, rather than the salutants (the letter must be written from 'the holy synod at Antioch', since its authors make the point that they are more than merely 'the Eusebians'). In addressing his reply to these by name, rather than to the synod, Julius is refusing to recognize the synod's validity.

He answers point 2 with the sneer, 'If all bishops have equal authority, why do you keep moving to larger sees?' To answer the third point, he reminds

them that Nicaea allowed that the decisions of synods to depose bishops are revisable, so that proceedings should always be carried out with an eye to the

end p.166

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

judgement of future synods. Most commentators point out that the canons of Nicaea as they stand do not, in fact, include this resolution.<sup>158</sup>

<sup>158</sup> For example, Schwartz, *GS* iii, 302 n. 2; Opitz, *Athanasius' Werke* ii, 103.24 n.; Barnes, *Athanasius*, 59, with 257 n. 24.

However, this is the practice which Nicaea itself adopted with regard to Eusebius of Caesarea, Narcissus of Neronias, and Theodotus of Laodicea, for they had been provisionally condemned by the synod at Antioch a few months before Nicaea, a synod which itself looked forward to a review of the case at Ancyra (where the upcoming 'great and priestly synod' was then expected to be). Julius does not make the point that the case of Novatian pleads against the Eusebians, since Fabius of Antioch did not accept the West's preference of Cornelius, but he could have.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>159</sup> He could also have disputed the case of Paul of Samosata, although it is unlikely that he would have wanted to. Paul was tried by many of the leading Origenist bishops of the day (Gregory the Wonderworker and Athenodorus from Pontus, Firmilian of Cappadocian Caesarea, Helenus of Tarsus in Cilicia, Hymenaeus of Jerusalem, Theotecnus of Palestinian Caesarea, Maximus of Bostra in Arabia, and Nicomas of Iconium), but the three most distinguished of them took no part in his deposition, nor did Dionysius of Alexandria or the other bishops of Asia Minor or those of the Balkan peninsula. The 'Oriens' here represented is little more than the diocese of that name, and only four of its leading bishops at that. It could also be argued that Rome constituted Paul's deposition, rather than ratifying it, since it was Rome's action which led to his expulsion by Aurelian.

The Easterners' point that Julius has preferred the communion of Athanasius and Marcellus to that of themselves is of course correct, but he had, when they came to Rome, to make a decision one way or the other, and had already reason to be deeply suspicious of the group which had claimed to depose them.

With regard to the fifth point, Julius more or less concedes that the Easterners were correct to say that they were not given enough time to come to the synod, and was clearly so embarrassed at their pointing out how unreasonable the journey would have been in the middle of winter in time of war that he concealed their letter for a time from the bishops who had assembled for the synod he had called.

We do not know who composed the synod of Antioch's letter to Julius (it may be a composite), but there are four individuals any one of whom would fit the bill of a very bright, very rhetorically skilled, and very sarcastic author: Eusebius of Constantinople, Asterius the Sophist, Basil of Ancyra (perhaps less likely, but he might have been responsible for the claim that there were more than merely the Eusebians to be reckoned with in the East), and Acacius of Caesarea.

## *(ii) Acacius of Caesarea's Against Marcellus*

It is possible that the Dedication Synod not only enshrined anti-Marcellan

phrases in the anathemata of its creeds (as we shall see), but also had a set-piece address against him by Eusebius' successor Acacius of Caesarea. Five fragments of an *Against Marcellus* by Acacius survive from his early days as a theologian (in latter years he would deny that the Son was the image of the

end p.167

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Father in the sense in which he affirms it here),<sup>160</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Acacius' anomoianism is refuted from his own earlier works at Seleucia in 359 (Socrates, *HE* II.40.33; Sozomen, *HE* IV.22.21); he replies that he should not be judged from his own works.

and since they attack Marcellus' work against Asterius, and Asterius is thought to have been present at the Dedication synod, it is usually and attractively assumed the piece was read there.<sup>161</sup>

<sup>161</sup> The fragments are to be found in Epiphanius, *Panarion* 72.6–10. For a thorough examination of the theology of Acacius' *Against Marcellus*, as well as a brief discussion of its probable setting at the Dedication Synod, see Joseph T. Lienhard, 'Acacius of Caesarea: *Contra Marcellum*. Historical and Theological Considerations', *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 10 (1989), 1–22.

Acacius' work, as we have it, is clever, though often unscrupulously so. It defends Asterius' exegesis of one phrase, or part of a phrase, of the Dedication Creed, in the light of Marcellus' criticism of it.

This passage of Asterius' is one we have already looked at in detail from Marcellus' point of view in Chapter 1: 'For the Father is one (ὁ ἄλλος μὲν), who begot from himself the only-begotten Word and first-born of all creation—One begetting One, Perfect begetting Perfect, King begetting King, Lord begetting Lord, God begetting God, unvarying image of both essence and will and glory and power.'<sup>162</sup>

<sup>162</sup> Asterius, fr. 11 and 12 Vinzent.

This phrase is paralleled in the Dedication Creed: 'Who was begotten before the ages from the Father, God from God, Whole from Whole, One from One, Perfect from Perfect, King from King, Lord of Lord...unvarying image of the Godhead—both essence and will and power and glory—of the Father (τῆς Θεότητος οὐσίας τε καὶ βουλῆς καὶ ἰδυνάμεως καὶ δόξης του. πατρὸς ἀπαράλλακτον εἰκόνα).'<sup>163</sup>

<sup>163</sup> See Chapter 3.3 (iii). There are various ways of construing the word Θεότητος (Godhead) in this sentence, but this is clearly how Marcellus construes it.

Marcellus saw this commentary of Asterius as betraying that his view of the Son's divinity had no content:

These words clearly expose his base opinion concerning [the Son's] Godhead (Θεότης). For how can 'the one begotten Lord and God', as he previously said, be 'image of God'? For 'image of God' is one thing, and 'God' is a different thing. So if 'image', not 'Lord' and not 'God', but 'image of Lord and God'. But if truly Lord and God, the 'Lord and God' can no longer be 'image of the Lord and God'.<sup>164</sup>



Marcellus went on to argue in the same way that the image of essence, will, power, and glory could not actually be any of these things:

Therefore, he wants him to be none of those things of which he spoke before; for he says that he is the image of all these. So then, if he is image of essence, he can no longer be essence itself (αὐτοουσία); and if he is image of will, he can no longer be will itself (αὐτοβουλή); and if image of power, no longer power (δύναμις); and if image of glory, no longer glory (δόξα). For the image is image not of itself but of something different.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>165</sup> Re 86 K 97 S/V 114 P 63. Note that Marcellus here follows the order of the Dedication Creed, not the Asterius fragment he quotes.

end p.168

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

So the Son, in Asterius' logic, Marcellus argues, does not even have the divine aspects in themselves, as Origen had taught. It may well be that it is Asterius who has used the words αὐτοουσία and αὐτοβουλή, which are clearly modelled on Origen's αὐτοδύναμις (power itself),<sup>166</sup>

<sup>166</sup> Origen, *Comm in Jn* I.38 (p. 43.9 Preuschen).

but Marcellus claims that they are ruled out by Asterius' own use of the word image.

Acacius deals colourfully and brusquely with Marcellus' arguments. Because the extracts given in Epiphanius are in fact from an anti-Acacian context, it is impossible to know how long Acacius' original speech was, or whether image theology was quite so central to it as the surviving extracts suggest, since it was precisely the Son's exact likeness to the Father that was later in dispute. What does appear clearly is that Acacius has a sure enough grasp of the theological issues between Marcellus and Asterius to flit from gross travesty of Marcellus' reasoning to real refutation of it and back again, sometimes turning Marcellus' words against Asterius back on their author, larding his own account with scriptural insults and apostrophizing his absent antagonist with gross threats whose real mark was presumably a delighted gallery.

Acacius argues that because Marcellus claims that an image is not itself what it is an image of (the image of God is not God), then in Marcellus' eyes the scriptural 'image of the invisible God' must be lifeless and without Θεότης, being neither Lord, God, essence, will, power, or glory.<sup>167</sup>

<sup>167</sup> Epiphanius, *Panarion* 72.7.1.

This is a clever reversal of Marcellus' charge against Asterius. Marcellus had claimed that the image of God was the flesh of the incarnate Christ, making visible the invisible Godhead:<sup>168</sup>

<sup>168</sup> 'For who would have believed before the demonstration of the facts that the Word of God, having been born through the Virgin, would assume our flesh and in it bodily display the whole Godhead?' (Re 13 K 16 S/V 33 P 38).

Acacius here is deliberately ignoring the nature of Marcellus' argument, to great rhetorical effect. There is, of course, according to Marcellus' exegesis of Colossians 1: 15, no reason why the flesh of Christ, as image, should be considered to be essence, will, power, or glory itself (it is Asterius, not the author of Colossians, who makes the claim that the 'image of God' must be the image of these things), and it is certainly not lifeless or without divinity, since the Word of God is the subject of its actions, and the human being the Word assumes both is indwelt by the true God and Lord, and is promoted qua human being to be Lord and God in a different sense for the sake of the human race. Nonetheless, Acacius' argument is clever: it does a good job of appearing to catch Marcellus on the horns of a dilemma, since he is not present to point out that Acacius' premise (that what is not by nature God cannot serve as the image of God) is false.

Acacius is also taking issue fairly and squarely with positions Marcellus really holds, however. One who is complete begets one who is complete, separate, and distinct, having a separate subsistence (hypostasis), Acacius

end p.169

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [170]-[174]

argues, against Marcellus' position that the Logos remains one with the Father and is not a separate entity. Acacius and his party (he uses the first person plural) believe the image of an *ousia* is another *ousia*, the image of a will is another will, and the image of power and glory are another power and glory. Acacius cites for the first two the scriptural precedent of John 5: 26, 'For as the Father has life ἐν αὐτῷ, so he has given to the Son to have life ἐν αὐτῷ', and 5: 21, 'For just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, so also the Son gives life to those whom he wills.'<sup>169</sup>

<sup>169</sup>*Panarion* 72.9.8.

Marcellus hated this theology of two wills of the Father and Son in perfect harmony: he would have said the Logos is the Father's will, just as he is the Father's wisdom and the Father's δόξα, and that it is Christ who has a second will, qua human being.

Acacius turns Marcellus' slur on Asterius ('These words clearly reveal his base opinion concerning the Godhead') back on Marcellus (72.7.1), as Marcellus had done to Eusebius of Caesarea's against the Ancyrans, and probably against Eustathius of Antioch. He calls down scriptural condemnation on Marcellus ('Hear the word of the Lord: Write of this man, "A man rejected" '(72.7.10)), and apostrophizes him with threats ('You ought to have your unholy tongue cut off' (72.7.2)—not necessarily an empty suggestion in the ancient world).

Acacius may have alienated a small group at the synod who would go on to be responsible for the pseudonymous *Fourth Oration against the Arians*, which takes what really can reasonably be described as a middle ground between the Eusebians and Marcellus: the taunt that Marcellus' enemies believe that Christ has a beginning but his kingdom does not seems to pick up a comment of Acacius' in these extracts.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>170</sup>*Panarion* 72.7.7; [Athanasius], *C Ar* IV.8.1.

But it is likely that, for the most part, he was greeted with resounding cheers and ecstatic applause, not least from the part of the room occupied by the surviving targets of *Against Asterius*, Eusebius of Constantinople, Narcissus of Neronias, and Asterius himself.

### (iii) The creeds of the synod

The Dedication Synod issued three creeds, apparently (according to Athanasius' *On the Synods* 22–24, where they are given) in separate letters. This suggests that they had three separate functions within the synod, perhaps one in the letter to Julius, one in the main synodal letter (which has not survived in any form), and one in a letter dealing specifically with the case of Theophronius of Tyana (which has not survived either).<sup>171</sup>

<sup>171</sup> The practice of issuing several different letters from a large synod, often covering much of the same ground, can be seen in the documents from both Nicaea and Serdica, for example.

The first creed seems, from the snippet of text given by Athanasius, to have been part of the sneering letter sent to Julius:

end p.170

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

We have not been followers of Arius—how could bishops, such as we, follow a presbyter?—and nor did we receive any other faith beside that which has been handed down from the beginning. But after taking on ourselves to examine and to verify his faith, we have admitted him rather than followed him; and you will know from the things being said: for we have been taught from the first to believe in one God, the God of the universe, the Framer and Preserver of all things both intellectual and sensible; and in one Son of God, Only-begotten, existing before all ages, and being together with the Father who had begotten him, by whom all things were made, both visible and invisible, who in the last days according to the good pleasure of the Father came down and took flesh of the Virgin, and fulfilled all his Father's will; and suffered and rose again, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, and comes again to judge the living and the dead, and remains King and God to all the ages. And we believe also in the Holy Spirit; and if it be necessary to add, we believe concerning the resurrection of the flesh, and the life everlasting.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>172</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 22.5–7; Socrates, *HE* II.10–18; text also in Hahn and Hahn, 183–4.

J. N. D. Kelly's judgement that this creed represents a *via media* between Arius and Marcellus is a little surprising;<sup>173</sup>

<sup>173</sup> 'By thus excluding the extremes represented by Arius and Marcellus, the creed was choosing the middle way preferred by most conservative churchmen' (Kelly, *Creeeds*, 266).

R. P. C. Hanson seems nearer the mark when he calls it the product of 'Arians of *sang pur*'.<sup>174</sup>

<sup>174</sup> Hanson, *Search*, 291.

There is nothing in it that Arius had not agreed to at some point, and much that he would have been positively enthusiastic about. Kelly argues that 'Arianism in the proper sense of the word is deliberately ruled out by the affirmation that the Son "existed before all ages and coexisted with the Father who begat him"'. But Arius was quite happy to use the phrase  $\pi\rho\omicron\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\ \tau\omega\nu\ \tau\omega\nu\ \alpha\iota\omega\nu\omega\nu$  (before all the ages) to describe the Son's existing, and does so on at least two occasions:<sup>175</sup>

<sup>175</sup> *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia* = *Urk* 1 (p. 3.2 Opitz); *Letter of Arius and Euzoius to Constantine* = *Urk* 30 (p. 64.6–7 Opitz).

he agrees that the Father made all the ages *through* the Son, and so he necessarily existed before them. What Arius *would* have said was 'There was when he was not,' a statement anathematized at Nicaea about which Antioch

is entirely silent. As for the phrase συν<sup>176</sup>οντ #x03B1; τῷ γεγεννηκ<sup>176</sup>οτι αὐτὸν πατρὶ (being together with the Father who had begotten him), Arius had already assented to and voluntarily used the verb γεννᾶω of the Son in his letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia in the very first document of the controversy.

<sup>176</sup>Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia = Urk 1 (p. 3.3 Opitz).

And once συν<sup>177</sup>οντα is protected by the perfect tense of γεγεννηκ<sup>177</sup>οτι, it carries no implication of a συναγέννητον,

<sup>177</sup>'Co-ingenerate'; cf. Arius' Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia = Urk 1 (p. 2.8 Opitz).

and merely indicates a second hypostasis existing since its generation as a separate being alongside the first. The stress on the 'good pleasure' and 'will' (εὐδοκία and βούλησις) of the Father, meanwhile, would have been meat and drink to Arius, since it was an

end p.171

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

important element of his soteriology that it is the Son's obedience to the will of the Father which brings about our salvation.<sup>178</sup>

<sup>178</sup> For a strong statement of this view, see Robert C. Gregg and Dennis E. Groh, *Early Arianism: A View of Salvation* (London: SCM Press, 1981), esp. 77–129. This study, which, together with Rudolf Lorenz's *Arius Judaizans? Untersuchungen zur dogmengeschichtlichen Einordnung des Arius* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), galvanized the rethinking of 'Arianism' which took place in the 1980s, sometimes overstates its case (e.g. in arguing that the Word undergoes moral advancement), but it remains a landmark in modern understanding of the theology of Arius and his associates.

Kelly is surely correct when he says that there is nothing to show that this creed was formulated as an official confession of the synod at all, and that it was in fact simply an extract from the apologetic letter which the council prepared as an answer to Pope Julius.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>179</sup> Kelly, *Creeeds*, 265

The interesting—and unanswerable—question is where the synod obtained this creed, and why they included it. It is possible that it represented the local creed of one or another of the synod's members. But it is also possible that the letter presents the creed to Julius as the one which Arius signed at Jerusalem to demonstrate that he was orthodox (as distinct from the one given in Socrates and Sozomen—Urk 30—which he presumably signed before his return in 328). If so, the writers of the synodal letter still made the creed their own to the extent of adding one final sneer in transcribing the last line (since presumably Arius would have had more diplomacy than to address the remark to Constantine).

One final point to be noted about this creed is that, like so many fourth-century Eastern creeds after it, it has an anti-Marcellan clause: 'remains King and God to all the ages'. This need not rule out this creed's having been used by Arius, even before Marcellus' condemnation, since Marcellus' *Against Asterius* and its theology was doubtless a hissing and a by-word among the Eusebian alliance from the moment they first saw it, long before they created a chance to try him for heresy.

The second creed, the 'Dedication Creed', was probably the main creed issued by the synod.<sup>180</sup>

<sup>180</sup> For the text, see chapter 3.2 (iii).

It seems likely, therefore, as argued earlier, that Eusebius of Constantinople was happy enough with its theology by this stage, 'unvarying image' and all. Since the text is quoted in Chapter 3, only the anathemas are given here:

Holding then this faith, and holding it from the beginning until the end, before God and Christ we anathematize every heretical evil opinion. And if anyone teaches apart from the sound and right faith of the Scriptures, saying that there either is or was a time or moment or age before the Son was begotten, let him be anathema. And if anyone says that the Son is a creature as one of the creatures, or something brought forth as one of the things brought forth or a created thing as one of the created things, and not as the divine scriptures have handed on each of the aforementioned things, or if anyone teaches or preaches apart from what we have received, let him be

end p.172

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

anathema. For all the things which have been handed down from the holy scriptures by prophets and apostles we truly and reverently believe and follow.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>181</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 23.7–10; Socrates, *HE* II.10.15–18; anathemas also in Hahn and Hahn, 186.

The anathemata are not explicitly anti-Marcellan, any more than the creed itself is, because it sparked rather than replied to his theological broadside: he was not a hate figure in 328, when I have argued it was previously issued. The adoption of this creed by this synod implies that Eusebius and his friends held it in affection, but can also be considered entirely of a piece with the anti-Marcellan nature of the synod's proceedings as a whole. Marcellus had attacked the theology of all the leading lights of the Eusebian alliance on the basis of this creed, and had torn Asterius' commentary on it apart phrase by phrase. To reiterate it, unshaken and unchanged, as Acacius pulled apart once again the work that had attacked it, and the synod as a whole wrote to Julius to refuse to allow Marcellus to be retried, was a fitting act of revenge.

This creed was to be the last theological word of the Eusebian alliance proper. Eusebius of Caesarea, Paulinus of Tyre, and Arius were all now dead, as apparently was Theognis of Nicaea,<sup>182</sup>

<sup>182</sup> Simonetti, *Crisi*, 172 n. 26, on the basis of Hilary, *FHA* IV.1.18 (p. 60.1–3 Feder).

and Eusebius of Constantinople and probably also Asterius were to die in the next year or so. It was not a bad theological legacy: Hilary of Poitiers embraced this creed as orthodox, and Sozomen could not see any difference between it and the Nicene creed.<sup>183</sup>

<sup>183</sup> Hilary, *Syn* 31–33; Sozomen, *HE* III.5.8.

But while it has a certain poetry, and no phrase in it can actually be rejected

as heretical (particularly since its most problematic phrase, 'begotten before the ages', was subsequently enshrined in the Nicaeo-Constantinopolitan creed), it has what one may describe as a certain tendency, and Marcellus put it well when he said it was not 'safe to praise'.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>184</sup> Re 59 K 65 S/V 1 P 1.

One might sign it and happily believe the Son a superior created instrument who came into being and who previously was not, and that the only basis of unity between Father, Son, and Spirit was harmony of will.

The third creed, the creed of Theophronius of Tyana, is extremely interesting. It runs as follows (including Athanasius' introduction):

And one Theophronius, Bishop of Tyana, put forth before them all the following statement of his personal faith. And they subscribed it, accepting the faith of this man. 'God knows, whom I call as witness over my soul, that thus I believe:

'In God the Father, ruler of all, creator and maker of the universe, from whom are all things, and in his Son, the only-begotten, God, Word, Power and Wisdom, our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, who was begotten from the Father before the ages, perfect God from perfect God, and being with God in hypostasis, and in the last days came down and was born from the Virgin according to the Scriptures, and became a human being and suffered and rose from the dead and ascended to the heavens, and sat down at the right hand of his Father, and is coming

end p.173

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

again with glory and power to judge living and dead, and remains to the ages. And in the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, which both God promised through the prophet to pour out on his servants and the Lord promised to send to his disciples, and which he did send, as the Acts of the Apostles bear witness. And if anyone teaches apart from this faith, or holds it in himself, let him be anathema. And of Marcellus of Ancyra or Sabellius or Paul of Samosata, let him be anathema, both him and all those who hold communion with him.<sup>185</sup>

<sup>185</sup> 0x0003db θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα τὸν τῶν ἁλῶν κτίστην καὶ ποιητὴν, ἔξ οὗ τὰ πάντα,  
καὶ 0x0003db τὸν υἱόν, αἰῶνος τὸν μονογενῆ, θεόν, λόγον, δυνάμιν καὶ σοφίαν, τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, δι᾽ οὗ τὰ πάντα, τὸν γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς 0x0003db πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων,  
θεὸν τέλειον ἐκ θεοῦ τέλειου, καὶ ὄντα πρὸ 0x0003db τῶν θεῶν ἐν ὑποστάσει, ἐκ ἐσχάτων δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν κατελθόντα καὶ γεννηθέντα ἐκ τῆς 0x0003db παρθένου κατὰ τὰ 0x0003db γραφά 0x0003db, ἐνανθρωπήσαντα,  
παθόντα καὶ ἀναστάντα ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν καὶ ἀνελθόντα 0x0003db τὸ 0x0003db οὐρανὸν 0x0003db καὶ καθεσθέντα ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ πατρὸς 0x0003db αὐ



του., καὶ πάλιν ἐρχόμενον μετὰ δ' αὖτε καὶ δυνάμεω κρίναι  
ζώοντα καὶ νεκροὺς καὶ μένοντα τὸ αἶω-  
ναῖον.  
καὶ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα ματὸν γίον, τὸν παρὰ κλητον, τὸ πνεῦμα τη-  
ροῦ ἀληθείας, ὃ καὶ δι' τοῦ προφήτου ἐπηγγέλατο ὁ θεὸς  
ἐκχεῖν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτοῦ δούλου καὶ κτλ  
τοῦ ἐπηγγέλατο πέμψαι τοῦ αὐτοῦ μαθηταί, ὃ  
καὶ ἐπέμψεν, ὡς αἱ Πράξεις τῶν Ἀποστόλων μαρτυροῦ-  
σιν.  
εἰ δὲ τίς παρὰ ταύτην τὴν πίστιν διδάσκει ἢ ἔχει ἐν αὐτῷ, ἀνάθεμα ἔ-  
στω. καὶ Μαρκελλοῦ τοῦ Ἀγκίρα ἢ Σαβελλίου ἢ Παύλου τοῦ  
Σαμοσατέως <...> ἀνάθεμα ἔστω καὶ αἱ περὶ καὶ πάντες οἱ κοινῶν  
αὐτῶν. (Athanasius, *De Syn* 24.2–5; text also in  
Hahn and Hahn, 186–7).

It has been considered probable that Theophronius was suspected of being a follower of Marcellus, above all because he has obviously been forced to anathematize Marcellus and the two stock heretics held to be his predecessors, Sabellius and Paul of Samosata.<sup>186</sup>

<sup>186</sup> See M. Tetz, 'Die Kirchweihsynode von Antiochien (341) und Marcellus von Ancyra: zu der Glaubenserklärung des Theophronius von Tyana und ihren Folgen' in *Oecumenica et Patristica: Festschrift für Wilhelm Schneemelcher zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Damaskinos Papandreou (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1989), 199–218.

Hilary speaks, in his very brief account of the Dedication synod, of a creed that was composed '*cum in suspicionem venisset unus ex episcopis quod prava sentiret*' (On the Synods 29).<sup>187</sup>

<sup>187</sup> 'When one of the bishops came under suspicion of holding depraved opinions.'

The creed he gives is the Second Creed, but the circumstances seem to match the third.

In fact, a careful examination of Theophronius' creed shows it to be at least at certain points a rather pro-Marcellan account of the faith, to which Theophronius has presumably been forced to add three phrases and two anathemata intended to be anti-Marcellan, but which he has managed to add in such a way as to keep his views intact. His desperate desire to do so shines clearly out of the creed's introductory phrase.

Theophronius then declares his faith in 'God the Father, ruler of all', not in 'one God the Father' as creeds of the period (for example Arius' second creed, Eusebius of Caesarea's creed, the creed of Nicaea, and the First, Second, and Fourth creeds of Antioch) standardly do, usually following this with belief in 'one Lord Jesus Christ' (except in the Fourth Creed of

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [175]-[179]

Antioch). This refusal to list Father and Son as one and one, lest they make two, is characteristic of Marcellus' thought.

In the second article, Theophronius declares the Son to be only-begotten divine Word, Power, and Wisdom. The Marcellus of at least some parts of *Against Asterius* would have reserved the word 'only-begotten' (and, on the whole, the word 'Son') for after the incarnation, but Marcellus was presenting a creed to Julius at almost exactly this time which declared his belief in God's μονογενῆς υἱὸς λόγος, ὃς ἀεί συνυπάρχων τῷ πατρὶ καὶ μηδεπώποτε ἀρχὴν τοῦ εἶναι ἔσχηκώς (only-begotten Son Word, who always coexisted with [or in] the Father and never ever had a beginning of being). λόγος, δύναμις, and σοφία were Marcellus' characteristic words for the pre-Incarnate. The list υἱόν, λόγον, δύναμιν καὶ σοφίαν (Son, Word, Power, and Wisdom) was also one that formed part of a formula agreed between Marcellus and Athanasius the previous year:<sup>188</sup>

<sup>188</sup> See Chapter 5.

it also arises in the Letter to Julius. Marcellus at this stage would have wanted to add a phrase like ἴδιος καὶ ἀληθῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ (proper and true...of God) to λόγος, δύναμις, and σοφία, as he does in the letter to Julius,<sup>189</sup>

<sup>189</sup> *Letter to Julius*, p. 126.13–14 Vinzent.

to distinguish his understanding of the terms from the doctrine that the Son was the exact image of the Father's Word, Power, and Wisdom (Asterius' theology), that is, a second Word, Power, and Wisdom, but doubtless this would not have been received at the Dedication synod with very much warmth.

Theophronius may well have been strongly encouraged to add the next three phrases, or at least the latter two. The phrase τὸν γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων (the one begotten from the Father before the ages), which is in both the First and (slightly rearranged) the Second Creeds of Antioch, would not have appealed to Marcellus, who did not like using birth language before the Incarnation; the aorist tense, connected with πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, would have been particularly unattractive to him. However, this was the word and the tense used at Nicaea, in the phrase τὸν γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς, μονογενῆ, τουτέστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς (the one begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is from the Father's essence), and it did represent the theology, if one reads πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων as eternal generation,<sup>190</sup> of his fellow-traveller Eustathius.

<sup>190</sup> Dossetti, 208; Hahn and Hahn, 160.

Θεὸν τέλειον ἐκ Θεοῦ τελείου (perfect God from perfect God) would have

been a real stumbling-block for Marcellus. We have seen that Acacius claims that Marcellus rejected τέλειος ἐκ τελείου; adding the 'God from God' formula only reinforces the difficulty, and makes it very difficult to understand the phrase in anything other than a Eusebian sense, as meaning two separate Gods. But 'God from God' had been used at Nicaea, however Marcellus made sense of it: he might have interpreted τέλειος here as a

end p.175

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

synonym for ἀληθής, as against Eusebius of Caesarea's 'God but not true God'.<sup>191</sup>

<sup>191</sup> As in his *Letter to Euphratians of Balanea* (Urk 3.3 (p. 5.5–10 Opitz)).

ὄντα πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἐν ὑποστάσει (being with God in/as a hypostasis) was obviously meant, as far as his opponents were concerned, to signify that the Son was a second hypostasis. Theophronius' phrase, however, is ambiguous. It leaves room for the hypostasis in question to be the Father's—unlike the phrase τῇ μὲν ὑποστάσει τρία, τῷ δὲ συμφωνίᾳ ἓν (three in hypostasis, but one in agreement), for example, which is used in the Second Creed.

The phrase καὶ μένοντα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας (and remains to the ages) looks as though it is meant to be anti-Marcellan, but it would not in fact exclude even the position Marcellus is popularly, though erroneously, held to have maintained, that Christ's kingdom would have an end, since even Christ's partial kingdom in Marcellus' thought would only have an end after the end of the aeons, when the material world passed away.

The treatment of the Spirit is interesting, and gives the lie to the notion that the role of the Spirit was not a live issue at this time. It largely matches the few tantalizing remarks of Marcellus' on the role of the Spirit which survive in the *Against Asterius* fragments, but most closely matches the pronouncement on the Spirit of the Western Creed of Serdica: πιστεύομεν καὶ παραλαμβάνομεν τὸν παράκλητον τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, ὅπερ ἡμῖν αὐτὸς ὁ κύριος ἐ

πηγγείλατο καὶ ἐπέμψεν. καὶ τοῦτο; πιστεύομεν περὶ φθόν.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>192</sup> 'We believe and we receive the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, which the Lord himself promised and sent to us. And we believe it has been sent.' For discussion of the text used, see Chapter 5.

An Irenaean theology based on Joel 2: 28–9 of a community animated by the Spirit seems to underlie Theophronius' formulation, but his distinction between the two promises of the Spirit by 'God' (in Old Testament times) and 'the Lord' (in New Testament times) is also striking.

The anathema condemning Marcellus is interesting, too, because it looks as though even here Theophronius avoided fulfilling his opponents' requirements, somehow or other. The text as it stands does not construe (the names Marcellus, Sabellius, and Paul are in the genitive, with nothing to govern them), and there is presumably some kind of lacuna. This is probably not accidental. It is impossible now to know what originally filled the lacuna, but nothing plausible can easily be supplied,<sup>193</sup>

<sup>193</sup> Tetz points out that most translators ignore the problem, while Opitz inserts an entirely random κατὰ (Tetz, 'Kirchweihsynode', pp. 199–201). Tetz himself suggests

the (enormously clever) emendation of εἰ δὲ τίς παρὰ ταύτην τὴν πίστιν διδάσκει ἢ ἔχει ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἄ <μ>αθ<η>μα ἔσται <ι> καὶ Μαρκελλοῦ τοῦ Ἀγκύρας

... (If anyone teaches [anything] beyond this faith or holds in himself the things which are also teachings of Marcellus of Ancyra)' for εἰ δὲ τίς ... ἔχει ἐν ἑαυτῷ, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω· καὶ Μαρκελλοῦ τοῦ Ἀγκύρας ἢ Σαβελλίου, ἢ Παύλου τοῦ Σαμοσατέως, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω (Tetz, 'Kirchweihsynode', p. 201), but it is too unnatural a construction for any actual Greek speaker to have written.

so the ambiguity may even be original, a device of Theophronius' to save his conscience. Since the text is transmitted through Athanasius, he may have taken some trouble to preserve

end p.176

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

the ink-blot or whatever it originally was which secured Marcellus from clear condemnation by Theophronius.<sup>194</sup>

<sup>194</sup> It is an extraordinary fact that in the whole of the rich MS tradition of Athanasius' *On the Synods*, no scribe ever 'corrected' the phrase, supplying, for example, καὶ εἰ τίς διδάσκει ἢ ἔχει ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὰ > Μαρκελλοῦ or καὶ <τὰ> Μαρκελλοῦ (understanding εἰ τίς διδάσκει ἢ ἔχει ἐν ἑαυτῷ, a more likely scribal emendation—if a harsher construction—as it involves less tinkering with the holy writer's words). The surprising difficulty of finding a smooth and concise emendation (a difficulty intended by the author?) has almost certainly contributed to the preservation of the *lectio difficilis*.

One final observation may be made about this creed. It is transmitted, as already noted, by Athanasius. Athanasius presumably knew Theophronius from his journey through Asia Minor in 337, if he was bishop at that point, since Tyana is a major stop on the route from Nicomedia to Antioch. If Theophronius really was a friend of Marcellus', or at least sympathetic to his theology, Athanasius may also have smiled when he had the letter copied at the thought of Eusebius and the others signing (as he makes a point of saying they did) the genuine and heartfelt expression of faith of a disciple or at least a fellow-traveller of Marcellus of Ancyra.

Theophronius seems successfully to have held on to his see: we hear no more of him, and no bishop of Tyana attended at Serdica. If so, he presumably had Constantius (who was present at the Dedication synod) to thank for his opportunity to 'repent' of his Marcellan opinions. His reprieve would have meant that there was still at least one bishop friendly to the anti-Eusebian party in one of the major cities of the East, even if he had to keep his head down.

The Dedication of the church of Holy Concord was celebrated (I have argued) at the end of the synod, after all the documents had been signed. Elpidius and Philoxenus made their escape and set out on the long journey back to Rome, in order to let Julius and the Italian bishops know that an ecumenical synod would not now take place.

## 4. Conclusion

The Dedication Synod of 341 marks a watershed in the Arian controversy.

This was the last stand of the old Eusebian group, for Eusebius of Constantinople died shortly afterwards. The charge of Arianism would now really begin to hit home with some of the Eastern bishops, who long struggled to repel the caricature of their theology that had been (as we shall see) so comprehensively sold to the West. Meanwhile, the most successful defence was attack, and an equally unfair but effective caricature of the theology of Marcellus of Ancyra became the point around which the fragmenting forces of the East could unite—that and their unreasonable treatment by Julius.

end p.177

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Marcellus' reputation has still not recovered from the assault it received at this synod. It was here, essentially, that this distinguished and respected church leader of nearly twenty-five years' standing, with a perspective well within the norms of biblical, pre-Constantinian, and early fourth-century theology, was turned into a pariah by his theological enemies, and sold to the East in general as such. Unfortunately, too many of those in Constantius' regions who knew how false this picture was were now dead, deposed, or silenced. The new generation, intoxicated by its own power, had yet to discover how dangerous was the game they had now become part of, or how soon some of them would find themselves its victims in their turn.

end p.178

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

## 5 Rome and Serdica

---

### Sara Parvis

**Abstract:** This chapter examines the moves toward a second Ecumenical Council in the years after the second depositions of Athanasius and Marcellus. Constantius' brother, Constans, is presented as a central figure in the negotiations, perhaps from as early as 340. It is argued that the decisions of the Synod of Rome, here dated to Spring 341, were not intended to be binding on the East in the absence of any Eastern bishops, but merely addressed the local problem of whether or not to continue to treat Athanasius and Marcellus as bishops in the absence of convincing evidence that they had been validly deposed. The works written by Athanasius and Marcellus in Rome at this time, the *First Oration against the Arians*, the *Letter to Julius*, and probably *On the Holy Church (De Sancta Ecclesia)*, are examined. It is argued that all draw on a statement agreed between the two concerning a heresy, which Athanasius calls the Arian heresy and Marcellus calls Ariomania. The signatories and documents of the Eastern and Western synods of Serdica are minutely examined, and argued to show that the two alliances were now in a process of realignment. Marcellus and Athanasius were in fundamental disagreement over whether or not to issue a statement adding to the Nicene Creed, and most of the Easterners were not in as intransigent a mood as the letter written in their name might suggest. Marcellus withdrew from public engagement with the controversy shortly afterwards to obviate the need to choose between a breach with Athanasius

or with his own pupil Photinus of Sirmium. He died nearly 30 years later in communion with the former, without ever having condemned the latter.

**Keywords: Ecumenical Council, Constantius, Constans, Synod of Rome, Julius, Athanasius, Serdica, Nicene Creed, Acacius of Caesarea, Photinus of Sirmium**

Marcellus and Athanasius had been forced out of their sees for a second time, despite all their strenuous efforts on their return from exile to build up their defences and take up as strong a position as possible. But they had not given up hope of another return. Constantius was not the only emperor. Julius was disposed, as his letters showed, to be suspicious of the conduct of the Eusebian alliance, and to be welcoming towards the bishops they had deposed. Another reversal was possible: Eusebius and the rest might overreach themselves, their friends at court might fall out of favour. Most importantly of all, the prelates of the churches outside Constantius' regions might be won over to see events in the East through the eyes of the exiles, and to allow them to build up wider popularity and support on the basis of which they might eventually be recalled to the East, particularly if Constantius should die before his brothers.

Marcellus may well have gone back to Illyricum after his renewed exile, perhaps, as Barnes suggests, in the hope of gaining some influence at Constans' court, though we have no particular reason to suppose he had any contacts there.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 57.

Athanasius may well have intended going on to Constantine II's court after Rome, and probably wrote to him.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 50–2.

But the welcome Athanasius received from Julius at Rome, and Julius' clear interest in taking on the adjudication of the whole case, decided him to stay and Marcellus to join him there. The question of which emperor to seek support from, meanwhile, solved itself. Early in 340, Constantine II invaded Constans' territory and was killed.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See *PLRE* i, 223 ('Fl. Claudius Constantinus 3').



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [180]-[184]

### 1. Marcellus and Athanasius in Rome

Marcellus and Athanasius spent the year 340 in Rome together. Although their wait for the arrival of the Eusebian party for Julius' synod was to prove fruitless, as they no doubt strongly suspected it would, it was a productive year in other ways. They probably, I will argue, met Constans when he was in Rome that year. And if they could not meet their Eastern aggressors, they could at least polemicize against them. For it was here, I will argue, at this time, that Marcellus and Athanasius together created the full-blown myth of Arianism.

#### (i) *The invention of Arianism*

As early as the summer of 325, Eustathius of Antioch can be found using the word Ἀρειμανιῖται ('Arian maniacs');<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Theodoret, *HE* 1.8.3.

it may well be a pun invoking frenzied worshippers of the god Ares, the god of war.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ἀρειμανῆς or Ἀρειμανῖος, 'full of warlike frenzy' (LSJ, 237). Constantine, in a somewhat hysterical letter (*Ur*k 34), addresses Arius as Ἀρεῖς Ἀρεῖε (p. 69.26 Opitz), evoking a phrase from *Iliad* 5.31 and 455.

At this point, it presumably means those who enthusiastically stir up strife on behalf of Arius: Eustathius mocks them for suddenly giving way to fear, the fear of losing their sees, and rushing to sign up to the Nicene Creed.

Athanasius uses this word in his Festal Letters for 338 and 339;<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Athanasius, *Festal Letters* 10.9 and 11.10, 12. For the dating of the Festal Letters, see Barnes, *Athanasius*, 183–91.

at this point, 'those around Eusebius' are sometimes a subset of the Ἀρειμανιῖται, sometimes a distinct group closely associated with them.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Athanasius, *Festal Letters*, 11.12.

In the case of the word 'Arian' itself, Eustathius was said to have written eight books *Contra Arianos*, but this may well simply be a later description of their contents. Athanasius uses the word 'Arian' in documents composed between 337 and 339,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> As in *Festal Letter* 11 (Burgess, 86 and 96).

but restricts its use to Arius' Egyptian and Libyan followers: in his *Encyclical Letter* of 339, Athanasius calls his replacement bishop Gregory an Arian, sent to be bishop over the Arians, because it was only the Egyptian Arians (he claims) who asked for him as their bishop, and because his secretary is Arius' old friend Ammonius.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Athanasius, *Ep Enc* 2.2. 'Arian' as a noun appears seven times in the short section 2.2-3.1 (p. 170.28—p. 171.22 Opitz) describing the installation of Gregory. Ammonius, the bearer of Arius' *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia* (Urk 1), is mentioned in *Encyclical Letter* 6.6 (p. 177.5).

'Those around Eusebius' are still a different group in Athanasius' rhetoric as late as the summer of 339, in league with the 'Arians' but distinguishable from them.

In Marcellus' case we do not know that he ever used the word 'Arian'. In the surviving fragments of *Against Asterius*, there is no mention of Arius, or of 'Ariomania', although Marcellus is in no doubt that Asterius and his friends

end p.180

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

are peddling a full-blown heresy.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Marcellus, *Contra Asterium*, Re 59 Kl 65 S/V 1 P 1.

This may be merely because Eusebius of Caesarea thought it prudent not to cite any such imputation in front of Constantine, but it seems clear enough that the real targets of the work are Asterius and the two Eusebii, together with Narcissus of Neronias and the dead Paulinus of Tyre. Asterius is the real author of the heresy, Marcellus clearly thinks, and the bishops have followed him. How the presbyter Arius fitted into the scheme we do not know, but he cannot have been very prominent.

After Marcellus and Athanasius spent their year together in Rome, however, a new animal emerges in the writings of both: the full-blown Arian heresy, modelled on the constructs of the old heresiologies, with its diabolical initiative, its roots in previous heresies or philosophies, and its single male heresiarch with his malignant followers, who propagate theological perversions with great vigour, persecute the orthodox, and, most importantly of all, have been clearly condemned by the Church. Athanasius could have used this notion in the encyclical letter of 339, but in fact it first appears in *Against the Arians* I. It also appears, as we have seen, in the letter of Julius to which the Dedication synod was replying when they said indignantly, 'We have not been followers of Arius—how could bishops, such as we, follow a presbyter?—and nor did we receive any other faith beside that which has been handed down from the beginning. But after taking on ourselves to examine and to verify his faith, we have admitted him rather than followed him.'<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 22.3–4 (p. 248.29–32).

This notion of Arianism (or Ariomania) as a heresy on the pattern of Gnosticism or Marcionism also appears in Marcellus' short work *On the Holy Church*, which I will argue was written at exactly this time. But because the dating of *On the Holy Church* (and even its attribution to Marcellus) are not proved beyond question, I will turn first of all to the *Letter to Julius*,<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Text cited from Vinzent, *Markell*, 124–8 (= Klostermann's fr. 129).

which is securely attributable to Marcellus and can be confidently placed in Rome in the first half of 341.

## (ii) Marcellus' Letter to Julius

It has often been claimed that the theology of the *Letter to Julius* looks rather different from that of the *Against Asterius* fragments,<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. Maurice J. Dowling, 'Marcellus of Ancyra: Problems of Christology and the Doctrine of the Trinity'; Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, 143–4.

and it is certainly true that there is no sign of some of Marcellus' more controversial ideas. Some commentators have seen this as deceit, and have accused Marcellus of dissembling, 'trimming', or downright lying in the creed contained in this letter,<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> L. W. Barnard, 'Marcellus of Ancyra and the Eusebians', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 25 (1980), 63–76, at 64; M. Richard, 'Un opusculé méconnu de Marcel évêque d'Ancyra', *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 6 (1949), 5–24, at 23, repr. in Richard, *Opera Minora* II, ed. E. Dekkers et al. (Turnhout: Brepols/Leuven University Press, 1977), no. 33; Reinhard Hübner, 'Gregor von Nyssa und Markell von Ankyra', in *Écriture et culture philosophique dans la pensée de Grégoire de Nysse*, ed. Marguérite Harl (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 199–229, at 214.

often on the basis of *On the Holy Church*, which seems to return to

end p.181

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Marcellus' earlier views. However, the truth in this case seems to be quite the reverse. Marcellus had been condemned for allegedly teaching that the Son first came into existence through the Virgin, and that the kingdom of the eternal Son and Word would have an end. These are the teachings which continue to be ascribed to him by writers such as Eusebius of Emesa and Cyril of Jerusalem, as well as successive creeds.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Eusebius of Emesa, *Sermon* 3.24 Buytaert; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. Lect.* 15.27; Eastern Creed of Sardica, anathemas 5–7; Makrostichos Creed; First Creed of Sirmium.

These are the charges, therefore, on which the *Letter to Julius* concentrates, and what Marcellus says in response to them has demonstrably not changed from what he says in *Against Asterius*. Marcellus was always prepared to call the pre-incarnate Word 'Son', and to state unequivocally that the Son is eternal and is the one through whom all created things are made,<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> In *Against Asterius*, Marcellus describes the Word as τὸν ὁληθω-ς υἱόν, in contrast to τὸ κατὰ οὐρανόν, which was Son out of κοινωνία with the Word: Re 17 Kl 20 S/V 38 P 43.

not merely a title accorded to the Word after the Incarnation. Likewise, in the *Letter to Julius*, he confesses ὅτι τῆς βασιλείας οὐκ ἔσται τέλος ('whose kingdom shall have no end'),<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Vinzent, p. 126.11–12.

but of the eternal Son and Word reigning with τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ('the God and Father') rather than explicitly of Christ. This is again what the earlier work asserted: after the final judgement the Word will no longer need his partial kingdom, but be king of all things generally, reigning together with the God and Father.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Re 104 Kl 117 S 105 V 106 P 125.

As well as defending himself against these charges, however, Marcellus also attacks his opponents, and makes some positive assertions about the

orthodox theology from which theirs deviates. This he does on the basis of propositions of theirs which have already been condemned, as well as other propositions which are agreed to be orthodox. If the *Letter to Julius* is compared with the opening chapters of Athanasius' *Against the Arians* I, two observations may be made. Firstly, Athanasius and Marcellus are drawing broadly upon the same agreed list of propositions, both propositions to be ascribed to opponents and condemned, and propositions to be upheld. Secondly, the list of condemned propositions is substantially the same as the list of condemned propositions cited in Alexander's encyclical letter before the synod of Nicaea, *Henos Somatos*.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> These parallels were noted by Michel Barnes, 'Fourth Century', 55.

The parallels between *Henos Somatos* and *Against the Arians* I have been noted and schematized by Rudolph Lorenz.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Rudolf Lorenz, 'Die Christusseele im arianischen Streit. Nebst einigen Bemerkungen zur Quellenkritik des Arius und zur Glaubwürdigkeit des Athanasius', *ZKG* 94 (1983), 1–51, at 8–10. There is a synoptic table in Lorenz, *Arius judaizans?*, 38–47.

A slightly different schematization

end p.182

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

which is more helpful for noting further parallels with Marcellus will be used here. They include the following.

Slogans and pronouncements attributed to Arius

1. Οἶκ' αἰὲν ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ ἦ-ν.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> 'God was not always Father': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.19 Opitz).

2. Οἶκ' αἰὲν ἦ-ν ὁ τοῦ λόγου θεοῦ. ἀλλ' ἐξ οἶκ' ὄντων γέγονεν.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> 'The Word of God was not always, but came to be out of non-being': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.9–10 Opitz).

3. Ἦν ποτε ἢτε οἶκ' ἦ-ν.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> 'There was when he was not': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.11 Opitz).

4. The Son is a κτίσμα and a ποίημα.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> 'A created thing' and 'something that is made': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.11 Opitz).

5. The Son is not ὁμοιος κατ' οὐσίαν to the Father,<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> 'Like according to essence': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.11–12 Opitz).

6. nor ἀληθινὸς κα' φύσει τοῦ πατρὸς λόγος,<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> 'True and by nature Word of the Father': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.12 Opitz).

7. nor ἀληθινὴ σοφία αἰῶνι.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> 'His true wisdom': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.12–13 Opitz).

8. The Son is only called λόγος and σοφία καταχρηστικῶς.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Called 'Word' and 'Wisdom' 'improperly speaking': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 7.13–p. 14.1 Opitz).

9. The Son was made (γενόμενος) τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὃν ἐν τῷ θεῷ σοφία, ἐν ᾧ καὶ τὰ πάντα καὶ αὐτὸν πεποίηκεν ὁ θεός.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> 'By God's own rational principle [or Word] and the wisdom which is in God, in which God also made all things and him': *Urk* 4b.7 (p. 8.1–2 Opitz).

10. The λόγος is ξένος and ἄλλοτριος from the οὐσία of God.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> 'The Word is foreign and alien to the essence of God': *Urk* 4b.8 (p. 8.3–4 Opitz).

### General observation against Arius

11. The views of Arius are an apostasy which is so great it must be the forerunner of the Antichrist.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Urk* 4b.3 (p. 7.1–2 Opitz).

In *Against the Arians* I, Athanasius ascribes pronouncements 1,<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Athanasius, *Contra Arianos* I.5.2 (p. 114.2 Metzler).

2 (in the form ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων γέγονε, the Word of God came to be out of non-being),<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Con Ar* I.5.3 (p. 114.3–5 Metzler).

3,<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *Con Ar* I.5.3 (p. 114.14 Metzler).

5,<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Con Ar* I.6.4 (p. 115.13–16 Metzler).

8,<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Con Ar* I.9.6 (p. 118.20–21 Metzler).

9,<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Con Ar* I.9.10 (p. 118.34–36 Metzler).

and 10<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Con Ar* I.6.2 (p. 115.3–5 Metzler).

to Arius. In opposition to pronouncements 4, 6, and 7, he provides positive statements from his own side: the Son is not a κτίσμα or a ποίημα (4),<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *Con Ar* I.9.1 (p. 117.4 Metzler)—reaffirmed as Arian belief in the reprise at I.9.5 (p. 118.17 Metzler).

he is υἱὸς ἀληθινὸς φύσει καὶ γνήσιος τοῦ πατρὸς (true and genuine Son by nature of the Father), σοφία μονογενής (only-begotten Wisdom) and λόγος ἀληθινὸς καὶ μόνος τοῦ πατρὸς (true and sole Word of the Father) (6 and 7).<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> *Con Ar* I.9.1 (p. 117.2–4 Metzler).

end p.183

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Marcellus uses a 'they say'–'we say' formula in the *Letter to Julius*,<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Marcellus' presentation of the views of his opponents is analysed in Vinzent, 'Die

Gegner'; the text is presented schematically on 293. Vinzent concludes that the opponent in view throughout is Asterius.

without mentioning Arius by name. 'They say' ἦν ποτε ἔτε οὐκ ἦν (there was when he was not) (3), the Son is a κτισμα and a ποιημα (4), the Son is not the ἴδιος and ἀληθινὸς λόγος (proper and true Word) of the Almighty God (cf. 6, 9), nor ἀληθῶς υἱὸς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ (truly Son from God), but God's ἕτερος λόγος and ἑτέρα σοφία καὶ δύναμις (other Word and other Wisdom and Power; cf. 7, 9). He is only called λόγος and σοφία and δύναμις (8), and is made (γενόμενον) (9). The Son is ἄλλη ὑπόστασις διεστῶσα τοῦ πατρὸς (another hypostasis separated off from the Father) (cf. 10). Marcellus says that those who believe these things are ἀλλοτρίους τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας (foreign to the catholic Church), the exact words used by *Henos Somatos* against Arius.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *Urk* 4b.19 (p. 10.9–10 Opitz).

Beyond these statements ascribed to 'those whom I refuted at Nicaea', Marcellus makes some statements which do not appear as such in *Henos Somatos*, but are used in similar form in *Against the Arians* I. These include the pairing ἴδιος καὶ ἀληθινός (proper and true; Athanasius uses the two words in apposition rather than as a pair, the second as part of the phrase ἴδιος τῆς οὐσίας αὐτοῦ, proper to his essence); the quartet υἱός, δύναμις, σοφία, λόγος as parallel epithets (Son, Power, Wisdom, Word; Athanasius also uses them all as such within a couple of lines of one another, though separately);<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Con Ar* I.9.1–2 (p. 117.2–p. 118.9 Metzler).

and the affirmation that the Son Logos never had an ἀρχή (beginning;

Athanasius ascribes to Arius the view that the Logos did have an ἀρχή).<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *Con Ar* I.5.3 (p. 114.15 Metzler).

In addition, both accuse Arius or the opponents of believing in a ἕτερος λόγος.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> A different Word; *Con Ar* I.5.6 (p. 114.15 Metzler)

Neither Marcellus nor Athanasius seems to be straightforwardly borrowing from the other in these expressions, which draw on *Henos Somatos* but move beyond its condemned propositions to positive doctrinal assertions. Marcellus is using a tighter text ('This is the one who is Son, this, the one who is Power, this, Wisdom, this, proper and true Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ'), which he has rhetorically made his own, and is unlikely to be copying from Athanasius' rather loose and diffuse collection of propositions, but *Henos Somatos* is so much more Athanasius' provenance than Marcellus' that it seems implausible that Marcellus would make such extensive use of it without any prompting. The conclusion seems inescapable that Marcellus and Athanasius have drawn up a list of propositions together on which both are agreed, including both propositions to be denied which are ascribed to Arius and his friends (which have conveniently already been condemned at Alexandria, and to some extent at Nicaea), and propositions which may be safely affirmed as orthodox. These agreed statements are probably part of a

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [185]-[189]

wider package of anti-Arian rhetoric, as will be argued in the next section. But first it may be worth noting one major point in which Marcellus and Athanasius differ in their use of terminology, even when employing the agreed formulae.

This is their use of *ousia* and *hypostasis* language. Although Athanasius does not yet make much use of *homoousios*,<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> The word appears only once in *Against the Arians* I and II, at *Con Ar* I.9.2.

he frequently uses *ousia* in *Against the Arians*, as he had in *Henos Somatos*. Athanasius accuses Arius of teaching that the Son is alien to the Father κατὰ οὐσίαν. Marcellus, as we have seen, uses an equivalent form with 'hypostasis': the Son, for his opponents, is ἄλλη ὑποστάσις διεστῶσα τοῦ πατρὸς. Marcellus' equivalent of the Nicene ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς (from the essence of the Father) is ἀληθῶς (υἱὸς) ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ υ. (truly (Son) from God): he accuses his opponents of believing ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ in the same sense as the created order (τὰ πάντα) is ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. Athanasius, as we have seen, also uses the phrase ἴδιος τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς, where Marcellus would use the absolute form ἴδιος λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. Marcellus never uses *ousia* language except in describing the views of his opponents. Athanasius, on the other hand, shies away from Marcellus' use of hypostasis language, preferring the scriptural χαρακτήρ τῆς (τοῦ πατρὸς) ὑποστάσεως (impress of the (Father's) being),<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Heb. 1: 3, cited at *Con Ar* I.12.5 and II.32.2.

which Marcellus once again applies to Christ's flesh. Athanasius will also use a phrase such as εἰκὼν τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς οὐσίας (image of the Father's essence),<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> *Con Ar* II.67.5.

which Marcellus would never use, one of Athanasius' residually Origenist theological expressions which are closer to Asterius' usage than Marcellus'.

### (ii) On the Holy Church

Of all the anonymous or pseudonymous works of the fourth century attributed to Marcellus in the twentieth, the only attribution which has commanded widespread support is that of Anthimus of Nicomedia's *On the Holy Church*. This short anti-heretical piece, surviving among a selection of heresiological material in two manuscripts, was published under the title *Anthimi Nicomediensis episcopi et martyris de sancta ecclesia* by Cardinal Mercati in the *Studi e Testi* series in 1905: the editor noted that the piece must either be pseudonymous or interpolated, since it dealt chiefly with a heresy (that of the 'Ariomaniacs') which flourished well after Anthimus' death in 302, but made no suggestions as to the real author or interpolator. Marcel



Richard proposed Marcellan authorship in an article first published in 1949 (an article which set the fashion for a number of less convincing attributions of pseudonymous works to Marcellus).<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Richard, 'Un opusculé méconnu'.

His thesis has been accepted by most major commentators on Marcellus (Manlio Simonetti, Martin Tetz, Maurice Dowling, Alexandra Riebe, Alastair Logan, and Klaus Seibt—Markus Vinzent and Joseph Lienhard

end p.185

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

have been more circumspect). The sole dissenting voice, R. P. C. Hanson<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Richard Hanson, 'The Date and Authorship of Pseudo-Anthimus De Sancta Ecclesia', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 83 (1983), 251–4.

(less credible on this occasion for not having read Richard's original article), has been thoroughly refuted by Alastair Logan, the major commentator in English on the work, who has recently re-edited it.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Alastair H. B. Logan, 'Marcellus of Ancyra (Pseudo-Anthimus), "On the Holy Church": Text, Translation and Commentary', *JTS* 51 (2000), 81–112. The text is cited here by the section numbers of Logan's edition (pp. 89–93).

Logan, who originally dated the work to 'the 340s',<sup>52</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Alastair H. B. Logan, 'Marcellus of Ancyra and anti-Arian Polemic', *St Pat* XIX (1989), 189–97, at 196.

breaking with the tradition begun by Richard and followed by Simonetti of dating the work to the third quarter of the fourth century, has more recently proposed a date more precisely in the middle of that decade, in the couple of years following the synod of Serdica.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Logan, 'On the Holy Church', 87–8.

I would accept Logan's arguments (echoed by Seibt, with some additional points)<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Seibt, *Markell*, 64–6.

against a date in the 360s or so: the work's ascription to the 'Ariomaniacs' of the 'servant' words δουλος and ὑπηρέτης in language about the Spirit is broadly foreshadowed by the language of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical Theology*; ascription of the Son's generation to the will of the Father is not merely a 'neo-Arian' doctrine, since it appears in the fragments of Asterius quoted by Marcellus in the *Against Asterius*; the names used (Asterius and Eusebius of Caesarea) are those of characters from the earlier part of the controversy. However, I would now like to make a case for 340 as the date of the work (a date which Seibt's analysis would certainly favour), which can only be done by a thorough examination of its structure and content.

Firstly, although the work's unity was convincingly demonstrated by Richard, no one has so far proposed a plausible context for the original writing of the work. Richard thought it was more likely to have been a letter than a tract, the sort that Basil of Caesarea would send to Amphilochius of Iconium on canon law. Logan agrees, citing the addressee of the title ('Anthimus, Bishop of Nicomedia and martyr, from the things he wrote to Theodore concerning the Holy Church') and the use of the second person (τίς ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν, 'in



order that you may know that').<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> *De S Eccl* 8.

But πρὸς Θεόδωρον could as easily mean 'against Theodore' as 'to Theodore',<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Little of the work of Theodore of Heraclea survives, but Jerome reports (*De Vir III* 90) that he wrote during the reign of Constantius, besides the commentaries on Matthew and John that are attested in the catenae, a commentary on the Pauline epistles. It is not impossible that *On the Holy Church* is written in reaction to an exegesis by Theodore of Heraclea of Ephesians 4: 5.

and the second person singular was characteristic of Marcellus' style: as we have seen, he uses a similar phrase, ἵνα γινώσκῃς τι, in one of the fragments of the *Against Asterius* (Re 29 Kl 34 S /V 2 P 2).

end p.186

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Rather, the work is so lapidary that it must be either an abbreviation of a longer work, or the plan for one. The work as it stands does not always make an enormous amount of sense. Sentences such as 'Because of this Eusebius of Caesarea also wrote "unbegotten" ' (12), with no further explanation, must surely be notes intended for expansion, or abbreviations of an argument whose general lines the abbreviator was confident of being able to reconstruct without difficulty. Two circumstances which support the view that the work is less than complete are the tendency of even the two manuscripts that have come down to us to abridge the text still further (though they clearly derive from a common ancestor, both omit items from lists the other gives more fully), and the title #x1F10;κ τῶν πρὸς Θεόδωρον, which demonstrates that the work was not thought to be complete when the title was originally attached to it.

On the other hand, the overall shape of the work is clear, and developed with some artistry. The technique of inclusio is used several times. Μὴ καθολικὴ καὶ ἀποστολικὴ ἐκκλησία (one catholic and apostolic Church) in the first sentence (1) is balanced by the work's final words ἁγίας καθολικῆς καὶ ἀποστολικῆς ἐκκλησίας (of the holy catholic and apostolic Church; 19). A reference to heretics bringing other heretics down 'to the pit of ruin' (εἰς τὸ τῆς ἀπολείας βάραθρον) in 4 is balanced by a reference in 18 to their having been 'drowned in the pit of atheism' (εἰς τὸν τῆς ἀθεαΐς βυθὸν ἀπεννίγησαν). And the reference to Sadducees in 5 as the first heretics is picked up by the accusation in 18 that the 'Ariomaniacs' derive their doctrine of the servility of the Spirit from Dositheus, heresiarch of the Sadducees, tying them once and for all into the well-worn heresiological taxonomy at the earliest possible point.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> For a convenient survey of heresiological taxonomy, see Rebecca Lyman, 'A Topography of Heresy: Mapping the Rhetorical Creation of Arianism', in *Arianism after Arius: Essays in the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts*, ed. Michele R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 45–62.

A further structure is provided by the work's credal frame, giving the work as a whole a chiasmic structure. In the following summary, the inclusio phrases are given in bold type, while the credal elements are given in italics.

The credal formula of '*one God and one Son of God and one Holy Spirit*',

which was presumably used by Marcellus' opponents (it is difficult to imagine Marcellus employing such an expression unprompted) is diffused of the significance of the three 'one's by following it with two other uses of 'one', 'one human being created by God' in the beginning, and 'one cosmos' (1). The focus is then shifted to what Marcellus sees as his own safe ground—the **one catholic and apostolic Church**, called catholic because it is spread over the whole world, and apostolic because it 'received the faith from the apostles and keeps it to the present' (2). This is presented as an exegesis of Eph. 4: 5,

end p.187

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

'one God [sic], one Faith, one baptism':<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> There appears to be no support within the Greek MS tradition for the reading Θ ε  
ϛ ϛ in place of Κ ϛ ϛ ϛ in Eph. 4: 5, but there is some evidence in citations. For Latin  
evidence, see the apparatus to *Novum Testamentum Domini Nostri Iesu Christi  
Latine*, ed. John Wordsworth and Henry Julian White, ii. *Epistulae Paulinae* (Oxford:  
Clarendon Press, 1941), at p. 434. In Greek, the reading occurs twice in the Long  
Ignatius, at *Philippians* 1 and *Ephesians* 6. In view of the undoubtedly 'Arian'  
provenance of the Long Ignatius, the exegesis attached to the former (*Phil* 2) is  
particularly interesting.

the faith is the apostolic element, the baptism presumably therefore guarantees the catholicity, and God is the unity guaranteeing the oneness of the Church.

**Heresies**, on the other hand, neither receive their faith from the **apostles** nor exist throughout the whole world, which is why their churches are also **not called 'catholic'** (3). Therefore it must be set down whence and from whom the heretics received their starting-points, **'and were brought down by [other] heretics to the pit of ruin'** (4).

The following heresies and heresiarchs and their origins are then briefly discussed: the **Sadducees**, Cerinthus, and the Ebionites (5); Simon Magus, various Gnostics, **Marcion**, and Lucian; and the Manichees (6). The starting-points of all of these are deemed to have been drawn from the philosophers **Hermes, Plato, and Aristotle** (7).

So, the author continues, the origins of the heresy of the Ariomaniacs should be given (8). *Three hypostases* are from Valentinus, who derived them from **Hermes and Plato** (9). The phrase *Second God* is from **Hermes**, the expressions 'ingenerate' and 'generate' are from **Plato**, and the notion of the Logos' subsisting by the will of God is likewise from **Hermes** (10–15). So the Ariomaniacs are disciples of **Hermes, Plato, and Aristotle** rather than of Christ and the apostles (16). Their doctrine of the Son as Second Cause is from **Marcion's** pupil Apelles (and also, though the text does not spell this out, echoes Aristotle (17)).

The *Holy Spirit* is blasphemed by the Ariomaniacs as a δουλός and ὑπηρέτης, a doctrine which they derive from Dositheus, heresiarch of the **Sadducees**. So they are **drowned in an abyss of atheism** (18). And 'at the same time as certain people withdrew, having revolted against the Church and the apostolic preaching, those who had been led astray by them also harvested the name of the heresiarch who made the schism, having **lost the name** of her who had nourished them, the **holy catholic and**

apostolic Church' (19).<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Ἰστέον δὲ καὶ τοῦτο, ὅτι ὅμα τῶν ἀναχωρησαῖ τινες στασιάζοντες πρὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν  
ἀνακείνῃ ἀποστολικὸν κήρυγμα, εὐθὺς οἱ πρὸς αὐτῶν πλανηθέντες κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ ἀ-  
ποστολικοῦ αἵρεσιάρχου ἔκαρπυσαντο, ἀπολέσαντες τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἀναθρεψαμένης αἰ-  
ῶς ὁγίας καθολικῆς καὶ ἀποστολικῆς ἐκκλησίας. (19)

From the above schematization, it can be seen that even the middle section matches the introductory 'One God and one Son of God and one Holy Spirit', showing the sense in which Marcellus understands the phrase by refuting the 'Ariomaniac' interpretation of it. 'One God', which Marcellus believes in fervently, is contrasted with the three hypostases of Marcellus'

end p.188

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

enemies, which travesty it. 'One Son of God' is not to be considered a second God, generate in the sense in which all things are, subsisting only by the will of the Father and not by a divine nature shared with God, a secondary cause through which the first cause works rather than being one with the first in causing all that is. 'One Holy Spirit' is not to be considered inferior to and divided in nature from Father and Son.

The longer work of which this is either plan or abbreviation would have spelled out the implications of the cryptic last paragraph (given in full above). What occasion, exactly, is being talked about? Logan takes the 'withdrawing' of this passage to refer to the walkout of the Eastern party from the abortive synod at Serdica, and this interpretation has a certain plausibility: ἀποχωρεῖν is used by Socrates to describe this action in his account of the incident a century later.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.20.8.

Logan suggests that 'those who were led astray by them' might then be Ursacius and Valens, condemned by name in the 'Western' creed—which also condemns three hypostases—as 'two vipers from the Arian asp'. But the Western Creed condemns Ursacius and Valens specifically for teaching the mutability of the Word, and they, surely, withdrew at the same time as the others. And why would the harvesting of the name of Arius be at that moment in particular, given the dastardly deeds of this party on previous occasions?

An occasion which surely fits this scenario better is the Synod of Tyre /Jerusalem. The revolt 'against the Church and the apostolic preaching' referred to would be the accepting of Arius back into communion, in defiance of the decision of Nicaea, and perhaps also the deposing of Athanasius from his 'apostolic' see of Alexandria. Various New Testament texts might be considered to forbid one or both of these acts, and they were certainly against the will of the Church as expressed at Nicaea.

On this reading, the 'withdrawing' would be the metaphorical withdrawing from the Church which Tyre /Jerusalem represented in Marcellus' eyes. At the same time, Marcellus asserts, those whom they had led astray bore as fruit the name of the heresiarch who had been cut off, and lost the name of the holy catholic and apostolic Church. His point would be that all those who went along with receiving Arius in defiance of the statutes of Nicaea, instead of making him catholic, simply made themselves Arians.

There is another reason for dating this work of Marcellus' before Serdica, and, indeed, to the year 340. If we return to *Against the Arians I*, it can be seen that its opening matches this work of Marcellus' relatively closely. Athanasius begins where Marcellus ends, and could be considered to be slightly reacting against Marcellus' picture as well as fleshing it out. Arianism is worse than all the other heresies because it has the cunning to clothe itself in Scripture, and try to force its way back into the Church fold thereby. But to argue there is

end p.189

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [190]-[194]

nothing wrong with Arianism is to call Caiaphas a Christian and reckon Judas still among the band of apostles. The Arians, having left the Church in the time of Alexander, exchanged the name of Christ for that of Arius, and those who follow after them inherit the same name, while those who communicate with Athanasius are Christians just as those who communicated with his predecessor were.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Athanasius, *Con Ar* I.1-3. Athanasius begins this section with an allusion to I John 2: 19: the Arians have 'gone out (ἐξελθειν) from us' (*Con Ar* I.1.1).

Athanasius' concern here would be to move the Arians' condemnation further back in time from the slightly dangerous question of who was or was not guilty at Tyre, to the firm ground of Alexander's vindication and Arius' condemnation at Nicaea: the guilt of anyone who associates with Arius (and the innocence of those who communicate with both Alexander and Athanasius himself) is of long standing and clear. For Athanasius, the real and proven villain is Arius with his Egyptian and Libyan associates; the Eusebian alliance can be assimilated to this group because they are now still standing by them. For Marcellus, on the other hand, the dangerous party, theologically as well as politically, are the Eusebian alliance themselves. Assimilating them to the condemned Arius is for Marcellus a new move, which requires that he find a decisive moment at which the charge becomes applicable. This specificity would be important to Marcellus the canon law maker as much as Marcellus the theologian, because it was the actions of the bishops, the lawmakers and guarantors of apostolic teaching, that were really of concern to him.

Both Marcellus and Athanasius use the term 'Ariomaniacs' in this discussion. Athanasius, too, has a heresiological taxonomy, though a more popular and less detailed one than Marcellus: it begins with Marcion and includes Valentinus, Basilides, Manichaeus, Simon Magus, the Cataphrygians, and the Novatians (the latter two of which groups, most interestingly, are entirely absent from Marcellus' list).<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *Con Ar* I.4.1; I.3.1-2.

Both are attempting to account for the fact that a rather large group is involved with the 'Arians'.

If the suggested date for *On the Holy Church* is correct, this work reflects and is the first expression of the perfecting of the myth of Arianism by Marcellus and Athanasius during their year together in Rome. The myth, like the agreed series of anti-Arian and orthodox propositions referred to above, would represent a compromise between the two theologians. Both had their own nuances, and each disagreed slightly with some of the other's expressions of it. But it was clearly in its broad lines the work of both.

Both Marcellus and Athanasius are now quite sure, in a much clearer way than either has been before, that 'Ariomania' is a package with very specific

contents. Firstly, it has a heresiarch, something Marcellus has never before adverted to. Secondly, the Eusebian party may be called 'Arians' *tout court*,

end p.190

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

rather than 'supporters of the Arians', as Athanasius called them in his *Encyclical Letter* of 338, and their theology, particularly that of Eusebius of Nicomedia and Asterius, may be attacked as 'Arian' also, something Athanasius had not previously done. Thirdly, their heretical opinions are the cause of their enmity towards and political activity against Marcellus and Athanasius and all the 'orthodox'. One final touch which seldom appears in the literature, no doubt due to its disreputable nature, is likely to have been an important part of the myth when discussed orally. God had passed clear judgement on the heresy's heresiarch by bringing about his death the day before he was due to be received back into the Church (if the reception at Tyre /Jerusalem were written off as a travesty) in the most striking and shameful manner.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> For discussion, see above, Chapter 3.6.

Timothy Barnes sees the myth of Arianism as adopted by Athanasius in *Against the Arians* I as a clever but cynical move to disguise a political struggle as a theological one, and thereby win support for his cause from other ecclesiastical quarters.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>64</sup> See Barnes, *Athanasius*, 53, 55.

Other twentieth-century commentators, less admiring of Athanasius' political skill and therefore more disgusted by what they see as his hypocrisy, have also taken this view in one form or another.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Tetz observed that Schwartz had drawn his picture of Athanasius 'nach dem Muster eines "machiavelistisch" gesinnten, reinen Hierarchen' (Martin Tetz, 'Zur Biographie des Athanasius von Alexandrien', *ZKG* 90 (1979), 304–38, at 164). That is very much the view of Athanasius behind the narrative of Richard Klein's *Constantius II*.

It should be asked, therefore, whether Marcellus and Athanasius (co-authors of the myth, in my view) are likely actually to have believed the picture of the Arian heresy they themselves had created and were to propagate as widely as possible.

I suspect its creation was something nearer to a temptation they found themselves unable to resist. They had no doubt, after all, that their enemies were theologically and politically extremely dangerous, and doing great harm to the churches. Who could bring themselves to be generous to their persecutors in such circumstances, to keep the complex theological and political nuances of the controversy distinct, and give due weight to the vacillations of Constantine, the ties of class and friendship, and the other non-theological factors which even in the ancient world ought to have been recognizable as having some influence on the actions of the 'Arians'? The myth of Arianism as it appears in *On the Holy Church*, is referred to (albeit not by name) in the *Letter to Julius* (and indeed in Julius' own letter to the Eusebians), and is expounded in virtually all of Athanasius' subsequent works, is a myth with a seductive power which has scarcely been bettered by that of any other heresy. It was all too plausible. What better way for Athanasius and Marcellus to explain to themselves and everyone else the



murderous hatred of the Eusebian party, than to see it as nothing more nor less than the war of heterodoxy against orthodoxy? What better way to make

end p.191

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

sense of the alliance of Marcellus' theological enemies with Athanasius' political ones, than to see them all as part of the same heresy? Marcellus could persuade himself that his enemies were indeed, technically, 'Arians', and in the process associate them inextricably with the party and opinions condemned by the whole Christian world at Nicaea; Athanasius could indulge in the pleasure of seeing all his political enemies as theological pariahs, rather than merely the Alexandrian ones. The two bishops knew their enemies well enough to know that there were considerable theological and personal differences between them, just as there were between themselves. But why should they bother to distinguish them, when their enemies made no effort to distinguish themselves, but acted continually in political concert? If Marcellus and Athanasius can be convicted of less than perfect charity and generosity towards those who meant them and their allies harm, it could also be argued that the Eusebian alliance deserved their fifteen hundred years as 'Arians', if not in every case for their theological views, then at least for their political choices.

## 2. The Synod of Rome

In mid-March of 341, more than fifty bishops assembled in Rome, at the church presided over by the presbyter Vito, in the expectation of meeting with representatives from the East to try the cases of Athanasius and Marcellus.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> For the number of bishops and for Vito, see *Ap c Ar* 20.3.

The date can be narrowed down as follows. Easter was 19 April in Rome in 341.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> There are useful tables of Easter dates in Martin and Albert, 307–12.

Julius says that the Italian bishops arrived 'at the appointed time-limit' (τὸν ὁρισθὲν οἱ πρὸθεσμένον, Athanasius, *Apology against the Arians* 26.3) given to the Easterners to come to Rome for a synod. Because a time-limit for the Easterners of late April or early May would make nonsense of Julius' complaint that his presbyters were kept until as late as January (Julius' letter, in Athanasius, *Apology against the Arians* 25.3), the limit must have been before Easter. The Italian bishops would have had to be back at home by the 17th at the latest; assuming they were all within a week's journey of home (there were certainly fifty bishops within that distance of Rome by the fourth century), the synod would have had to be over by 10 April. On the other hand, Julius' presbyters are unlikely to have made the 2000-mile winter journey from Antioch, starting on 7 January, in less than two months. Julius' letter seems to imply (*Apology against the Arians* 21.4) that the presbyters arrived shortly before the Italian bishops assembled (which is plausible, since the arrival of the presbyters with the Eastern letters could scarcely have been concealed for a time if they had arrived after the Italian bishops



had already assembled) and that Julius kept the latter waiting a little in the hopes that the Easterners would arrive despite the refusal their letter gave. If so, the end of the προθεσμία must have been, as already proposed, about 15 March, giving a window of a little over three weeks for the synod itself, little enough time in the circumstances. The presbyters would have arrived a couple of days earlier; Julius cannot have kept the Italian bishops waiting for much longer than a week and still had time for the synod itself.

The Eusebian alliance, of course, had no intention of coming, as the Antiochene letter made clear. At this point in the proceedings, Marcellus left, before the Roman synod met without them.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Vinzent argues that the Roman synod was already over when Marcellus wrote (Vinzent, 'Gegner', 291 n. 25, 296 n. 44, 324–5), because Marcellus' letter is addressed directly to Julius rather than to a synod and his departure is only intelligible if his case has already reached a positive outcome (324). I would argue that a letter addressed to Julius is intelligible before as well as after the synod, and his departure before it is also intelligible, if he believes that without the Easterners there is no point in having the synod at all. On the other hand, why would Julius need a statement of Marcellus' orthodoxy if the synod had already exonerated him?

He may never really have expected his opponents to come; in any case, it seems likely that he left in horror and frustration after seeing their letter and hearing from the presbyters that he was now being peddled across the East as the worst of heretics. He knew that any synod which could now be held would be entirely incapable of reinstating him and Athanasius; he may well have been hastening to begin campaigning in Illyricum again against this new assault on his reputation. Probably at Julius' request, he left a statement of his own faith so that the synod which did meet could pronounce him orthodox, for what that judgement was worth; in addition, he asked that it should be sent with Julius' reply to the Easterners so that anyone who had merely accepted the Eusebians' account of his theology without knowing either him or them would have the opportunity to know better. Julius presumably did so, since Epiphanius got hold of a copy.

Julius put off showing the letter from the Dedication synod to the Italian bishops (Marcellus had clearly, from his letter, seen it already before he left) for as long as possible, hoping against hope that the Easterners would still appear, but was forced in the end to bring it forward for general inspection.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *Ap c Ar* 21.4.

He need not have been afraid of loss of face: the Italian bishops were indeed furious, but their wrath was aimed not at a man whose somewhat unrealistic expectations had assembled them on a fool's errand (as Julius must have feared), but at the insolence of the letter's authors.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> *Ap c Ar* 21.4–5.

We now come to two important questions: what the Italian bishops who did appear for the synod made of their task, now that so many essential parties had failed to come, and what formal decisions they took. Both of these questions are partly unanswerable, but insofar as they are answerable, their answers may be rather different from what they are generally assumed to be.

The second question is easier to address. The evidence available to us on the point derives from three sources: the documents of Serdica (mostly negative evidence and evidence from silence), Julius' letter to the Easterners, and Athanasius' description of the synod in *History of the Arians* (to which the two mentions in the main narrative of the *Apology against the Arians* add nothing, as we shall see). Debates over Rome's authority past and present have somewhat clouded this issue: commentators both for and against a wider authority for the bishop of Rome than simply in the affairs of his own see have used this synod as evidence for such authority being claimed at the time.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1984), 529, writes, 'Though nominally reporting a decision of a Roman council, Julius speaks from his own episcopal position...While the rest of Christendom was accepting a council of bishops, judicial or otherwise, as the voice of the Holy Spirit, the papacy was staking its claim to speak to colleagues on the authority of Peter and nothing else.' Hanson, *Search*, 272–3, laments the fact that 'a new and unpleasant aspect' had been placed on the controversy by 'the opportunism of Julius of Rome'. Louis Duchesne, *The Early History of the Christian Church, From Its Foundation to the End of the Fifth Century*, vol. ii. *The Fourth Century*, tr. Claude Jenkins (London: John Murray, 1912), meanwhile, asserts that 'the Council of Rome had quashed the Eastern decisions' (p. 173), and, though not without nuance, pronounces that on the whole 'the Pope was abundantly justified' (164).

In this they rather overestimate the weight of this synod's actions. In fact, it probably did nothing new in legal terms at all, beyond refusing to recognize the Dedication Synod's letter as valid evidence, and requesting Julius to write in reply to it from his own persona, which he did in terms which were far from being the extraordinary claim of Roman supremacy which they have sometimes been thought to be. It merely ratified practical decisions with regard to Athanasius and Marcellus which Julius had already made more than a year previously. If the synod of Rome did more than this, Julius was at some pains to conceal the fact from the Easterners.

Despite the fact that Athanasius himself, in characteristically wool-pulling manner, attempts to dress the synod's actions up as a full and final judgement on his case,<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> At the beginning of the *Apology against the Arians*, Athanasius expresses his astonishment that his case needs to be judged *again*, since it has already been judged many times: κέκριται γὰρ οὐχ ἓπαξ, οἱ δὲ περὶ ἄλλα καὶ πολλὰκις. πρῶτον μὲν < ἐν τῇ συνόδῳ > ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ χώρᾳ συναγομένῃ ὑπὸ ἐπισκόπων ἑγγίς κατ' αὐτόν, δεῦτερον δὲ ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ γράψαντος Εὐσεβίου καὶ κληθέντων αἰτῶντες καὶ ἡμῶν καὶ συναχθέντων ἐπισκόπων καὶ πλέον πεντήκοντα, καὶ τρίτον ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ συνόδῳ τῇ ἐν Σαρδικῇ συναχθείσῃ κατὰ πρόσταξιν τῶν θεοφιλεστῶν βασιλέων Κωνσταντίου καὶ Κωνσταντίνου ('For they ['the things concerning us'] have been judged, not once or twice but even many times—first in the synod in our own land which was attended by nearly a hundred bishops; and secondly in Rome when Eusebius had written and both they and we had been summoned and more than fifty bishops had assembled there too; and thirdly in the great synod which assembled in Serdica in accordance with the command of the God-beloved emperors Constantius and Constans'; *Ap c Ar* 1.2). This is sleight of hand. Although everything Athanasius says here is individually strictly true, several of his observations combine to give an overall impression which is false. An unwary reader, who balked at reading Athanasius' large dossier in detail, would assume the Eusebians, having been summoned to Rome with

Athanasius, were actually present among the fifty bishops who judged his case there. The mention of Constantius' part in bringing about the synod of Serdica conceals the fact that he never ratified the decisions to which Athanasius refers. And most importantly, the use of the verb κρίνω for all three occasions mentioned subtly suggests that each judgement is of the same weight, a full trial, rather than the local and provisional one which I will argue that the synod of Rome was.

his own writings (for Athanasius never actually lies, however

end p.194

---

Parvis, Sara, Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [195]-[199]

much he may suppress or twist information which is against his own interests) show how local was the scope of the synod's ruling, as Julius' letter shows how provisional it was. Athanasius speaks of the synod of Rome three times: twice in the *Apology against the Arians*,<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> *Ap c Ar* 1.2 and 20.3.

and once in the *History of the Arians*.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Hist Ar* 15.1.

For once, the *History of the Arians* account is the best. The synod at Rome, he says there, 'did not receive the Eusebians, as suspect and fearing to come, but also deemed the writings from them to be non-authoritative; but us they did receive, and lovingly shared communion with us'.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Τοὺς μὲν περὶ Εὐσεβίων, ὡς ὑπ' ὀπτους καὶ φοβηθέντας ἔλθειν, οὐκ ἀπεδέξαντο, ὁλλὰ κατὰ γραφὴν παρὰ αὐτῶν ἠκίρωσαν, ἡμὰς δὲ ἀπεδέξαντο κατὰ τὴν πρὸς ἡμὰς κοινῶν ἀν' ἡγήθησαν.

What it might have meant for the synod not to receive 'those around Eusebius', who were not present, is deliberately left unclear by Athanasius, but it was hardly a legal condemnation: αἱ περὶ Εὐσεβίων were not a legal body, and in any case, Julius could hardly have written to them by name as bishops if he had just taken part in their formal condemnation. The legally valuable part of Athanasius' information is twofold: he (along with Marcellus, as Julius tells us) was 'received' and his communion lovingly shared; the writings of the Eusebians (presumably the Dedication synod's letter to Julius) were set aside by the synod as inadmissible evidence. It is important to note both the scope of the synod of Rome's reception of the two bishops, and the reasons for the setting aside of the Dedication synod's letters.

Church practice was for all Christians to be accepted into local communion in foreign churches if they had the appropriate letters testifying to their being in good standing. Athanasius and Marcellus both had such letters:<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> See *Ap c Ar* 23.3-4.

Athanasius had the letters of the 80 bishops of the 338 synod of Alexandria (more numerous and more local than the bishops of Tyre), and Marcellus not only had letters in his favour, but was also well known to the local presbyters Vito and Vicentius, who had been present at Nicaea, as a defender of orthodoxy (against his current accusers). On the other hand, Julius had good reason to doubt the competence of the letters he had received claiming they had both been validly deposed.

When each of them arrived, three months apart, Julius and his Roman colleagues had to make an immediate decision on the very local question of whether or not to entertain them and communicate with them. This is not

'interfering in the affairs of the East': it is making a very necessary decision for the church of Rome. The Romans have only two choices: to communicate with Athanasius and Marcellus or to snub them. Julius felt that the epistolary evidence that Athanasius was in good standing with his local church was stronger than the evidence that he had been lawfully deposed from his see, so he communicated with him. In the case of Marcellus, there was the additional evidence of local church leaders speaking in his favour and against those who

end p.195

---

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

had deposed him, and the fact that Athanasius himself was in communion with him. To communicate with both was therefore a perfectly reasonable and coherent decision.

This decision had already been made. The Dedication synod's letter argues that it is the wrong decision. The synod of Rome has to adjudicate on this state of affairs, once again as a local question: should the Roman (and now Italian) churches remain in communion with Athanasius and Marcellus in the light of this new claim, from a larger Eastern synod, that the two have been validly deposed?

They have no choice, in doing so, but either to break off communion with Athanasius and Marcellus, or to reject the validity of the Dedication synod. They do the latter, on the grounds that the Dedication synod has itself snubbed both Julius and the Roman churches: its leaders have failed to attend the synod in Rome that they themselves had first proposed, they have ill-treated the Roman presbyters sent to them as envoys, and their letter is written in an insolent and insulting manner. Julius intimates that he does not accept the synod's validity by addressing his reply only to a few named individuals instead of to bishops throughout the East, but it is important to note that he remains (so far as he is concerned) in communion with the bishops to whom he is writing. The situation prior to the synod of Rome is therefore unchanged by the letters from Antioch: the synod of Rome has taken no action at all, other than to continue as before in communion with Athanasius and Marcellus, and to ignore the claims of the Dedication synod to have produced any arguments or evidence necessitating a change in that policy.

Julius' letter, however, shows that he considers the decision of the Roman synod to be neither final nor binding on anyone outside the local Italian churches. This is very clear from a cursory comparison with the rulings of the Western synod of Sardica. Julius' letter does not proclaim Athanasius and Marcellus to be officially restored to their sees, or anathematize their successors, or excommunicate their accusers. It merely denies, for the purposes of communion with the local Roman and Italian churches, that they have yet been validly condemned, without ruling out the possibility that they may be proved to be so at a later date. It may be noted that all the evidence Julius cites concerning Tyre is procedural, concerning the validity of the trial proceedings; he does not discuss the charges themselves.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>77</sup> See *Ap c Ar* 27.3–28.7, 31.

This is all that Athanasius himself, in his more exact moments, claims that the synod did—received him as a bishop, and admitted him to communion

and episcopal *agape*.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>78</sup> *Ap c Ar* 20.2; *Hist Ar* 15.1.

It 'judged' the case against him to be doubtful enough to need a further trial; it did not pretend, in the absence of the Easterners, to supply that trial.

end p.196

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Why the evidence against Marcellus had also been dismissed, and the synod which deposed him had been ruled to be invalid (Julius says of Marcellus as well as Athanasius that 'it was canonically and not unjustly that we held and maintained communion with them' and 'it is neither holy nor just to disown...those who have not been condemned')<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup> *Ap c Ar* 34.4 and 5.

is not quite so clear. Unless Athanasius has omitted some of Julius' letter, Julius himself makes no attempt to explain this move to his correspondents. This is probably because the original acceptance of Marcellus as orthodox had partly depended on the view that his accusers were heretical, which Julius was not at this point anxious to stress.

This is important to the first of our questions above, what the Italian bishops who appeared for the synod made of their task once they realized that the full-scale synod to try Athanasius and Marcellus they had envisaged could not now take place. The answer seems to be that, although they obviously knew they had no competence to restore the two bishops to their sees by themselves, they nonetheless had few doubts about the rights and wrongs of the question, or about who was responsible.

There are four reasons in favour of this view. Firstly, there is the fact that the Roman synod, for reasons not explained in Julius' letter, seems to have accepted without question the Roman churches' original decision to set aside as invalid the condemnation of Marcellus in Constantinople in 336. There are various ways this synod could have been argued to be invalid on procedural grounds. There were no Galatian bishops there, so far as we know from Eusebius, which was certainly irregular. Many of the bishops from nearby provinces who were (presumably) friends with Marcellus (the authors of the letters written in his support, for example) were not present, and presumably, as at Tyre, were not invited. Marcellus was given no chance to clear himself on any later occasion: even Paul of Samosata was tried three times before he was condemned. His doctrines were misrepresented to the Emperor, and things which he had written speculatively were taken as actual assertions.

Julius could have made any of these points; they would have been no more hard-hitting than the points he makes about Athanasius' case. At least two of them were made elsewhere, before and during Serdica.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> The Easterners at Serdica seem to be replying to such a defence when they state, '*Namque post unam et secundam multasque correptiones cum nihil proficere potuissent—perdurabat enim et contradicebat rectae fidei et contentione maligna ecclesiae catholicae resistebat—...omnes...actis eum ecclesiasticis damnaverunt*' ('For when, despite censuring him once, twice, many times, they were unable to accomplish anything—for he persisted and spoke against the right faith and through wicked strife opposed the Catholic Church—they all...condemned him by ecclesiastical procedure'; Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.3.3 (p. 51.1–7 Feder)). This hardly squares with the



facts as even the Easterners' letter itself gives them, that Marcellus was deposed after one single trial at Constantinople. The Westerners at Serdica, meanwhile, complain precisely that Marcellus was condemned out of context on the basis of speculative views misrepresented as his teaching (Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 45.1 = Theodoret, *HE* II.8.24 = Hilary, *FH B* II.1.6 (p. 117.5–8 Feder)).

His failure to do so

end p.197

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

suggests what other evidence confirms: that the case against Marcellus was not thrown out, either originally by the Roman churches or now by the synod of Rome, on procedural grounds, as Athanasius' was, but for other reasons, which could not diplomatically be dwelt on in Julius' letter. This suggests a conviction on the Roman synod's part that Marcellus had been condemned purely because he had earlier exposed his accusers' own heresy, and for refusing to communicate with the heretic Arius.

Secondly, there is the apparent failure even to consider the *Against Asterius*, on the basis of which Marcellus was condemned, as evidence against him that ought to be examined. This is clear from Julius' account, which merely mentions testimonies, oral and written, in his favour, and a further inquiry into his current beliefs, which he confirmed in writing and asserted that he had held for his whole life.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> See Julius' letter at *Ap c Ar* 23.3 and 32.2, with Marcellus' letter to Julius, p. 124.2–19 Vinzent.

Some criticism of this method of demonstrating Marcellus' orthodoxy must have reached the main players in the West, because the Western Synod of Serdica went out of its way to examine the content of the *Against Asterius* itself. But at Rome, the testimony in Marcellus' favour had clearly been strong enough to persuade the relevant parties that there was no case against this book that needed answering.

Thirdly, there is the testimony on Marcellus' behalf to which Julius refers. Vito and Vicentius were obviously prepared to testify strongly to Marcellus' orthodoxy at the time of Nicaea.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Ap c Ar* 32.2.

The synod of Rome took place in Vito's own church; it is clear that his voice had some weight at the synod, presbyter though he was. Vito and Vicentius could look back on the very beginning (so far as the West was concerned) of the controversy, sixteen years previously, and see the now beleaguered Marcellus as a bastion of orthodoxy at the height of his powers, while Athanasius was still a young deacon acting as secretary to Alexander. It is not difficult to imagine that they would have found his conspiracy theory entirely believable as an explanation for his deposition, especially after the depositions of so many others of the key players at Nicaea.

Finally, there is the fact that Marcellus himself makes the proven (at Nicaea) heresy of his accusers and his own refutation of them the central plank of his defence in his written statement of belief. As we have seen, he ascribes the statements condemned as Arius' in *Henos Somatos* to his enemies currently living, a tactic aimed at reinforcing their position as already ecumenically condemned in the Roman synod's eyes. This would dovetail neatly with the evidence of Vito and Vicentius, and probably also of those who had written in



his favour from Asia Minor, and with the suspicious insolence of the Dedication synod's letter and the Easterners' failure to appear. Marcellus' case for his own defence was probably as neatly sewn up, with all the

end p.198

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

supporting documents and testimonies, as Athanasius'. Like Athanasius' case, it was probably largely irresistible, in the absence of his opponents. And we know from *Against the Arians* that Athanasius was prepared to back Marcellus' theological story to the hilt, despite the fact that he had at the time a perfectly good case of his own without it.

The presence at the Roman synod of a number of other deposed bishops—at least four, probably including Lucius of Adrianople and Asclepas of Gaza,<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Athanasius, at *Ap c Ar* 33.1, names four provinces from which bishops came. See Opitz, note to p. 111.11 for identifications.

besides various presbyters from Alexandria and elsewhere—can only have added to the plausibility of the Arian conspiracy theory in the eyes of the Italian bishops, as in Julius'. Julius mentions no decision at all concerning these other figures, not even whether they were received into communion, though they surely must have been. But their tales of woe clearly added to the general feelings of outrage.

In the light of all of this, it should be recognized that Julius' letter really is enormously restrained, indeed, defensive. He makes no accusations against the Eusebian alliance which he cannot substantiate. He makes only the barest mention of 'Arianism', and that in the most oblique terms. He defends his own actions in calling the Easterners to a synod and in receiving Athanasius and Marcellus in the first place at great length and with great care. And finally, as mentioned, although he implicitly denies the validity of the Dedication synod, he writes to Eusebius and his friends as brothers, making it clear that, so far as he is concerned, he is still in communion with them. He leaves their conduct to God on judgement day (always the last refuge of powerless ecclesiastics), and makes one more futile plea for them to come to Rome for a proper synod. The probability that he was expecting his letter to be read by Constantius or one of his officers is high.

Finally, it is worth considering whether Julius was quite as convinced by Marcellus as he was by Athanasius. Leslie Barnard has pointed out that Julius is rather lukewarm in his defence of Marcellus,<sup>84</sup>

<sup>84</sup> L.W. Barnard, 'Pope Julius, Marcellus of Ancyra and the Council of Serdica: A Reconsideration', *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 78 (1971), 69–79 at 71–2.

compared with his ready defence of Athanasius, and compared with the strong support Marcellus seems to have received from the Roman synod in general, and though Barnard's insinuations regarding Marcellus' integrity are unnecessarily harsh, this difference is indeed palpable. His conclusion, that Julius was not entirely of one mind with the Roman synod in the case of Marcellus at least, cannot therefore be dismissed out of hand. At the very least, it seems that Julius was a cautious and balanced man, whereas caution and balance were to be very much absent from the debate over the next few years.

end p.199

---



---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [200]-[204]

---

### 3. The Road to Serdica

#### (i) *The involvement of Constans and the case of Paul of Constantinople*

We have now to consider another important question, although one that can probably only receive a speculative answer: how the youngest of the three brothers, Constans, now sole emperor of the West, came to be so interested in the ongoing Eastern ecclesiastical controversy that he was eventually prepared to threaten his brother with war on behalf of two of the exiled bishops.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.22.3–5; Sozomen, *HE* III.20.1; Theodoret, *HE* II.8.54–56; Philostorgius, *HE* III.12 (p. 43.1–7 Bidez).

The threat of war on his brother which Constans was prepared to make in 345 is so serious a political event that several commentators have doubted whether it actually happened: 'It is difficult to believe', Hanson says, 'that Constans would have been ready to plunge the Empire into civil war...for the sake of the restoration of a few bishops.'<sup>86</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Hanson, *Search*, 307; see also Schwartz, *GS* iv, 13 n. 1; Opitz's note to *Hist Ar* 20.2 (p. 193.14).

Hanson is right: it is far easier to believe, on the previous record of the house of Constantine, that Constans was ready to demand the restoration of a few bishops for the sake of plunging the empire into civil war; or rather, for the opportunity to lay claim to some of his brother's territory. Constantine, when still part of an imperial college, had used the wrongs of the Christian populace as an excuse to annex the remainder of the empire piece by piece;<sup>87</sup>

<sup>87</sup> See Barnes, *Constantine*, 70.

it would hardly be surprising if his son saw an opportunity to use the wrongs of Christian bishops to annex at least part of his brother's territory. Constans had gained the whole territory of his elder brother Constantine II after their civil war of 340; he may well have been hoping to provoke Constantius into a similar war. Constantius, held down in Antioch by his campaigns against the Persians, was wise enough not to be drawn in: he eventually reinstated the bishops rather than risk that war, but he viewed the bishops concerned with lasting resentment, and took his revenge on them when he had the opportunity.

The two bishops over whose reinstatement Constans was eventually prepared to threaten war were, significantly, Paul of Constantinople and Athanasius, the bishops of the two major cities just beyond the bounds of

Constans' territory,<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Klein, following a suggestion of Seeck, thinks that Constantinople belonged to Constans rather than Constantius till it was ceded in the winter of 339–340 (*Constantius II*, 76). But this goes against the evidence of Philostorgius, *HE* III.1<sup>a</sup> (p. 29.15–16 Bidez).

both of whom were powerful local political figures with a great deal of popular support. Magnentius, Constans' usurping successor, approached both in 350 (to Athanasius' embarrassment and Paul's downfall), obviously intending to continue Constans' policy by similarly engaging support in the two 'buffer zones' of Egypt and Thracia.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>89</sup> See Athanasius' laboured defence in *Ap ad Const* 6–12 and *Historia Acephala* 1.3. See also Barnes, *Athanasius*, 102–4 and 214–17.

Constans may

end p.200

---

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

have had some desultory interest in the capacity of Marcellus and the other bishops who were eventually cleared by (Western) Serdica to weaken Christian support for Constantius, but it was Athanasius and Paul who were at the heart of his policy of Eastern interference at last and probably also at first.

There are some signs that Constans had come to believe himself the true heir to his father, destined eventually to rule the whole empire as he had. He certainly seems to have copied a number of his father's acts: he insisted on a visit to Britain, where Constantine had begun his imperial career;<sup>90</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 225

commissioned copies of the Scriptures from Athanasius, as Constantine had from Eusebius;<sup>91</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Athanasius, *Ap ad Const* 4.2.

and sought to hold an ecumenical council headed by Ossius of Corduba which would produce a creed and settle the date of Easter. One of the letters which Constans sent Constantius urging him to allow a synod to be held, which is partially summarized for us by Theodoret, makes this connection explicitly:

Athanasius having gone to Constans (for Constantine the eldest had died in battle), he complained of the plots of the Arian phalanx and of the battle waged against the apostolic faith, and he reminded him of his father and of the great synod which he had assembled, and how he had confirmed by law the things written by those of the fellowship of the synod. These things about which he had been entreated raised the emperor to his father's zeal. For immediately having heard all these things he sent to his brother, exhorting him to keep the clarity of his father's piety unsullied; for he also, having seized the empire with piety, destroyed the tyrants of Rome and subjugated the barbarians round about.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Theodoret, *HE* II.4.4–5.

This letter may well have provided part of the charge of treason against

which Athanasius is attempting to defend himself in the *Apology to Constantius*; he is precisely concerned to claim that Constans wrote to Constantius *before* Athanasius ever met him in person, and that it was others who had requested a synod from Constans, not Athanasius.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Athanasius, *Ap ad Const* 4 (PG 25, 600D–601A).

It gives us a crucial insight into the thinking of Constans. The parallel between Constans' father's 'seizing the empire with piety', taking Rome from the tyrants, and Constans' own subjugation of the West, is clear, as is the implicit threat to take the East from his brother if that brother shows himself the harbourer of impiety.

Constans may have been reminded of the plight of Athanasius and Marcellus on a visit to Rome in 340 to celebrate his gain of the remaining territories of the West:<sup>94</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 225 with 315 n. 47.

he would have found them there celebrating the sacred mysteries along with Julius. He knew of it already: he had by that stage already received letters against Athanasius and Marcellus from the Eusebians three years earlier, and an envoy from at least Athanasius refuting their charges.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Athanasius, *Ap ad Const* 4.

But if he saw them in Rome, immediately after his victory over

end p.201

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

one of his two brothers, or perhaps was petitioned on their behalf in Aquileia or Milan, their case might have impressed him anew as a useful political lever over the other.

It may be, therefore, that it was as early as 340 that Constans became involved in the negotiations for an East–West synod. If he did intervene then, he had plenty of ammunition with which to work. He could plausibly have argued that the amnesty and return after Constantine's death had been granted by all three brothers together, and so Constantius should not rescind it by himself (the Eusebians' writing to Constans and Constantine II against the exiles had tacitly admitted this interest of the other two emperors). Athanasius and Marcellus had been deposed again after their return, it could be argued, by small, unrepresentative, partisan synods. Their cases should be examined by a much larger number of both Eastern and Western bishops, particularly since 'those around Eusebius', their accusers, were also suspect and had charges, including charges of heresy, to answer.

Constans' involvement at this stage would explain why Julius and the other Italian bishops were so sure the Easterners would come to the March 341 synod, even though Julius had been unsuccessfully inviting them to a Roman synod for the past three years. It would also explain why Constantius suddenly decided to call a very large Eastern synod in the winter of 340–341, when he had been content to have the exiles expelled by much smaller gatherings two years earlier; he was not prepared to accede to his brother's request for an ecumenical synod (yet), but holding a large synod of his own would be a fitting snub to Constans' pretensions. A charge that earlier synods had been unrepresentative had probably also struck home, and the advantage of emulating the splendour of their father's great

ecclesiastical gatherings was presumably not lost on Constantius any more than Constans. If Constans wrote to Constantius in May or June 340, Constantius would have received the letter in July, in nice time to convoke a rival synod for the following December.

The insolent letter of the Dedication synod to Julius refusing a Western synod and complaining of Western interference would then partly be Constantius' coded response to his brother. If so, however, Constans was not prepared to let the matter rest. The next dramatic Eastern ecclesiastical event after the abortive synod of Rome was the death of Eusebius of Nicomedia, followed by the attempt of Paul of Constantinople to return to his former see. Here, too, Constans' hand can probably be detected.

Eusebius died in November or December of 341,<sup>96</sup>

<sup>96</sup> According to Socrates, *HE* II.12.1, he did not live to receive the letter from Rome. but he must have been known to be mortally ill for some time, because Paul, exiled to Pontus at the time,<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 7.3. was able to consult Maximinus of Trier about the advisability of attempting to claim the see on Eusebius' death.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.27.7 (p. 66.30–p. 67.7 Feder).

Paul's case does not seem

end p.202

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

to have been taken up by the Roman party, despite the fact that he had been the first bishop of those who were eventually supported at Serdica to be deposed by Constantius, as early as the autumn of 337. He is nowhere mentioned by name in Julius' letter, as Athanasius and Marcellus constantly are, and it would seem extraordinary that he should be merely one of the bishops from Thracia mentioned in passing in Julius' last paragraph<sup>99</sup>

<sup>99</sup> In *Ap c Ar* 33.1.

(given that the stigma of causing Hermogenes' death still lay in the future). In any case, if he was one of these, Julius and the Roman synod apparently failed to espouse his cause: Julius addresses Eusebius of Constantinople as bishop, which would seem impossible if they had accorded Paul the same status they accorded Athanasius and Marcellus. It seems more likely that he was confined to Pontus by the terms of his exile, and unable to travel to the West.

The Easterners at Serdica, who dredge up every connection they can between their various enemies in order to discredit their communion with one another, do not link Paul directly to Julius or the Roman party, except by saying that Paul at one point condemned Athanasius (probably when still a presbyter).<sup>100</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.13.1 (p. 57.20–23 Feder).

Instead, they accuse two bishops only of supporting him before his disastrous return to Constantinople in late 341: Maximinus of Trier and Asclepas of Gaza. Maximinus in particular is accused of being the real cause of the huge slaughter in Constantinople, because he encouraged Paul to

return there and claim the see.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Hilary, *FH A IV*1.27.7 (p. 66.30–p. 67.7 Feder).

But why should Maximinus take it upon himself to encourage Paul to make such a hazardous move in the face of Constantius' known wishes? And why should Paul do so with no greater support than that of the bishop of a city over a thousand miles away in another emperor's territory?

Constans is very likely to have been operating out of Trier in the late autumn of 341 as he campaigned against the Franks. He presumably reached it by around mid-September, since he can be found at Lauriacum, halfway along the journey from the Balkans, on 24 June.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>102</sup> See Barnes, *Athanasius*, 225. This timing is based on Constantius' five to six months to make the similar journey from Rome to Sirmium in 357 (Barnes, *Athanasius*, 222).

He would have had plenty of opportunity before Eusebius' death to hear of Eusebius' illness and press Maximinus to encourage Paul to return to Constantinople, whether or not Paul was already touting for support, and whether or not he would ordinarily have been likely to look for it from the bishop of Trier.

We know very little about Paul's background, but it is likely to have been aristocratic, perhaps as aristocratic as Eusebius' own. He is described by Socrates as 'teacherly' (διδασκαλικός), and as 'young in age but advanced in understanding';<sup>103</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Socrates, *HE II*.6.3.

to have been elected bishop of the New Rome at that age, he is likely to have been well-connected as well as highly educated. Despite

end p.203

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

the little time he had previously held the see, he had wide enough support to hold the main church against Eusebius' followers, and even against the comes Hermogenes for a short time;<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> See Socrates, *HE II*.13.2–3; Sozomen, *HE III*.7.6.

since he had scarcely had time to build up a large popular following on his own in the three months or so he previously held the see, this support is likely to have been based on powerful connections among the local citizens. His exile to Pontus may have been to estates he owned there. But most importantly, he managed to escape capital punishment on two occasions when he had, from Constantius' point of view, usurped an extremely important office, including in one case being the cause of major civil unrest leading to the death of Constantius' own ambassador. These were extremely serious offences; Athanasius fears the death penalty for lesser ones alleged against him by the Eusebian alliance.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 3.5–7.

When Paul is finally executed in 350, the two methods used are classic ways of executing members of the aristocracy (often women) whose blood one does not wish to shed: starvation and strangling. As we know from Athanasius, even bishops of lower rank had theirs shed in abundance;<sup>106</sup>



<sup>106</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 12.1–2 and (less luridly) *Ap c Ar* 33.2.

it is Paul's rank, not his sacerdotal status, which sets him apart in this regard.

If Paul had the support both of at least some of the local aristocracy and their clients and of the Western emperor in returning to the see at Constantinople, his action begins to look slightly less foolish; with Eusebius' influence gone and his friends presumably in disarray, Paul must have imagined he could successfully present his election as a *fait accompli*, and persuade Constantius to bow to the inevitable. Constantius might have thought he could follow up Paul's move with military backing if necessary; unfortunately, he was then pinned down on the Rhine just as completely as Constantius was hemmed in at Antioch (indeed more so, since Constantius in the end expelled Paul from Constantinople in person), and considerably further away.

On Eusebius' death, events moved very quickly. Paul would have had to have been hiding near the city by that stage, ready to step in before Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, and their friends could definitively install a successor of their choosing. Paul was installed by 'the people' in the main church; Eusebius' old friends elected Macedonius, Paul's original rival, and installed him in the church of St Paul.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Socrates, *HE* 2.12.2.

As soon as the news came to Constantius in Antioch (fifteen days later, at normal post speed; the message may have been expedited due to its political seriousness, but the messenger would also have had to cross the Cilician Gates in winter conditions), he ordered the *magister equitum* Hermogenes, already on his way to Thracia with an armed force, to deal with the situation. Depending on where Constantius' messenger caught up with Hermogenes, he will have taken from one and a half to five weeks to arrive at Constantinople, where he set out to expel Paul

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [205]-[209]

by force.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>108</sup> This figure is based on a sustainable daily marching distance of twenty miles for Hermogenes' troops, and an expedited messenger speed of up to 100 miles per day, though faster speeds were possible in really urgent cases (see Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, esp. 188).

After a stand-off which is unlikely to have lasted long, Hermogenes made a violent move on Paul, a riot started, he was lynched, and huge numbers were killed; this took place in what was by now the consular year of 342. The news was not slow in coming to Constantius (an expedited message, relayed day and night, might have reached him in less than a week). He made a famously speedy winter journey himself to save the situation; he expelled Paul successfully and fined the city half its free bread ration.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>109</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.13.2–5; Libanius, *Or* 59.96–97 Foerster; Ammianus Marcellinus XIV.10.2.

On Paul's expulsion by Constantius, he immediately headed for Trier himself, where Constans still was. There Maximinus was 'the first to communicate with him'.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.27.7 (p. 67.2–3 Feder). For Constans' presence, see Barnes, *Athanasius*, 225.

And there he may well have stayed until after the synod of Serdica, at which he was not present.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 71, suggests that he was. But at Serdica Asclepas communicates with Paul by letter: see below.

Whatever the Western synod of Serdica thought of Paul's attempt to return to his see, however, and the fact that he is never mentioned by name in its documents speaks volumes, they reinstated him with the others, probably using his friend Asclepas' name as a kind of shorthand for 'Asclepas and Paul with whom he is in communion'. Again, Constans' support for Paul may have been important in achieving this; the Westerners were evidently not proud of this connection, which they carefully concealed in their encyclical letter, while the Easterners gleefully trumpeted it in theirs.

Paul attempted another return in late 344, being outwitted at that point by the praetorian prefect Philippus, who kidnapped him through the back door of an imperial bath-house and put him on a ship for Thessalonica before his supporters could wake up to what was happening.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>112</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.16, and Sozomen, *HE* III.9. On the date, see Barnes, *Athanasius*, 214–15.

Constans reacted swiftly; in spring 345 he threatened war on Paul's behalf, and successfully achieved his reinstatement. Paul was now finally able to occupy the see for more than a few months, remaining there until Constans' grip on his own regions faltered in 349. Paul was once again deposed and

arrested, and soon after Constans' death was himself executed.

All of this suggests that it was Constans who was Paul's chief supporter, and, conversely, that Paul was the bishop in whom Constans was most interested, and that for reasons rather more political than theological. Athanasius was prepared to bring Paul forward in his lists of wronged anti-Arian heroes, but he simply dwells on the wrongs done to him, rather than (as in the cases of Eustathius, Marcellus, and others) on any zeal of his for the truth.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>113</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 4–7; *De Fug* 3.

Marcellus may have been responsible for the recovery of Paul's body after execution, since

end p.205

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

he was buried in Ancyra,<sup>114</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Socrates, *HE* V.9.1.

but we have no record of their relations during Paul's lifetime. Other than Maximinus of Trier (who is likely to have been governed largely by the emperor's wishes in his dealings with Paul, since they all took place while the emperor was at Trier), Paul's main ecclesiastical champion seems to have been Asclepas of Gaza,<sup>115</sup>

<sup>115</sup> Hilary, *FHA* IV.1.20.3 (p. 61.23–30 Feder).

for reasons unknown: they may have had some personal or educational connection. But it was surely Paul's political clout, first and last, which rendered him a figure of such importance in the 340s. We know very little, if anything, about his theological views.

## *(ii) The Eastern delegation to Trier*

Constans, I have postulated, sent three letters to his brother demanding an ecumenical synod<sup>116</sup>

<sup>116</sup> That is, a synod representing both portions of the empire.

to re-try the cases of the Eastern exiles: the first in 340, to which Constantius replied by calling the Dedication synod of Antioch, and the third in 342, which brought about the synod of Serdica eighteen months later. The second would therefore have been sent in 341, shortly after the Easterners failed to attend the Synod of Rome, and Constantius' reply would have been the delegation of four bishops sent 'as if from a synod' to Constans' court in 'Gaul' (presumably Trier), bearing the so-called Fourth Creed of Antioch.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 25.1.

Athanasius tells us that this took place 'a few months' after the Dedication synod, which must mean at least seven or eight months, assuming that Constans was not in Gaul until the second half of 341,<sup>118</sup>

<sup>118</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 225.

and could mean over a year.

Athanasius tells us that 'a report of the synod of Rome came to

Constans',<sup>119</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 15.2.

hardly surprisingly, if he had been closely involved in encouraging Eastern attendance at it. It is likely that a fierce letter of Constans to his brother, dismissing the Dedication synod as led by Arians, was the result, because the deputation to which Athanasius refers has two characteristics: it was a deputation to Constans, rather than to the church leaders of the West, and the creed it brought addressed many (though by no means all) of the traditional criticisms of 'Arian' theology.

No doubt encouraged by Constans, Maximinus refused to welcome the four bishops—Narcissus of Neronias, Maris of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea, and Mark of Arethusa—who made up the embassy,<sup>120</sup>

<sup>120</sup> Named by Athanasius in *Syn* 25.1.

a move which went well beyond what Julius had been prepared to do. The Easterners at Serdica bitterly resented this action, not surprisingly: it was the first rejection of any of the Eastern bishops,<sup>121</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Throughout the following discussion of Serdica, 'Easterner' and 'Westerner' are used simply as designations for bishops from Constantius' domains on the one hand, and bishops from Constans' on the other. They emphatically do not designate Greek versus Latin churches: the churches of the dioceses of Macedonia, Dacia, and Illyricum are 'Western' under this designation.

as opposed to their theology, by the West.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>122</sup> The Easterners at Serdica singled Maximinus of Trier out for special condemnation, for this offence and for his dealings with Paul of Constantinople (Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.27.7 (pp. 66–7 Feder)).

end p.206

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Two interlocking questions present themselves: did this embassy take place before or after Paul's attempted return to Constantinople, and who was present at the court at Trier? On the one hand, a diplomatic overture from Constantius to Constans on the East–West ecclesiastical question might seem rather more likely before Paul's disastrous action than afterwards, particularly if Constans was harbouring Paul at court and treating him with the honours due to the legitimate bishop of Constantinople. On the other, there seems to have been a group of bishops gathered at Trier, since Athanasius speaks of the Fourth Creed's being presented to 'Constans and all who were there';<sup>123</sup>

<sup>123</sup> Athanasius, *Syn* 25.1.

this might well suggest that Paul and various others (presumably Asclepas and perhaps Ossius) were already at the court. In addition, despite the fact that at least three of the ambassadors were staunch supporters of Eusebius, the Fourth Creed is on the whole more conciliatory than the first two; we might expect this in the aftermath of Eusebius' death, when various powerful figures with different theological positions, including some more moderate ones, were jockeying with one another in the East.

It appears from Athanasius' account that the creed was drawn up by another synod, presumably also at Antioch. If so, a synod of a few important Eastern

bishops who desired to take stock of their position now that Eusebius was dead seems likely; we have no notice of another synod on the scale of the Dedication, and matters needed to move quickly.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Schwartz, *GS* iii, 322, and Klaus M. Girardet, *Kaisergericht und Bischofsgericht: Studien zu den Anfängen des Donatistenstreites (313–315) und zum Prozess des Athanasius von Alexandrien*, Antiquitas, Reihe 1, Abhandlungen zur alten Geschichte 21 (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt Verlag, 1975), 110, assume that the synod which produced the Fourth Creed was the Dedication, which Girardet (with some understatement) calls a 'Dauersynode'. Hanns Christof Brennecke, *Hilarius von Poitiers und die Bischofsopposition gegen Konstantius II*, Patristische Texte und Studien 26 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984), 21 with n. 18, argues (surely correctly) that it was an otherwise unknown synod.

Basil of Ancyra, for one, would have benefited from the position of his city on the main road through Asia Minor, just as Marcellus had; he would have seen the emperor passing through in both directions, and had the latest news of events in Constantinople. Maris of Chalcedon and Theodore of Heraclea were near enough to Constantinople to be apprised of events there in any case. All of these are likely to have returned to Antioch in Constantius' wake after Eusebius' death and Paul's expulsion, knowing that it was vital that the Easterners regroup as quickly as possible, and probably in Basil's case (and in Maris', perhaps) looking to change the direction of Eastern ecclesiastical politics somewhat. Narcissus and Acacius are also likely to have joined them, together with whichever of Flacillus or Stephen was currently the bishop of Antioch,<sup>125</sup>

<sup>125</sup> On the date of Stephen's election, see Burgess, *Chronography*, 240.

and presumably others. If they had not originally assembled at the request of Constantius, he made use of them for his reply to his brother's complaint concerning the Dedication synod, and as we shall see, effectively

end p.207

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

neutralized the power of the more moderate elements, who seem to have had an important part in drawing up the creed itself.

The authors of the Fourth Creed did not anathematize the teachings of Arius by name, significantly, but they did produce a creed which was far less Arian in feel than the First Creed of Antioch, as well as less Origenist than the

Second:<sup>126</sup>

<sup>126</sup> The text of the creed is given by Athanasius, *Syn* 25.2–5, and Socrates, *HE* II.18.3–6. I cite from the text given by Opitz (p. 251); there is also a text in Hahn and Hahn, 187–8.

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, the Creator and Maker of all things, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named. And in his only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who was begotten before all the ages from the Father, God from God, Light from Light, through whom all things came to be, things in heaven and things on earth, things visible and things invisible, who is Word and Wisdom and Power and Life and true Light, who in the last days for our sake became a human being and was born from the holy Virgin, who was crucified and died and was buried and rose from the dead on the third day, and was taken up into heaven, and took his seat at the

right hand of the Father, and is coming at the close of the age to judge living and dead and to repay to each according to their works; whose kingdom, being indissoluble, remains to the unbounded ages, for he will be seated at the right hand of the Father not only in this age, but also in the coming one. We believe also in the Holy Spirit, that is, the Paraclete, which he, having promised to the apostles, sent after his ascent into heaven to teach and to remind them of all things, through whom also will be sanctified the souls of those who have believed in him purely. But those saying that the Son is out of non-being, or from another hypostasis and not from God, and that there was a time or age when he was not, the catholic and holy Church knows as alien.

The composers of this creed have left room for both one-hypostasis and three-hypostasis theology.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>127</sup> On the traditions of one-hypostasis and three-hypostasis theology at this period, see Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, 35–46.

They confess one God the Father, but do not confess 'one Lord Jesus Christ', and certainly not the First Creed's *ἕνα θεόν...καὶ ἕνα υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ μονογενῆ*, one God and one only-begotten Son of God (who is, by implication, not God in the strict sense). Only scriptural titles are used for Christ (Word, Wisdom, Power, Life, and True Light), not the Second Creed's *ὅλος, τέλειος, and μῦνος* (whole, perfect, One), and the First Creed's will-language is likewise absent for the time being. The Son is not called the Father's image. The 'God from God, Light from Light' formula, already enshrined by Nicaea, is the least problematic of such formulae for a one-hypostasis theologian, since neither demands a hard separation of two distinct beings with boundaries, unlike the Second Creed's 'King from King, Lord from Lord'.

Nonetheless, some positions are still distanced or excluded. The Holy Spirit is described in terms to some extent similar to those of both the Third

end p.208

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Creed of Antioch and the Western Creed of Serdica: both Holy Spirit and the alternative name Paraclete are given, and the Spirit is described as being both promised and sent. Significantly, though, it is sent after the ascent into heaven (the Acts version, not the Johannine version, of the giving of the Spirit), which leaves room for a 'promotion' Christology such as that of Eusebius of Nicomedia's letter to Constantia, and the Spirit's main activity (sanctification) is pushed into the future. Unlike the Third Creed, the Fourth in no way links the sending of the Spirit with Joel 2: 28.

The only anti-heretical clause (other than the anathemata, which are all derived from the Nicene anathemata) is that which concerns Christ's kingdom. This is, in fact, a very interesting version of what would come to be a stock anti-Marcellan clause, because (unlike the version eventually adopted in the creed of Constantinople) it deliberately rules out a chiliastic notion of the Second Coming of Christ: he is firmly seated at the right hand of the Father both in this age and the age to come, not reigning with the saints on earth. As late as Methodius of Olympus and Lactantius, this had been a perfectly ordinary view in the Church; it seems only to have been the coming of Constantine which allowed the view to triumph that there was no further

scope for putting this world to rights.

Although this creed was reused on a number of occasions during the next twenty years, it was hardened up and made considerably more anti-Marcellan in a series of additional anathemas, beginning with those of the Eastern Creed of Serdica. Even at this point, however, it was a creed that Arius could happily have signed. Its repetitions of what look like three of the Nicene anathemas have slight but significant variations: *τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων τὸν υἱὸν ἢ ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως καὶ μὴ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἦν ποτε χρό*

*νος ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, ἀλλοτρίου οἴδεν ἢ καθολικῇ καὶ ἁγίᾳ ἐκκλησίᾳ.*<sup>128</sup>

<sup>128</sup> 'Those saying that the Son is out of non-being, or from another hypostasis and not from God, and that there was a time when he was not' (Antioch IV); 'There was when he was not', 'He came to be out of non-being', and 'from another hypostasis or ousia' (Nicaea). Nicaea rules out that the Son is a 'creation', 'changeable' or 'alterable'.

Nicaea had *ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν*, *ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο*, and *ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας*, shutting off possibilities which the authors of the Fourth Creed retain, as well as ruling out the words *κτιστός*, *τρεπτός*, and *ἀλλοιωτός*, about which the Fourth Creed is significantly silent.

The tacit admission in this creed that, if Arius' theology was acceptable, one-hypostasis theology was also within the bounds of reasonable Christian discourse, cannot have been aimed at Marcellus: the delegation can hardly have been prepared to readmit him to his see after all that had taken place over the past seven years. It is rather a recognition that one-hypostasis theology was common (indeed, normal) in the West.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>129</sup> See the 'Western' creed of Serdica.

In the abstract, the



---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006

pp. [210]-[214]

---

Easterners claim they can live with such a theology. This was a considerable concession for a group which included the triousian Narcissus of Neronias.

The choice of messengers was hardly conciliatory, meanwhile: Theodore and Maris had both been members of the Mareotis commission, and Narcissus was a long-standing enemy of both Athanasius and Marcellus. This suggests an embassy intended to be theologically acceptable but politically tough, which would address the charges of Arianism brought against those who had deposed Athanasius and Marcellus which had been so successful in winning over Western bishops, clearing the Eastern leaders of heresy and thereby showing that there was no need to retry the cases of Athanasius and Marcellus. This time, however, it was the Easterners' turn to suffer a rebuff. Constans was determined to press for a full joint synod of West and East. He evidently sent the Eastern delegation back from Trier to his brother in Antioch with the stern reply that nothing short of a full ecumenical synod would satisfy him.

Constantius, still under threat from Persia, was forced to give in to his brother's request for the time being, and resort to rather more subtle means to thwart his political plans. A military escort (the *comes* Strategius Musonianus, the eunuch Hesychius, and Athanasius' old sparring-partner Philagrius, formerly prefect of Egypt and future vicar of Pontica)<sup>130</sup>

<sup>130</sup> See *PLRE* i, 611–12 ('Strategius Musonianus'); 429 ('Hesychius 1', about whom nothing else is known); and 694 ('Fl. Philagrius 5').

was sent for the Easterners, who were to travel as a party, agree their strategy in advance, and assemble at Philippopolis, on Constantius's side of the border, for a final pre-synod synod to prepare their approach. Once in Serdica, they were to be kept in their quarters in the imperial palace under virtual house arrest. There was to be as little opportunity as possible for breaking ranks.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>131</sup> See esp. Hilary, *FH B* II.1.7.3–5 (119.5–121.9 Feder), and Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 15.4.

The Westerners fought harder to be free of the bondage of the imperial will,<sup>132</sup>

<sup>132</sup> See Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 15.3.

and succeeded in being allowed to leave any military escorts behind. Constans' support had been bought at a price, however, a price that more than one member of the 'Western' party would come to find embarrassingly high.

## 4. Serdica

(i) *The date of the synod of Serdica*

There has come to be virtually an absolute divide between German scholars and French, Italian, and English-speaking scholars as to whether to date the synod of Serdica to 342 or 343. The linguistic lines were less sharply drawn until relatively recently: Friedrich Loofs<sup>133</sup>

<sup>133</sup> See F. Loofs, 'Zur Synode von Serdica', *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 82 (1909), 279–97 (repr. in Loofs, *Patristica*, 173–88), at 294–5.

and Otto Seeck preferred 343,

end p.210

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Henry Chadwick initially accepted 342,<sup>134</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Henry Chadwick, 'The Fall of Eustathius of Antioch'.

as did W. Telfer,<sup>135</sup>

<sup>135</sup> W. Telfer, 'Paul of Constantinople', 77–80, 91–2.

and Marcel Richard produced one of the main arguments for the latter date.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>136</sup> Marcel Richard, 'Le Comput paschal par octaétérus', *Le Muséon* 87 (1974), 307–39, repr. in Richard, *Opera Minora* i, ed. E. Dekkers et al. (Turnhout: Brepols/Leuven: University Press, 1976), no. 21.

In the last twenty years or so, however, the respective dates have taken on the status of orthodoxy in the respective scholarly traditions.

Each side is convinced that the argument has long been settled in its favour, or at least ought to have been.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>137</sup> See the differing laments in Martin and Albert, 289, and Ulrich, *Rezeption*, 39.

In recent years, scholars have often resorted simply to giving their tradition's date without even indicating that it is in dispute.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>138</sup> See e.g. on the one side Seibt, *Markell*, 13, and Vinzent, *Markell*, p. xxii; on the other, Manlio Simonetti, 'Serdica II. Council', in *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, ed. Angelo Di Berardino, tr. Adrian Walford, 2 vols. (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1992), ii, 757, and Michael P. McHugh, 'Serdica', in *Encyclopaedia of Early Christianity*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 2nd edn. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 1034–5. A striking example is provided by Wilhelm Schneemelcher ('Serdika 342: Ein Beitrag zum Problem Ost und West in der Alten Kirche', in *Evangelische Theologie*, Sonderheft: *Ecclesia semper reformanda (Theologische Aufsätze, Ernst Wolf zum 50. Geburtstag)*, ed. W. Schneemelcher and K. G. Steck (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1952), 83–104, repr. in Schneemelcher, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament und zur Patristik*, ed. W. Bienert and K. Schäferdiek, Analecta Vlatadon (Thessalonica: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1974), 338–64). Schneemelcher nowhere adverts to the problem of the date, but does quote Loofs ('Das Glaubensbekenntnis der Homousianer von Sardika', *Abhandlungen der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Phil.-hist. Klasse (1909), 3–39, at 37), who favoured 343, on p. 99, including that date. His only comment is to add in brackets '(gemeint ist 342)'.

This is probably ultimately owing to the positions on the debate taken up by influential historians of the period in each language: it was the great German scholar Eduard Schwartz who first proposed 342,<sup>139</sup>

<sup>139</sup> Schwartz, 'Die Osterbriefe' = *GS* iii, 1–29, at 11, and 'Von Konstantius Tod bis

Sardika 342' = GS iii, 265–334, at 325–7.

followed by Opitz,<sup>140</sup>

<sup>140</sup> See Opitz's comment on Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 36.1 (p. 114.2 n.).

Lietzmann,<sup>141</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Hans Lietzmann, *A History of the Early Church*, iii. *From Constantine to Julian*, tr. Bertram Lee Wolf (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950 [German edn. 1938]), 199–200.

and Schneemelcher, while the French scholars Zeiller,<sup>142</sup>

<sup>142</sup> J. Zeiller, *Les Origines chrétiennes dans les provinces danubiennes de l'Empire romain* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1918), 228–31.

Bardy<sup>143</sup>

<sup>143</sup> Gustave Bardy, 'Sardique (Concile de)', in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* xiv (1939), 1109–14.

and Pietri<sup>144</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Charles Pietri, *Roma Christiana: Recherches sur l'Église de Rome, son organisation, sa politique, son idéologie de Miltiade à Sixte III (311–440)*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 224, 2 vols. (Rome: Écoles françaises de Rome, 1976), i, 212, with 212–13 n. 3.

held the line for 343, as did Simonetti. The lucid case presented by Hamilton Hess<sup>145</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Hess, *Canons of the Council of Serdica*, 140–4 (the detailed argument is not repeated in Hess's *Early Development*).

essentially convinced those of the English tradition to move back towards 343 (Henry Chadwick had retreated from support for 342 to agnosticism by the time of his influential first volume of the Penguin History of the Church),

while V. C. De Clercq<sup>146</sup>

<sup>146</sup> De Clercq, *Ossius*, 313–24.

made a similar case in America slightly earlier.

end p.211

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

German scholars may rightly claim that the combined weight of Schwartz, Opitz, Lietzmann, Schneemelcher, and, more recently, Brennecke,<sup>147</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Brennecke, *Hilarius von Poitiers*, 47 with n. 137.

should not be lightly put aside. They may also rightly point out that those who prefer 343 often have not really considered just how strong the argument for 342 on the basis of the Festal Index actually is, and just how ambiguous almost all the key pieces of evidence are. Nonetheless, I would still argue that, in the absence of unambiguous evidence for 342, the reasons for preferring 343 have the edge. It has not always been recognized as clearly as it ought to be by the 342 camp that the Verona Codex evidence is as ambiguous as the rest: it rests on a conjectural emendation, of a document which is doubtfully reliable in the first place. Richard Burgess has recently produced a satisfactory explanation of the original date on the document in question, which doubtless the 343 supporters will all find themselves entirely convinced by. But it is nonetheless important that both sides remind themselves of the equivocal nature of much of the crucial

evidence, and so I shall rehearse the key points again here.

Socrates and Sozomen both date the synod of Serdica to the consular year 347, a dating generally followed (with one or two exceptions, for example the Ballerini brothers) until the nineteenth century.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.20.4; Sozomen, *HE* III.12.7.

The publication for the first time in 1848 of the Athanasian Festal Letters together with their Index, which gives the consular date of 343 for the synod,<sup>149</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Martin and Albert, 240–6.

caused this date to be generally accepted thereafter until Schwartz argued in 1904 and 1911 that it should be 342. He did this on two major grounds: that the Festal Index, though it gives the consular year, is really based on the Egyptian year beginning on 29 August, and so events occurring in the autumn are chronologically a year out; and that the date of the synod of Serdica given in a short passage in the 'Collection of Theodosius the Deacon', which made no sense to him as it stood, could be plausibly emended to point to 342 but not 343.

The Festal Index entries number the years according to two different reckonings: the consular year and the indiction year, the year of the fifteen-year tax cycle. Until 333 the consular year is given first; after that, the indiction is given first. The question is, when the Index says of an event that it occurred 'in this year', does it mean the consular year from January to January, or the more generally used indiction year from summer to summer (roughly the same as the Egyptian year)?<sup>150</sup>

<sup>150</sup> For an explanation of the indiction cycle, see E. J. Bickermann, *Chronology of the Ancient World*, 2nd edn. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), 78–9. On the beginning of the indiction year in Egypt, see Roger S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 328–9.

The Index begins counting with the Egyptian year 44 of the Diocletian era (which began on 29 August 327).<sup>151</sup>

<sup>151</sup> For the following discussion, see Martin and Albert, 224–46.

This would suggest that it is indeed the indiction years which underlie the dating of the Index, particularly since a

end p.212

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

number of events which took place in the autumn are listed in the wrong consular year: Athanasius' exile in 335 and his return in 337 are listed in the consular years 336 and 338 respectively. If this were the Index's uniform practice, the date of Serdica (assuming it met in the autumn)<sup>152</sup>

<sup>152</sup> This assumption is based on the fact that the legates of Western Serdica were in Antioch around Easter (Athanasius, *Hist. Ar.* 20.2).

would certainly be 342. However, the situation is somewhat more complicated. In the case of Athanasius' return from his first exile, for example, the redactor ends up dating the death of Constantine in the wrong indiction year (11th rather than 10th) as well as the wrong consular year (338 rather than 337), presumably by calculating it relative to Athanasius'

November return, which has already perforce been dated to the wrong consular year. On the other hand, Athanasius' return to Alexandria after Serdica is dated to 24 Phoaphi (21 October), 4th indiction, 346 (Constantius IV Constans III), which was the correct year in the consular calendar, but not the correct indiction, which should have been the fifth.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Although the Index lists the two events in the same year, Athanasius did not return to Alexandria for over a year after Gregory's death in 345 (see Barnes, *Athanasius*, 91).

The evidence of the Index would seem to be that the indiction year was the one followed more often than not, but not invariably.

The synod of Serdica is dated by the Index to the 1st indiction, and the consular year of Placitus and Romulus (343). It should be noted that Serdica is more likely than most dates mentioned in the Index to have been dated by consular year, since its documents will presumably have been so dated, and since there was no departure of Athanasius from Alexandria or return there by him that year to mark it. Nonetheless, the evidence is, at best, ambiguous, and seems on the whole to tell rather in favour of Schwartz.

On the other hand, another piece of evidence from the Festal Index tells in the other direction. The Index tells us that Athanasius, returning from the synod of Serdica, spent the Easter of the 2nd indiction at Naissus, which suggests that the synod did not take place at the beginning of the 1st indiction eighteen months previously. The Index also tells us of three Festal Letters that Athanasius sent from abroad between Serdica and his return to Alexandria in October 346, which seems to fit with a date of 343, and tells us where he spent the first two of those three Easters: Naissus (returning from Serdica) and Aquileia. Schwartz and those who have followed him have argued that some letters are missing from the count anyway, and that Athanasius must have spent two Easters in Naissus or two in Aquileia, and the redactor has trimmed one or the other to make the evidence fit.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Schwartz, *GS* iii, 331.

This is certainly possible, but the evidence, straightforwardly read, here tells against their case.

Schwartz's case was also partly argued on the basis of a passage in the Verona Codex LX (58).<sup>155</sup>

<sup>155</sup> Published in Turner, *EOMIA* i.2.4, 637.

This is deemed to be the trump card by those who favour his

end p.213

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

date. Jörg Ulrich, in a recent restatement of the case for 342, claims that the information to be had from this passage, 'die eindeutig auf 342 weist, ist in ihrem historischen Wert klar höher zu bewerten als die Notiz aus Index 15'.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Ulrich, *Rezeption*, 43

Ulrich may want to revise the latter half of that judgement now that Richard Burgess has shown persuasively that the passage actually tells in favour of 343.

The passage under discussion, a brief note of the synod of Serdica, reads (in its entirety), '*Tunc temporis ingerebantur molestiae imperatoribus synodum convocare, ut insidiarentur Paulo episcopo Constantinopolitano per suggestionem Eusebii Acacii Theodori Valentis Stephani et sociorum ipsorum, et congregata est synodus consolat. Constantini et Constantini aput Serdicam.*'<sup>157</sup>

<sup>157</sup> 'Then the emperors were pestered to convoke a synod, in order that they might ambush Paul the bishop of Constantinople, by the suggestion of Eusebius, Acacius, Theodore, Valens, Stephen, and their associates, and a synod gathered in the consulates of Constantine and Constantine at Serdica' (Turner, *EOMIA* i.2.4, 637)

The consular years of Constantine and his son of the same name were 320 and 329, which are obviously impossible as dates for Serdica. Schwartz, like the Ballerini brothers before him, emended '*Constantini et Constantini*', to '*Constantii et Constantis*', but whereas the Ballerini had read '*Constantii IV et Constantis III*', or 346,<sup>158</sup>

<sup>158</sup> See PL 56, 146.

Schwartz read '*Constantii III et Constantis II*', or 342.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>159</sup> Schwartz, *GS* iii, 11.

Simonetti, following Zeiller, argued that even if the emendation of the Verona Codex text suggested by Schwartz is correct, it could well be based on a source which mentioned the synod as convoked in that year.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Simonetti, *Crisi*, 167 n. 12.

Annik Martin, in the critical edition of the Festal Index, points out that the Verona Codex account is part of a late fourth-century partial and ill-informed attempt, whose chronology is deeply unreliable, to show that the true incumbents of the sees of Constantinople and Antioch survived Arian persecution without ever being condemned by a real synod just as Athanasius did (hence the garbled account of Paul's role in the synod of Serdica).<sup>161</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Martin and Albert, 35–49.

But it is Richard Burgess who has been the first to produce a really satisfactory alternative to Schwartz's emendation.<sup>162</sup>

<sup>162</sup> Burgess, *Chronography*, 242–3.

He points out that if '*Constantini et Constantini*' is not emended, the last consular year with that title, 329, is the '2nd indiction' of the previous fifteen-year cycle to the one in which Serdica occurs. Now, the use of the indiction cycle for ordinary dating in Egypt, especially, is well attested in papyri, as well as in the Festal Index itself. It is very well adapted to dating during one person's lifetime; individuals and families are not likely to confuse events within the four or five cycles they might normally hope to live through. Beyond that, however, there is no way of distinguishing between one cycle and another, other than by collating a list of indiction years against some longer calendar.



---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [215]-[219]

---

The year of autumn 343–autumn 344 was, of course, the second indiction of the next cycle. Burgess suggests that the Greek original had only the indiction as its date, but when it was translated into Latin about 420 for the North African churches, some attempt was made to add a date more intelligible to the Westerners by calibrating it with a consular list. It would not really be surprising if the date was miscalculated at that point. None of the other fifth-century historians, after all, knew what the correct date of Serdica was, either.

This argument, it seems to me, is a better explanation for the dating *Constantini et Constantini* than Schwartz'. A miscalibration of indiction cycles is an easier mistake to make than rendering '*Constantii et Constantis*' as '*Constantini et Constantini*'. A sensible explanation of an unemended text must generally be preferable to an emendation. The Verona Codex, therefore, now tells for the autumn or winter of 343.

The rest of the evidence can be summarized more briefly. Marcel Richard pointed out that Rome seems to have moved for either Easter 342 or 343 from calculating Easter on the basis of an eight-year paschal cycle to calculating it on the basis on an 82-year cycle (Easter 342 coincided in all the cycles, so one cannot tell when exactly the change was made).<sup>163</sup>

<sup>163</sup> Richard, 'Le comput paschal', 318–27. See Turner, *EOMIA* i.2.4, 641–3.

He argued that a synod at Serdica in autumn 342 would be an attractive time and occasion for the change (or perhaps just before it, so Rome would have a long list of Easters ready to agree with the other churches). The 341 synod of Rome, however, would be an equally good venue for the change, which was clearly an internal Roman affair, since the new calendar in fact agreed with the Eastern systems less frequently than the old (though it was easier to use): a case in point is Easter 343, when the old calendar would have agreed with Alexandria, but the new one did not. The presence of Athanasius and Marcellus in Rome the previous Easter might well have galvanized debate on the issue. Although Serdica agreed a system to harmonize the date of Easter between Alexandria and Rome, Richard argued that this does not tell in favour of 343, because Athanasius' replacement Gregory would have had no incentive to adopt the new date; on the other hand, the compilers of the Festal Index had no incentive to adopt Gregory's date rather than Athanasius', either, since the two communities were not in communion.

The Easterners brought their own paschal calendar to Serdica, giving thirty years of Easters (two indiction cycles) from 328 to 357, along with a Jewish Passover calendar finishing up with Passover 343. Leslie Barnard argued that this evidence therefore favours that year.<sup>164</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Leslie W. Barnard, 'The Council of Serdica: Some Problems Reassessed', *Annuario Historiae Conciliorum* 12 (1980), 1–25.



As Sacha Stern has pointed out,<sup>165</sup>

<sup>165</sup> Sacha Stern, *Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar Second Century BCE–Tenth Century CE* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 75.

their aim seems to have been to show that they did not celebrate Easter according to the calculations of the Jews, against the ruling at Nicaea, as they had presumably been accused of doing (which was perhaps the pretext for the discussion of the date of Easter at Serdica). Stern argues that the Jewish dates are all retrospective, which indeed we would expect: there was nothing to be gained from citing future Passover dates, if such a thing were even possible in this system. Stern's analysis, therefore, certainly favours the list's having been drawn up some time after Passover 343.

end p.215

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Turning to other evidence in play, it must be recognized that the argument from Athanasius' *Apology to Constantius* 4 is ambiguous. Athanasius writes that 'after three years had passed, in the fourth year' Constans, then in Milan, wrote to Athanasius asking him to appear before him, at which point he told him that he had written to his brother asking for an ecumenical synod. The problem is the starting-point, which might in the context be Athanasius' arrival in Rome, his departure from Alexandria, or even his initial exchange of letters with Constans early in 338 (the ambiguity is probably deliberate). As Ulrich points out,<sup>166</sup>

<sup>166</sup> Ulrich, *Rezeption*, 40–1.

this means the meeting in Milan could have occurred in 341 (this is compatible with Constans' whereabouts in the first half of 341, certainly), which would leave plenty of time to gather the synod by autumn 342. On the other hand, a meeting this early (quite an attractive proposition, since it would be immediately after the failed synod at Rome) would fit perfectly well also with 343, if one assumes Constantius long continued to drag his heels over the proposed ecumenical synod.

One persuasive piece of evidence remains: the presence of the delegation from the Western synod of Serdica at Antioch in the spring of 344. Athanasius tells in *History of the Arians* 20 of the arrival of the Western envoys, Vincentius of Capua and Euphrates of Cologne, in Antioch, and of the plot of Stephen of Antioch against them. The plot, which misfired, leading to Stephen's deposition, was executed 'in the very days of the most holy Pasch' (20.3).

Shortly afterwards (ὁ λ' ι γ ο ν τ ι), Athanasius continues, Constantius stopped persecuting the followers of Athanasius (21.1). About ten months after that Athanasius' replacement Gregory died (21.2). The date of Gregory's death is fixed to 26 June 345 by the Festal Index.<sup>167</sup>

<sup>167</sup> Festal Index XVIII, in Martin and Albert, 244–7, with 76 and 293 n. 56.

Those who accept 342 as the date of Serdica must, therefore, either put the arrival of the envoys and the deposition of Stephen back to Easter 343, and explain away Athanasius' ὁ λ' ι γ ο ν τ ι, or find some way to explain the fact that the delegation from Western Serdica took an uncomfortably long time to arrive.

Schwartz, in 1935, adopted the former course,<sup>168</sup>

<sup>168</sup> Schwartz, *GS* iv, 13–14.

followed by Opitz<sup>169</sup>

<sup>169</sup> Opitz on *Hist Ar* 20.2 (p. 193.10 n.).

and Lietzmann.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>170</sup> Lietzmann, *Constantine to Julian*, 207.

He claims that the delegates were in Rome in the spring of 343, and that Athanasius' ἀλῖ γ ο υ τ ι actually lasted another eighteen

end p.216

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

months, until about September 344. Richard<sup>171</sup>

<sup>171</sup> Richard, 'Le Comput paschal', 322.

disagrees; he explains the hiatus by arguing that the delegates did not really come from the synod of Serdica as such, but were sent from Constans eighteen months later. He is right to note that only one of them, Vincentius of Capua, is listed as attending Serdica, as well as the significance of Constans' involvement, but there is still no real reason for the delay. Ulrich, meanwhile, claims rather implausibly that the handful of Western delegates and their imperial associates might have taken eighteen months to complete their journey to Antioch on account of Constantius' massive military

defensive measures against Persia in 343.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>172</sup> Ulrich, *Rezeption*, 44

It will be seen that there is a hiatus of eighteen months in all of these accounts. Now, when Socrates actually tells us that the synod of Serdica met one year and six months after it was convoked,<sup>173</sup>

<sup>173</sup> Socrates, *HE* II.20.6.

this would seem to be the most sensible place to locate it. It is easy to explain a delay before the synod. Constantius clearly had no desire at all to have such a synod held, and dragged his feet as far as he could. If it was convoked in April or May 342, this would not really leave enough time before the autumn for the Easterners to make the journey (one of the excuses for their not attending at Rome was the shortness of the time allowed).<sup>174</sup>

<sup>174</sup> Individual Eastern bishops could obviously easily have made the journey in six months, but it would not have been unreasonable to argue that that period was too short for them to receive the letters of convocation, make their arrangements, and undertake a journey from as far as the Thebaid to Serdica, if they wanted to travel together rather than sailing separately. The convocation of the Council of Ephesus, in 431, allowed six and a half months (19 November 430 to 7 June 431: *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, ed. E. Schwartz, i.1.1, 115.21–23 and 116.7–9), and the Antiochene bishops still managed to be late.

Once winter was reached in the calculation, there would be a strong argument, on Constantius' side, for not asking the Eastern bishops to set out until after the following Easter, and allowing again a good long time for the journey.<sup>175</sup>

<sup>175</sup> Ulrich points out (*Rezeption*, 43) that the Eastern bishops claimed to have

hurried (*'occurrimus'*) to Serdica *litteris imperatoris conventi* ('having been convoked by imperial letters'; Hilary, *FH A IV.1.14.1* (p. 58.3–4 Feder)). However, leaving aside the rhetorical exaggeration of the Easterners' Letter in general, how fast they had to travel depends on how late they left their departure, not on when the synod was convoked.

On the other hand, it is not easy to explain delay at the other end, either between the synod and the arrival of the Western delegates in the court in Antioch, or between that event and Constans' definitive threat of war. The timing of both these events was in the control of Constans, who had nothing to gain by losing the momentum in his battle of wills with his brother, and needed quickly to follow up his brother's outmanoeuvring of him at Serdica with further initiatives. Were all the other evidence neutral, these reasons for delay before the synod and speed after it would surely tip the balance in favour of 343. But now that Burgess has made sense of the Verona codex date, 343 is also indicated by the balance of the rest of the evidence.

end p.217

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

## (ii) The 'Eastern' party at Serdica

Virtually a complete list of names of the 'Eastern' party at Serdica survives, and something very close to an agreed number. This gives us, therefore, our most important snapshot of the Eastern political landscape (or at least that part of it governed by Constantius) since Nicaea itself. It also gives us, as we have partially seen, an important means of making sense of the composition of the Dedication synod two years earlier.

The Eastern bishops themselves claimed that they were eighty in number, while Socrates and Sozomen (presumably relying on Sabinus) reckon them as seventy-six.<sup>176</sup>

<sup>176</sup> Hilary, *FH A IV I.16.1* (p. 58 Feder); Socrates, *HE II.20.5*; Sozomen, *HE III.12.7*.

Seventy-four can be verified to have been present.<sup>177</sup>

<sup>177</sup> See Appendix Table 7.

The list of Eastern signatories given by Hilary has seventy-three names, of which two are a doublet (Eusebius of Pergamum appears twice), but it does not include Ursacius of Singidunum or Maris of Chalcedon, both of whom are otherwise known to have been present.<sup>178</sup>

<sup>178</sup> See Hilary, *FH A IV.3* (pp. 74–8 Feder) for the list of 73. For detailed discussion of the more problematic names of episcopal sees, see A. L. Feder, *Studien zu Hilarius von Poitiers II*, Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Phil.-hist. Klasse 166.5 (1910), 70–100, whom I have generally followed, except where indicated.

'Thelaphius of Chalcedon' is probably a parablepsis, concealing Maris' name and the actual name of Thelaphius' see.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>179</sup> Feder suggests emending 'Chalcedonia' to 'Calchida', Chalcis ad Belum in Syria.

Since two further Eastern bishops ('Arius of Palestine' and 'Asterius of Arabia') broke away and joined the 'Western' party,<sup>180</sup>

<sup>180</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar 46.3*; *Hist Ar 15.4*, 18.3.

it is not unlikely that they made up the original seventy-six in the Eastern party, of which eighty was a rounding up; otherwise, the figure seventy-six may include one or two who were left behind because of illness.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>181</sup> Hilary, *FH A IV.1.25.1* (p. 64 Feder).

Ten signatories did not provide the name of a see, an eleventh has probably been lost by the parablepsis suggested above, and in some other cases it is difficult to tell which of two or more cities of the same name is meant. Nonetheless, they yield in general a clear picture of the representation of the different dioceses and provinces in the party.

The Easterners themselves claimed to represent twenty-eight provinces: the Thebaid, Egypt, Palestine, Arabia, Phoenicia, Syria Coele, Mesopotamia, Cilicia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Galatia, Bithynia, Hellespontus, Asia, the two Phrygiae, Pisidia, the Isles, Pamphilia, Caria, Lydia, Europa, Thracia, Haemimontus, Moesia, and the two Pannoniae.<sup>182</sup>

<sup>182</sup> This list, the one Hilary gives in his *On the Synods*, accords better with the names of sees in the list of signatories he gives in *Historical Fragments* than with the list the Encyclical Letter itself gives (*FH A IV.1* (p. 49.1–7 Feder), which gives twenty-four provinces (Egypt, Moesia, and the Pannoniae are missing, and Phrygia is singular), and which includes, against all available evidence, Isauria. The *De Synodis* list still has its irregularities: none of the sees in the list of signatories seems to correspond to Mesopotamia, for example.

The majority of these provinces sent one or two bishops to the synod, or three at most. Egypt sent four bishops, including two Melitians and Ischyrus who had been

end p.218

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

victims of Athanasius' violence, but not including Gregory; Galatia also sent four, including Basil of Ancyra. Among the Oriens bishops were Stephen (the new incumbent of Antioch), Mark of Arethusa (one of the unsuccessful delegation to Trier), Eudoxius of Germanicia, Acacius of Caesarea, Macedonius of Mopsuestia (of the Mareotis commission), and Narcissus of Neronias. Other notable figures were Dianius of Cappadocian Caesarea, Maris of Chalcedon, Menophantus of Ephesus, Theodore of Heraclea, and two bishops from Western sees, the ubiquitous Ursacius and Valens.

Here again, as with Tyre and the Dedication synod, we must note that what looks to be a representative sample of Eastern opinion in general is, in fact, not so. As noted in the case of the Dedication synod, the incumbents of at least 268 sees in Constantius' regions were politically active in the years from Nicaea to Serdica. The Easterners at Serdica (excluding Constans' subjects Ursacius and Valens) represent just under 27 per cent of these. It might be argued that the number was probably partly controlled by the imperial invitations. But they do not even include a majority of the metropolitan bishops of the East: only eleven of the twenty-five provinces within Constantius' territory named by the synod (the Thebaid, Palestine, Arabia, Phoenice, Syria, Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, Pamphylia, Asia, and Thracia) sent their metropolitans, though the party would have had the firm support of at least one more in Gregory of Alexandria.

It is also vital to recognize that, contrary to common assumption, there is virtually no overlap at all between the bishops who attended Nicaea from

these regions and those who were part of the Eastern party at Serdica, other than among long-standing members and supporters of the Eusebian alliance. The two groups of bishops are otherwise demonstrably almost entirely different. This is statistically so surprising (we would expect about half to be the same, as we shall see) that it is very hard to believe that it is accidental.

The statistics speak for themselves. Out of more than 185 sees from the regions later governed by Constantius represented at Nicaea,<sup>183</sup>

<sup>183</sup> See Honigmann, 'Liste originale', 44–8. Other serious lists, probably of those who signed the canons but not the creed, would add perhaps another fifteen such 'Eastern' bishops to the Nicene total, once those Honigmann has identified as doublets are excluded. (Country-bishops are included in the total.)

forty were represented at the Eastern synod of Serdica.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>184</sup> Troas in Hellespontus and Amaseia in Diospontus, though they do not appear on the  $\lambda$  V list on which Honigmann's is based, appear in other Nicene lists and so are included in the total (cf. Gelzer, 233, 249).

(The corresponding figure for the West is five out of ten, if the Roman presbyters are counted as one.) Twenty-three of the sixty-three Eastern sees at Serdica whose names we know, in other words, or more than a third, had not been involved in the previous attempt at an ecumenical synod, and conversely, only a fraction of the Eastern Nicene sees were represented at Serdica.

This is an interesting picture in itself, but the figures become far more startling when we look at the number of individual bishops who attended

end p.219

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [220]-[224]

both synods, surviving the eighteen years from one to the other. There are only six out of the forty: Florentius of Ancyra Sidera in Lydia, Flaccus of Hieropolis in Phrygia II—if this is the same see as the Nicene Hierapolis—Narcissus of Neronias, Macedonius of Mopsuestia, Menophantus of Ephesus, and Maris of Chalcedon. Four of these are familiar fellow-travellers of the old Eusebian party.

Some comparisons may be helpful at this point. Of the forty sees represented at both synods, eight had been occupied at Nicaea by bishops whom we might consider to be within the Eusebian orbit.<sup>185</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Palestinian Caesarea (Eusebius), Epiphaneia (Amphion), Mopsuestia (Macedonius), Neronias/Irenopolis (Narcissus), Neocaesarea (Longinus), Cappadocian Caesarea (Leontius), Ephesus (Menophantus), Chalcedon (Maris) (see Chapter 2, section 1 (i) above).

The percentage of those with known connections with the Eusebian/Arian alliance whose sees were represented at both synods who survived in their sees alive and well from Nicaea to Serdica and attended both synods, in other words, is 50 per cent. This accords very well with other evidence of the life expectancy of adult males around this period.<sup>186</sup>

<sup>186</sup> For example, according to the life table, based on what is known as Model West, level 3, developed by A. J. Coale and P. Demeny, *Regional Model Life Tables and Stable Populations*, 2nd edn. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 43 (and cited by Bruce W. Frier, 'Demography', in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd edn, xi. *The High Empire, A.D. 70–192*, ed. Alan K. Bowman et al. (Cambridge: University Press, 2000), 787–816, at 789), the average life expectancy in the Roman empire for a male aged 40 would be 18.7 years—in other words, a male who celebrated his fortieth birthday during the Council of Nicaea would, on this model, have exactly a 50% chance of living to the end of 343.

The same is true of the much smaller sample of Western evidence: of the five Westerners whose sees are represented at both synods, two survived (Ossius of Corduba and Protogenes of Serdica), or 40 per cent.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>187</sup> The others are Alexander of Thessalonica, Cleonicus of Thebes, and Silvester of Rome (though the presbyters who had represented him were, in fact, both still alive, though not themselves at Serdica).

The percentage of those bishops who survived in the East who are not known to have been in the Eusebian orbit, however, is 6 per cent. Of the Nicene incumbents of the thirty-two sees represented at both synods who had no known Eusebian connection, only two were still in place at Serdica.<sup>188</sup>

<sup>188</sup> It may be worth considering also the statistics concerning the occupants of those sees whose bishops attended Nicaea who are known at the time of Serdica, even though they did not attend that synod. In the East, Patrophilus, who had attended Nicaea, was still bishop of Scythopolis, and the incumbents of Alexandria, Nicomedia, Nicaea and Jerusalem, all represented at Nicaea, are also known at the time of Serdica. Three were in the Eusebian orbit (Patrophilus, Eusebius, and Theognis), and two very much otherwise. Only Patrophilus survived the eighteen years, altering the



statistics of surviving Eusebians to five out of eleven, or 45.5%, while the percentage of survivors not known to be Eusebian-friendly now becomes two out of thirty-four, or just under 6%. In the West, meanwhile, it is reasonably probable from Athanasius' lists of bishops of Gaul and Cyprus in *Ap c Ar* 49.1 and 50.2 that Gelasius of Salamis in Cyprus and Nichesius of Douia in Gaul were still in their sees eighteen years after Nicaea (see Opitz's notes to p. 127 no. 96 and p. 131 no. 260), while Cyril of Paphos was not. This alters the Western survival statistics to four out of eight, or 50%.

Those who would argue that there was no systematic weeding-out of their opponents by the Eusebians between Nicaea and Serdica have some work to do to explain these figures. At the very least, it must now be admitted that,

end p.220

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

since only two of the bishops at Nicaea who might reasonably count as 'moderate' also attended Serdica, and only six bishops did so at all, the Eastern bishops at Nicaea and at Serdica are in effect two entirely different groups, and it makes no sense to consider them as having changed their minds or adjusted their positions between the one synod and the other.

Constantius presumably asked each province to send two bishops, since nearly all sent that number or more. (Constans may explicitly have asked for the same bishops who attended the Dedication synod to come to Serdica, though if so, some refused the invitation.) We can tell to some extent which provinces were most committed to the enterprise by noting which ones sent an above average number of bishops, their metropolitan, or both. These turn out to be in the main the same ones which had been led for some time by bishops within the orbit of the two Eusebii: Palestine (excepting Jerusalem), Phoenicia, Syria, Cilicia, Cappadocia, Diospontus, and Asia. Bithynia was less well represented than usual on this occasion, and Galatia was of course now thoroughly in the hands of Marcellus' enemies. Of those provinces which had been unrepresented at the synods of Tyre and Constantinople which condemned Athanasius and Marcellus, on the other hand (other than Galatia itself, naturally), most did not send their metropolitan. Isauria sent no bishops, Paphlagonia, Pisidia, and Caria sent one, and Lydia sent two. The two Phrygias (who had sent at least one representative to Constantinople) sent no metropolitan either, while other bishops sent letters of support to Rome on behalf of Marcellus and Athanasius.<sup>189</sup>

<sup>189</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 50.4.

Even Pamphylia, which sent Sisinnius of Perge and Eugeius of Licinia, also contained at least one bishop who ratified the Westerners' documents. Central Anatolia continued to keep its distance from the Eusebian party and its successors as far as possible, it would seem, though this was slowly breaking down.

It is not too difficult to determine who led the Eastern party. The Westerners condemned eight Eastern bishops (besides the three who had replaced Marcellus, Athanasius, and Asclepas in their sees), describing them as *auctores*, *primates*, or ἡγεμόνες since the deaths of the two Eusebii.<sup>190</sup>

<sup>190</sup> *Auctores* and *primates* (originators and leaders) in the Western letter = Hilary, *FH B* II.1.7.3 (p. 119.6 and 15 Feder); ἡγεμόνες (leaders) in Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 46.1.

These were Theodore of Heraclea, Narcissus of Neronias, Stephen of Antioch,



George of Laodicea, Acacius of Caesarea, Menophantus of Ephesus, Ursacius of Singidunum, and Valens of Mursa. George was not even present, so their condemnation is not simply a function of their roles at Serdica, but it seems likely that among them can be found the leader or leaders of the Eastern Serdican party. Of the remaining seven, Ursacius and Valens had been at the forefront of the assault on Athanasius at Tyre, and were singled out for particular condemnation, both theologically and politically, by the Westerners, probably because only they were actually vulnerable to immediate

end p.221

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

action by Constans. Theodore of Heraclea had been on the Mareotis commission, and was one of the group's leading theologians; Narcissus of Neronias was the only surviving member (assuming Asterius was by now dead) of the group whose theology Marcellus had originally attacked. The presence of Menophantus of Ephesus on the list is rather more surprising; although he had been at Nicaea, and was a 'disciple of Lucian', this is the first we hear of him as a front-rank opponent of Marcellus, Athanasius, and their allies.<sup>191</sup>

<sup>191</sup> Unless we read the list given in the Verona codex and in Theodore of those who wrote to Julius against Athanasius and Marcellus (and, here, Asclepas), which includes Menophantus of Ephesus and Stephen, not yet of Antioch; the names are absent from the version of the letter in Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 42.5. See the comparative edition in Feder, 106.

It is not the last, however: he can be found plotting the downfall of Paul of Constantinople (and probably also Athanasius) in 349, together with Theodore, Narcissus, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, and Eugenius of Nicaea.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>192</sup> Sozomen, *HE* IV.8.3–4.

It is Acacius and Stephen, however, who were probably at the forefront of the Eastern party at Serdica. Zeiller suggests Stephen as its leader, as bishop of the most prestigious see of those represented,<sup>193</sup>

<sup>193</sup> Zeiller, *Origines*, 231.

and it is certainly true that his name heads the list of signatories to the Easterners' letter. Stephen's career in the see of Antioch, at this point *de facto* capital of the East, was short, but he proved himself more than willing to act against the Western party by fair means or foul.<sup>194</sup>

<sup>194</sup> Stephen was to be deposed a year later for a plot to discredit the Western delegates to Constantius involving, as usual, a prostitute. See Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 20.3–5 and the circumstantial account in Theodore, *HE* II.9.3–10.1.

Acacius of Caesarea, meanwhile, had already shown himself a leading light of the Dedication synod, and would continue to be one of the most powerful, as well as the most divisive, bishops in the Eastern church for a long time to come.

In particular, one or both of these two must have written the vitriolic Easterners' Letter which is so useful for filling in some of the events of the previous seventeen years. It is written in the name of the whole party, but from a particular perspective. The writer makes plain that he did not take part in the original condemnations of either Marcellus or Athanasius: '*Magna*

*autem fuit parentibus nostris atque maioribus sollicitudo de supradicta  
praedicatione sacrilega [that of Marcellus]. Conditur namque in  
Constantinopolim civitatem sub praesentia beatissimae memoriae  
Constantini imperatoris concilium episcoporum';*<sup>195</sup>

<sup>195</sup> 'Great, moreover, was the anxiety of our parents and predecessors concerning the sacrilegious preaching spoken of above. For a council of bishops was arranged for the city of Constantinople in the presence of the emperor Constantine of exceedingly blessed memory' (Hilary, *FH A IV.1.3.1* (p. 50.18–21 Feder)).

*'una nobiscum audirent ea, quae a nostris patribus contra ipsos [Athanasius and Marcellus] in praeteritum fuerant iudicata.'*<sup>196</sup>

<sup>196</sup> 'They should hearken, as we do, to those things which were laid down in judgement against them by our fathers in the past.' (Hilary, *FH A IV.1.15.1* (p. 58.17–19 Feder)).

This is true of Acacius and Stephen and none of the other bishops condemned as the party's leaders: the others either are known to have attended

end p.222

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

the synod of Tyre or were at least bishops themselves at the time it took place. If '*parentes*' and '*patres*' are to be taken strictly, Acacius must be the author, since his predecessor Eusebius attended both the synod of Tyre and that of Constantinople, while Stephen's predecessor Flacillus was only at the former.

The other reason for thinking the author of the Easterners' Letter to be Acacius is the account it gives of Marcellus' theological deviance. Marcellus' view that Christ was made 'image of the invisible God' by the conception of his body is picked out as the crux of his heresy, together with his belief that Christ's kingdom would have an end. These are the same terms in which Acacius berates Marcellus' theology at the Dedication synod.<sup>197</sup>

<sup>197</sup> Hilary, *FH A IV.1.2.2* (p. 49.27–p. 50.3 Feder); Epiphanius, *Panarion* 72.6–10.

It is likely that the Eastern leaders, both ecclesiastical and civil, had prepared a series of spoiling tactics before they arrived, to ensure that the synod as such would never sit, or at least that it would never come to a conclusion. As it happens, their very first tack—refusing to come to the synod while the disputed bishops were allowed to celebrate communion— was successful. The Western party could not be brought to exclude Marcellus, Athanasius, and the others while their cases were deliberated on, since many if not all of them had evidently celebrated communion with them already. The Easterners' decision in this case was understandable enough, since to have celebrated communion with those they deemed to be properly deposed would have made it extremely difficult for them to have continued arguing their case thereafter. However, it should also be noted that it is not very likely that they would have gone ahead with the synod even if the Westerners had acceded to their request and excluded the exiles for the time being. On a later occasion, when Acacius tried the same trick, the synod of Seleucia agreed to expel all bishops whose status was in doubt, so as to be able to continue with the proceedings.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>198</sup> Socrates, *HE II.40.3*; Sozomen, *HE IV.22.11–12*. See Hanns Christof Brennecke,

*Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer: Der Osten bis zum Ende der homöischen Reichskirche*, Beiträge zur historische Theologie 72 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1988), 46.

He merely found other means of side-stepping the decisions of the majority, much to the irritation of some of his former comrades.

It is very likely that the same tactics were planned here. The Eastern leaders did reveal two more ruses with which they had come prepared: the proposal that the former Mareotis commission should revisit the site of Athanasius' alleged crime with an equal number of Westerners,<sup>199</sup>

<sup>199</sup> Hilary, *FH A IV.1.18* (p. 60.1–15 Feder).

and the need to depart for the East and congratulate Constantius as soon as he should report a victory over the Persians.<sup>200</sup>

<sup>200</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 16.2.

The Mareotis proposal, had it been acceded to, would have prevented any progress for a good six months, and the Eastern leaders would almost certainly have found reasons to leave

end p.223

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Serdica in the meantime. News of a victory over the Persians, meanwhile, could presumably have been had by the *comites* at any point required.

This was undoubtedly Constantius' policy; forced into an ecumenical synod he did not want by the politicking of a power-hungry younger brother, he had given his officials the task of making sure it never took place. At least two Eastern bishops, it appears, were all too happy to carry out their arrangements.

### (iii) The 'Western' party at Serdica

Athanasius claims that around 170 bishops from both East and West assembled at Serdica.<sup>201</sup>

<sup>201</sup> *Hist Ar* 15.3.

This accords well with the numbers for both. We know of a minimum of eighty-nine bishops who signed at least one of the various documents of the 'Western' party at Serdica, besides the representatives of Julius of Rome.<sup>202</sup>

<sup>202</sup> See Appendix Table 8. Feder (*Studien*, 49–50) reaches a count of ninety-seven, partly because he assumes the maximum possible number of bishops of the same name on the basis of the various lists. He also adds three more to these: Gratus of Carthage, Euphrates of Cologne, and Rheginus of Scopelus. It is not certain, however, that any of them was actually present. Gratus was certainly involved with Serdica in some way: Ossius refers to 'our brother Gratus' in one of the Serdican canons (Latin 8, Greek VII, Theodore 10), and the Easterners wrote to his rival bishop Donatus. Nonetheless, his business with the synod could easily have been done by letter, as Paul of Constantinople's was, and there is no evidence that he signed any of the synod's documents. Euphrates was a delegate to the East after the synod. Theodore claims he had been at the synod (*HE* II.8.54, II.9.5), but that could be mere inference. Athanasius (*Hist Ar* 20) claims that he was sent by the synod, but it is clear from Theodore that this was via Constans (then at Trier), since Euphrates and Vincentius had a military escort and bore a letter from Constans to his brother. It is likely, in fact, given the geography involved, that Euphrates was

Constans' own messenger to Serdica in reply to their inevitable tale of woe, who was charged by him to join with one of the synod's delegates and head East. Reginus of Scopolus is claimed in a Greek martyrology (*ActaSS* Febr. 25) to have attended at Serdica, but this also seems shaky evidence in the absence of a signature.

The evidence for these names, however, as for the actions of the Western synod in general, is extremely complex.

There are five extant lists of bishops who signed documents issued by the Western synod. The longest of these, given in Athanasius' *Apology against the Arians*, which purports to be a list of those who signed the main Encyclical Letter, contains seventy-seven names (plus Julius' representatives), unfortunately (and probably deliberately) with no sees attached.<sup>203</sup>

<sup>203</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 48.2.

Hilary gives a list of those who signed the synod's letter to Julius of Rome, fifty-nine or sixty in all.<sup>204</sup>

<sup>204</sup> Hilary, *FH B* II.4 (pp. 132–9 Feder). Fifty-nine or sixty because numbers 59 and 60 may be the same person: see Feder, *Studien* ii, 47, and Ulrich, 91 n. 404 and 93 n. 415.

Verona Codex LX (58) gives two more documents with names attached, the Letter of the Synod of Serdica to the churches of the Mareotis, with 27 names (hereafter list A), and a letter from Athanasius at Serdica to the same, with 60 (hereafter list B).<sup>205</sup>

<sup>205</sup> *EOMIA* i.2.4, 658 and 660–2.

At least the second list of signatures is not likely to belong to the letter to which it is appended, since it does not include Athanasius' own name (which the more general letter does), and on closer inspection is really two different lists (B1 and B2), since the first 18 names do

end p.224

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [225]-[229]

not have sees whereas the others do, and several of the first 18 names  
reoccur later in the list.<sup>206</sup>

<sup>206</sup> C. H. Turner himself makes this point: *EOMIA* i.2.4, 60, note to lines 3–18.

Most names, however, appear in no more than one of these three lists, A, B1, and B2; added together, they form a significant third list of seventy-five names, covering all but eight of the names in Hilary's list, and all but twelve of the names in Athanasius' list, while providing eight new names not in either.

Various different lists of the provinces the Western party claimed to represent can be found. The Verona codex<sup>207</sup>

<sup>207</sup> *EOMIA* i.2.4, 645.2–8.

gives Rome, the Spains, the Gauls, Italia, Campania, Calabria, Africa, Sardinia, the Pannoniae, Moesia, Dacia, Dardania, the other Dacia, Macedonia, Thessalia, Achaia, Epirus, Thracia, Europa, Palestine, Arabia. Athanasius' list adds Apulia, Noricum, Siscia (= presumably Savia), Crete, and Egypt, and replaces Europa with Rhodope.<sup>208</sup>

<sup>208</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 37.1.

Theodoret's list is identical to the Verona list as far as Thracia, again replaces Europa with Rhodope, but then continues with a list of Eastern provinces that is close but not identical to that of the Eastern gathering itself: Asia, Caria, Bithynia, Hellespontus, Phrygia, Pisidia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Cilicia, the other Phrygia, Pamphylia, Lydia, the Cyclades islands, Egypt, the Thebaid, Libya, Galatia, Palestine, Arabia.<sup>209</sup>

<sup>209</sup> Theodoret, *HE* II.8.1.

Hilary gives no list of provinces as such, but on the basis of those included in his list of signatories to the synod's letter to Rome,<sup>210</sup>

<sup>210</sup> Hilary, *FH B II* (pp. 132–9 Feder).

he would have the Spains, the Gauls, Italia, Tuscia, Campania, Apulia, the Pannoniae, Dacia, Savia, Dardania, the other Dacia, Macedonia, Thessalia, Achaia, Epirus, Thracia, Asia, Egypt, Galatia, Palestine, Arabia. List B2 would add Scythia Minor.

It is striking how close the Verona list in particular is to lists of Western provinces represented at Nicaea. The lists extant in the canonical collections give Rome (sometimes under the heading Italia), the Spains, the Gauls, Calabria, Africa, the Pannoniae, Moesia, Dacia, Dardania, Macedonia, Thessalia, Achaia, Europa, Gothia, and the Bosphorus.<sup>211</sup>

<sup>211</sup> See Gelzer, lists I–IV (Latin), V (Greek), VIII–IX (Syriac), XI (Armenian).

Eusebius of Caesarea renders Gothia as 'Scythia'<sup>212</sup>

<sup>212</sup> On Scythia and Gothia, see Knut Schäferdiek, 'Wulfila: Vom Bischof von Gotien zum Gotenbischof', *ZKG* 90 (1979), 253–92.

and adds (whether accurately or not is unimportant) Thracia and Epirus.<sup>213</sup>

<sup>213</sup> Eusebius, *VC* III.7.1.

Once again, it is likely that Nicaea is the model for Serdica in this (although influence by Serdica on the Nicene lists cannot be ruled out). The presence of the Campanian bishops at Serdica when that province does not appear on the Nicene list is easy to explain: they had presumably been at the synod of Rome and wanted to follow up the case. The province of Sardinia, meanwhile, is probably a scribal conjectural emendation of the second province of Dardania that appears in some Nicene lists.<sup>214</sup>

<sup>214</sup> Gelzer, lists II, V, and XI.

end p.225

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

If the lists of provinces resemble those of Nicaea, however, the same is obviously not the case with the numbers who attended from those provinces; more than five times as many attended at Serdica, for the obvious reason that the West could not risk being outvoted by the East. The ones and twos of Nicaea are replaced by six each from the Spains and (the north of) Italy, and twenty-eight from the diocese of Macedonia, together with smaller numbers from other provinces. At least forty-five were from Greek-speaking cities;<sup>215</sup>

<sup>215</sup> Protogenes of Serdica and Paregorius of Scupi should be added to Ulrich's list of forty-three (*Rezeption*, 92–3). As Ulrich notes, others with Greek names, particularly those with no sees attached, may also be from Greek-speaking parts, or at least be themselves Greek-speaking.

at least thirty were from Latin-speaking parts. It is possible that a number of those from the dioceses of Dacia, Thracia, and even Illyricum were bilingual, as Photinus of Sirmium, Ursacius of Singidunum, and Valens of Mursa clearly were.

The order of names in Athanasius' list, together with those which head lists A, B1, and B2, strongly suggests that the leaders of the Western party were Ossius, Julius' presbyters, Protogenes of Serdica, and Gaudentius of Naissus.<sup>216</sup>

<sup>216</sup> List A is headed by Ossius, list B1 by Protogenes, and list B2 by the Roman delegates and Gaudentius (*EOMIA* i.2.4, 658, 660).

These are all singled out for particular disapprobation in the Easterners' encyclical, together with Maximinus of Trier, who was not present.<sup>217</sup>

<sup>217</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.27.2 (p. 65.31–p. 66.2 Feder).

All but Protogenes were from Latin-speaking regions, but all must also have had some facility in Greek: Ossius had dealt extensively with Greek-speaking prelates in the past; one of the Roman presbyters, Philoxenus, was presumably of Greek antecedents; and Gaudentius came from so near the Greek /Latin border that he must have had some knowledge of both. The sub-groups assigned to them in the Verona list were all linguistically mixed. In any case, as Hess points out, if the whole council had met as planned, Greek speakers would have far outnumbered Latin speakers. The Latin



speakers, and especially their leaders, must always have been expecting to work to some extent with interpreters.<sup>218</sup>

<sup>218</sup> On the role of translators at the council, see Hess, *Early Development*, 120–3.

One final question which must be asked about the Western party at this stage, however, is just how united they actually were in general, quite apart from the linguistic divisions. First of all, the exiles themselves were now apparently very much at odds as to how to proceed, a disagreement no doubt caused above all by the death of Eusebius of Constantinople, which held out a hope that the ecclesiastical situation in the East might now be reversed if only the right actions were swiftly taken. Paul of Constantinople, and probably Asclepas with him, clearly favoured a political solution, built on the patronage and perhaps even the military aspirations of Constans. This was a very dangerous game indeed, as his disastrous pre-emptive return to Constantinople in late 341 proved, no less than his eventual fate. Marcellus

end p.226

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

obviously favoured a conciliar theological solution. He had never been happy with Nicaea, and now was his chance to revisit its agreement and have Eusebian theology condemned to its core for good and all. He had had enough, it would appear, of Athanasius' softly-softly approach, of toning down one-hypostasis theology and trying for the greatest possible theological consensus. Marcellus was in the mood to be radical again, and he would take with him as much of the West as he could.

Athanasius, a born politician with a very strong instinct for survival, was probably equally frightened by both approaches. Although he did write to Constans, his claim to Constantius that he had pinned all his hopes of reinstatement on the Church and stayed away from the court as far as possible looks to be largely accurate. At the very least, he left others to negotiate on his behalf, rather than pinning all his hopes on one monarch. Constans' espousal of his cause after the death of Constantine II shows how wise he was to keep that distance.

Athanasius also had no reason and no desire to see Nicaea superseded. He recognized that it would be potentially disastrous to allow it to be set aside. It is not unlikely that it was he who convinced Julius to take a strong line in this regard. And he could no doubt see very well from his double perspective as heir to the Origenist tradition and enthusiast for Irenaean incarnational theology that Marcellus was moving in a direction that a large section of the new generation of Eastern bishops would never be able to follow.

The Westerners themselves were not, apparently, unified either. Julius clearly had a high regard for Athanasius, and perhaps a slightly lower one for Marcellus; he never seems to have espoused Paul of Constantinople's case at all. He saw the task now as being to hold the Nicene line;<sup>219</sup>

<sup>219</sup> See the very defensive letter of Ossius and Protogenes to Julius (*EOMIA* i.2.4, 644), re-edited by Martin Tetz, 'Ante omnia de sancta fide et de integritate veritatis: Glaubensfragen auf der Synode von Serdika (342)', *ZNW* 76 (1985), 243–69, at 247–8, with textual commentary, 248–9.

he may well have been suspicious of Constans' motives by this stage. Ossius, despite having been appointed by Constans, was prepared to act with



deference towards Julius, and to show particular friendship to Athanasius. Nonetheless, he was clearly furious at the undoing of the condemnation of Arius, and seems to have been persuaded by Marcellus' case, as we shall see, on the matter of modifying the creed.

We know less about the churches in the dioceses which made up most of the 'Western' synod, those of Dacia, Macedonia, and Illyricum, than we would like, but we know enough to know that there had been some important theological and political differences there in the recent past, which continued in the next few years. Valens and Ursacius had not been the only supporters of Eusebius there. Alexander, the former bishop of Thessalonica, had been accounted so also, as had Cyriacus, former bishop of Naissus. Maximus, bishop of Salona in Dalmatia, is one of those handful

end p.227

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

of Western bishops addressed by name by the Easterners' Encyclical Letter in the expectation of a sympathetic hearing. Protogenes, the bishop of Serdica, had apparently signed against Marcellus on four occasions, although he was to show him strong support at the Serdican synod.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>220</sup> Protogenes joined in condemning Marcellus four times: Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.16.3 (p. 58.8–11 Feder); Protogenes and Cyriacus condemned Marcellus in synod in Constantinople: *FH A* IV.1.3.4 (p. 51.15–19 Feder).

Meanwhile, Sirmium elected Photinus, Marcellus' pupil, as its bishop some time before 345, and he had enough local support to survive two attempts to depose him before Constantius became master of the West. Gaudentius of Naissus, one of the leaders of the Serdican synod, had already defended Paul, presumably as he passed through on the way to Trier.<sup>221</sup>

<sup>221</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.27.2 (p. 65.31–p. 66.5 Feder).

Two other bishops, Dionysius of Elis and Aetius of Thessalonica, had been attacked (in Aetius' case) and deposed and restored (in Dionysius') by their current companions, as the Easterners gleefully tell us.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>222</sup> Aetius: Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.20.2 (p. 61.18–22 Feder); Dionysius: *FH A* IV.1.20.2 (p. 61.12–13 Feder).

It cannot, therefore, be assumed that the bishops of these regions were all ideologically, rather than opportunistically, wedded to the anti-Eusebian cause.

The enthusiasm of the bishops of the Gauls and of the Italian peninsula for the Serdican synod was not unbounded either, so far as we can tell. For whatever reason, Maximinus of Trier did not himself attend the synod; only one bishop from the Gauls did attend, Verissimus of Lugdunum, and he seems to have left early.<sup>223</sup>

<sup>223</sup> Verissimus' name appears in two of the Serdican lists, but on Athanasius' list he is included among those who signed the documents afterwards, not at Serdica itself (*Ap c Ar* 50). Another bishop, the intriguing 'Maximus of Gaul', communicated with the synod by letter.

Only eight bishops went from the whole of the Italian peninsula, in contrast to the fifty who had attended the synod of Rome, though the number may have been controlled. Three dissident bishops from Campania (one of whom had a rival bishop from the same see, Neapolis, in the Western party) and

the clergy of Rimini were addressed as supporters by the Easterners in their encyclical.

Paul of Constantinople did not attend the synod. The Easterners accuse the Westerners of communicating with him by letter through Asclepas.<sup>224</sup>

<sup>224</sup> Hilary, *FH A IV.1.20.3* (p. 61.27–30 Feder).

It is likely that this was a compromise to please Constans; there is no evidence that Western ecclesiastical leaders other than Maximinus of Trier, who was not present, ever took his case up of their own accord. Barnes is probably correct, however, in his assumption that Paul was exonerated by the Western synod, even though his name is not mentioned in any of its documents. The Easterners clearly believe him to be defended by the West, Socrates and Sozomen say that he was, Constans' demand for his restoration in 345 assumes that he was, and at the crucial moment in their encyclical the Westerners use a formula which covers him: *'carissimos quidem fratres et*

end p.228

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

*coepiscopos nostros Athanasium Alexandriae et Marcellum Ancyro-Galatiae et Asclepum Gazae et ipsos qui cum ipsis erant ministrantes deo, innocentes et puros pronuntiavimus'* (καίτοις οἱ αἱ ποιεῖς συλλειτουργοῦντας τῷ κυρίῳ in

Athanasius' Greek).<sup>225</sup>

<sup>225</sup> 'We have pronounced innocent and pure our most beloved brothers and fellow-bishops Athanasius of Alexandria and Marcellus of Galatian Ancyra and Asclepas of Gaza and those who with them were ministering to God.' Hilary, *FH B II.1.8.1* (p. 122.5–8 Feder); Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 49.

Asclepas, the Easterners tell us, communicated with Paul both before and after the latter's fateful return to Constantinople<sup>226</sup>

<sup>226</sup> Hilary, *FH A IV.1.20.30* (p. 61.23–30 Feder).

(he presumably accompanied Paul there), and had not ceased to do so by the time of Serdica; in pronouncing Asclepas' coministers innocent, the Westerners tacitly pronounced Paul to be so.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>227</sup> Indeed, the criminous and the innocent cannot remain in communion without guilt passing to the latter. See *FH Appendix (Liber I ad Constantium 1.5.2* (p. 184.10–13 Feder)): *'quibus qui communionem suam imprudenter et incaute commiscet, quia fient socii scelerum, participes criminum necesse est eos, qui iam in hoc saeculo abiecti sunt et abdicati, cum advenerit dies iudicii, pati supplicia sempiterna.'*

They may or may not have written to the church in Constantinople telling it to expect Paul when they wrote to the churches in Egypt, Ancyra, and Gaza. The Westerners' letter to Constantius is not specific either, merely asking that *'eos qui adhuc...aut in exilio aut in desertis locis tenentur, iubeas ad sedes suas remeare'*.<sup>228</sup>

<sup>228</sup> 'Those who are still held either in exile or in desert places, order that they may return to their sees.' Hilary, *FH Appendix (Liber I ad Constantium 1.4* (p. 183.17–20 Feder)).

Constans' letter a year later specified names, and included Paul's.

#### (iv) The 'Eastern' synod of Serdica

The ecumenical synod at Serdica was to treat with three matters afresh, which were probably detailed in the letters convoking the synod. These are summarized by Ossius and Protogenes in their letter to Julius as follows: firstly, concerning the holy faith and the integrity of truth, and how it had been violated; secondly, concerning persons who were said to have been wrongly deposed, that if they could prove it they should be justly confirmed in their positions; and thirdly, concerning the various injuries to the churches and their ministers which had been perpetrated.<sup>229</sup>

<sup>229</sup> Hilary, *FH B II.2.3* (p. 128.4–11 Feder).

The Eastern encyclical began by alluding to what are clearly the same three points, though disposed slightly differently: firstly, that the Lord's holy and catholic Church should everywhere preserve the unity of the spirit and the bond of love through right faith, free from all dissensions and schisms; secondly, that the rule of the church, and the holy tradition and judgements of ecclesiastical forebears, should remain firm and solid in perpetuity; and [thirdly] that there should be no violence caused by newly emerging perverse sects and traditions, particularly in the constituting or expulsion of bishops.<sup>230</sup>

<sup>230</sup> Eastern letter in Hilary, *FH A IV.1.1* (p. 49.8–21 Feder).

This agenda was probably set by the Westerners (in other words by Constans), since it corresponds to their concerns. As we can see from their

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [230]-[234]

encyclical, however, the Eastern leaders had no difficulty in reapplying it to their own view of things, turning the implicit charges against them on their heads. There was indeed a heresy threatening the sound faith of the Church, their encyclical asserts, but it was that of Marcellus, *haereticorum omnium execrabilior pestis*.<sup>231</sup>

<sup>231</sup> 'A plague worse than all heretics' (Hilary, *FHA* IV.1.2 (p. 49.23 Feder)).

He was rightly deposed for this, and it is those who communicate with him who are the harbourers of heresy. The one who is really guilty of using violence, including in appointing and deposing bishops, is in fact Athanasius; he too was therefore rightly deposed. All the exiles then brought about more violence when they returned. The judgements against them were just, and carried out by people who made a thorough investigation of the cases; keeping the canons demands that these judgements be respected and held to.

This strategy for responding to the three areas at issue at the synod had probably been worked out long in advance by the Eastern leaders; in some respects it repeats moves already made at the Dedication synod. The Easterners' Letter, in its wording and probably its views in general, represents the most radical wing of the Eastern party, as has already been argued. But there are also some indications of a more moderate approach, not in the Letter itself, but in the creed and anathemas attached to it, which are what the seventy-two bishops in Hilary's list actually seem to have signed.<sup>232</sup>

<sup>232</sup> The creed and anathemas are found in (1) Hilary, *FHA* IV.2.29.1–4 (pp. 69–73 Feder); (2) Hilary, *De Syn* 34; (3) Codex Veronensis LX (58). All three versions (together with a Greek retroversion from Schulthess' Syriac) are printed in parallel in Feder, though the Verona codex is here cited from Turner's edition in *EOMIA* i.2.4, 638–40.

These latter may also have been put together by the Easterners before they arrived in Serdica, suggesting that not all would have been happy with the way events were managed by their leaders in Serdica itself.

The creed itself is the comparatively conciliatory Fourth Creed of Antioch with its original three anathemas. In the version twice reproduced by Hilary in different translations, another six anathemas are added. It may be that we can discern beneath them two stages of composition, displaying at first a more even-handed approach, and later a further, somewhat more radical one.

The first four new anathemas make a neatly balanced chiasmus, suggesting that they were probably composed together. 'Likewise also those who say that there are three Gods, or that Christ is not God, or that before the ages he was neither Christ nor Son of God, or that Father and Son and Holy Spirit are the same, the holy and catholic Church anathematizes.'<sup>233</sup>

<sup>233</sup> Ὅμοιως καὶ τοὺς λέγοντας τρεῖς εἶναι θεοὺς, ἢ τὸν χριστὸν μὴ εἶναι θεόν, ἢ πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων μὴτε χριστὸν μὴτε υἱὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι θεοῦ, ἢ τὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα [ἀναθεματίζει ἡ ὁγία καὶ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία]. Greek drawn from Feder's reconstruction, pp. 72–3.

Two are correctives to parodies of Eusebian theology, anathematizing those who say there are three Gods or that Christ is not God (because not true God, presumably). These are balanced by two clauses anathematizing corresponding parodies of Marcellan theology: those who say that [Christ] is neither

end p.230

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Christ nor Son of God before the ages, or that Father and Son and Spirit are the same.

It might well have been one of the synods the Easterners held on the way to Serdica, of which Asterius of Arabia and Arius of Palestine told the

Westerners,<sup>234</sup>

<sup>234</sup> In the Western letter, in Hilary, *FH B II.1.7.4* (p. 120.3–4 Feder).

which chose the Fourth Creed as a basis for further theological negotiation and added these first four of the new anathemas. The emperors had given leave to debate everything '*de integro*', from the beginning.<sup>235</sup>

<sup>235</sup> Hilary, *FH B.II.2.3* (p. 128.4–11 Feder).

From at least Constans' point of view, this probably meant scrapping the Nicene creed also and replacing it with a new one, making him the new Constantine who would bring about a new, more successful theological unity throughout the empire. Julius of Rome had warned the Western leaders to hold firm to Nicaea,<sup>236</sup>

<sup>236</sup> See Ossius and Protogenes' letter to Julius, cited below.

but at least some of the Eastern party would have been very happy with such a rethinking of Nicaea, and may have meant the Fourth Creed to be such.

The last two anathemas were perhaps added at the final pre-synod synod in Philippopolis just outside Constans' territory.<sup>237</sup>

<sup>237</sup> Even this version does not seem to have been the final one. A version with further emendations appears in Latin in Codex Veronensis and in Syriac in Codex Parisinus syr. 62, given in a Greek retroversion by Feder (pp. 68–73)—which is a more persuasive text than the Latin (cf. Feder, *Studien I*, 22 ff.). This version makes several additions to the text Hilary translates, all connected with the Holy Spirit. The first two anathemas, dating back to the Fourth Creed embassy, become τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας, ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, ἢ ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ μὴ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ('those saying that the Son of God is from non-being, or that the Spirit is from another hypostasis and not from God'). In the new group of anathemas, those are anathematized who say ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσι θεοὶ ἢ ὅτι ὁ χριστὸς οὐκ ἐστὶ θεὸς ἢ ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμα οὐκ ἐστὶ θεοῦ, ἢ ὅτι πρὸ αἰώνων οἶδ' ὁ χριστὸς καὶ ὁ υἱὸς οἶδ' τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ. ἐστὶν ἢ ὅτι ὁ αἰτεῖς πατὴρ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἢ ἡ ἐκ νηητοντὸν υἱὸν ἢ γεννητὸν τὸ πνεῦμα ἢ ὅτι βουλῇ ἢ θελήματι ὁ πατὴρ ἐγέννησε τὸν υἱόν

ἥ ὅτι ἐποίησεν ἥ ὅτι ἐκτίσεν ἥ ὅτι προεχέρισεν ἥ ὅτι γινώμῃ γέγονεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, ἧς πάντα οἱ δε ἡμεῖς συντάττοντες πατρί, καὶ τοὺς πάντας ἀναθεματίζει ἡ ἁγία καὶ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία ('that there are three Gods, or that Christ is not God, or *that the Spirit is not of God*, or that before the ages neither is Christ also Son, *nor the Spirit of God*, or that Father and Son and Holy Spirit are the same, or that the Son is unbegotten *or the Spirit begotten*, or that the Father begot the Son by will or intention, *or that he is made or created or appointed*, or that the Logos of God, who knows all things together with the Father, came to be by a decision, all these also the holy and catholic Church anathematizes.'

They are woven grammatically into the previous four but without regard to their pleasing linguistic structure: ἥ [τοῖς λέγοντας] ἀγέννητον υἱόν, ἥ ὅτι οὐ βουλήσει οἱ δε θελήσει ἐγέννησε ὁ πατήρ τὸν υἱόν, ἀναθεματίζει ἡ ἁγία καὶ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία.<sup>238</sup>

<sup>238</sup> 'Or [those saying] that the Son is ingenerate, or that the Father did not beget the Son by will or intention, the holy and catholic Church anathematizes.'

These are particularly interesting for being addressed directly against the theology of Athanasius, the only apparent case of Athanasius' theology rather than his conduct being targeted by the leaders of the East. Athanasius had pronounced himself willing, in *Contra Arianos* I, to speak in certain qualified circumstances of the Son as well as the Father being ἀγέννητος;<sup>239</sup>

<sup>239</sup> See the cautious discussion in *Against the Arians* I.30–31, esp. 31.2. The ms. evidence fluctuates between ἀγέννητος, 'unbegotten', and ἀγεννητος, 'unoriginated', during this section, but though Metzler's text prints now one, now the other, the argument surely demands that the same term be used throughout, and the notion of begetting is central to the argument as a whole.

he had

end p.231

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

also attacked his opponents for seeing the Son as a product of the Father's will rather than coming from his essence.<sup>240</sup>

<sup>240</sup> *Con Ar* I.29.2: τὸ δὲ γέννημα οὐ βουλήσει ὑποκειται, ἀλλὰ τῆς οὐσίας ἐστὶν ἰδίον της ('But what is born is not subject to the will, but is proper to the essence').

This suggests that one move being considered by at least some of the Eastern leaders was an attempt, parallel to the successful invention of 'Ariomania', to invent 'Marcellomania' and to attack the Western party's leaders in general as heretics. In the end, this was not the path the Eastern encyclical took, preferring instead to isolate Marcellus, Athanasius, and their companions as distinct, unrelated cases, one of heresy, one of a campaign of violence, and the rest of canonical misdemeanours, and to attribute to their Western supporters naiveté, imprudence, and stubbornness rather than heresy (although the letter does break down at the conclusion into mudslinging against various Western leaders, charges against Ossius and his party of introducing heresy, and general excommunication). Although the final letter is anything but conciliatory, this comparative restraint may be the result of an agreed policy urged by some of the Eastern party to avoid a blanket condemnation of Egyptian and Western theology: one hypostasis language, for example, is not ruled out by the creed the Easterners signed at Serdica (indeed, is not explicitly ruled out even in the East until the creed of Nike in 359).



That there was a group on the Eastern side pushing for restraint, theological and probably also political, in dealing with the West, and that this group was known of and recognized by the West, is suggested also by some otherwise rather surprising omissions from the list of those anathematized by the West: neither Maris of Chalcedon nor Macedonius of Mopsuestia, both of whom had been on the Mareotis commission, were condemned by the Westerners, nor was Dianius of Caesarea, although they had all been addressed by Julius as leaders of the Dedication synod, and Maris had been one of those who wrote to Julius against Athanasius and Marcellus.<sup>241</sup>

<sup>241</sup> See above, Chapter 4, section 2 (i).

It is possible that Maris did not even sign the Eastern creed, or only signed through a proxy (if the name 'Thelafius of Chalcedon' is a substitute rather than a parablepsis). Macedonius was part of the delegation which took the 'Long-winded' Creed to the West in 345,<sup>242</sup>

<sup>242</sup> See Athanasius, *Syn* 26.1.

and Maris was present at the Constantinopolitan synod of 360,<sup>243</sup>

<sup>243</sup> See Brennecke, *Homöer*, 54.

but neither of them appears again on lists of those plotting against or hounding Athanasius.

Asterius of Arabia and Arius of Palestine (called Macarius, possibly an epithet, in the Westerners' encyclical letter,<sup>244</sup>

<sup>244</sup> In the version in Codex Veronensis (*EOMIA* i.2.4, 649.249).

no doubt for obvious reasons) give us a clue to the actions of this group. These two bishops escaped their

end p.232

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

virtual house arrest in the imperial palace and joined the Westerners' side, claiming that there were many who were 'of right faith' in the Eastern party,<sup>245</sup>

<sup>245</sup> Hilary, *FH B* II.1.7.4 (p. 121.6 Feder).

but had been persuaded through fear or promise of gain to remain. It is not difficult to see the success such measures would have had, with Maris, Macedonius, Dianius and also with the likes of Basil of Ancyra, who risked losing his see to Marcellus if he changed sides.

The intended ecumenical synod ran its predictable course. The Easterners arrived to find the Western party already holding debates and liturgies together, and refused to join them as long as the exiles were included in the latter. They retired to the imperial palace, where they were billeted, and shut themselves off, intermittently exchanging angry messages with members of the other party. The local populace were drawn in by the excitement (briefed by the Westerners, according to their opponents), and no doubt began campaigns of catcalling outside the Easterners' stronghold. Riots, as usual, threatened to develop.<sup>246</sup>

<sup>246</sup> For tumult in the city, see Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.19 (p. 60.28–p. 61.8 Feder).

Acacius of Caesarea, meanwhile, as argued above, perhaps together with



Stephen of Antioch, composed on behalf of the Easterners the defiant encyclical letter which describes these events, for which he may or may not have had the approval of his colleagues (it is possible that the creed and list of signatures appended to the encyclical were originally issued separately from it). Making the excuse of an Eastern imperial victory over the Persians, they withdrew once more to Philippopolis, inside Constantius' territory where they could be sure of cooperative imperial scribes and messengers, to publish their letter.<sup>247</sup>

<sup>247</sup> The sources for Philippopolis are conflicting. Socrates, *HE* II.20.9, claims that the Easterners held a separate council in Philippopolis from which they sent letters 'in all directions'; Sozomen, in *HE* III.11.4, makes Philippopolis a stop on the way to Serdica. There was probably business done there both going and returning. As Hess points out (*Early Development*, 110), the letter itself claims to be from Serdica, but its distribution is more likely to have been from Constantius' regions.

The letter was addressed to known dissidents in the West, and the main Eastern bishops who had remained at home. It wasted no time on defence of the Easterners' politics, much less their theology, but went on the attack from start to finish. It reiterated in still more strident tones the arguments of the letter of the Dedication synod to Julius, adding the claim that the Western bishops were trying to be the judges of the Eastern ones,<sup>248</sup>

<sup>248</sup> The 'Western' synod of Serdica did indeed go on to try to do this, although up until this point all that had been sought was an ecumenical synod that would include representatives from both halves of the Empire; but of course the 'Easterners', or the authors of their encyclical, were in the very process, *mutatis mutandis*, of doing the same.

and mocked the Western bishops for being taken in by Athanasius and Marcellus and now having to support them to avoid looking foolish themselves. It finished, after various sarcastic flourishes lampooning the Westerners' council itself, by deposing the bishops of Rome, Corduba, Serdica, Naissus, and Trier and

end p.233

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

all who were in communion with them – the entire West, in other words.<sup>249</sup>

<sup>249</sup> Hilary, *FH A* IV.1.24.1 (p. 63.23–28 Feder).

The author(s) claimed that the whole (Eastern) synod had ratified at least the depositions of these five named individuals, and left it to be understood that the further excommunication of all their allies was the synod's will also. It is rather to be hoped that, as at other points in the encyclical, its authors were exaggerating here; the acts of large meetings are normally unpredictable, particularly those in which feelings are running high, but it is difficult to imagine bishops from nearly every province in the East agreeing deliberately to split the whole church along imperial political lines in this way.

Constantius had more than achieved his ends by this outcome, at least for the time being. His brother was shamed and his pretensions well and truly snubbed; the Western church leaders were left stigmatized as country cousins too stupid and stubborn to know the difference between the true faith and heresy, or a worthy bishop and a sacrilegious thug. The Eastern encyclical's rhetoric was, it seems, particularly effective in this regard. It has left many a modern commentator, after all, apparently convinced of its case.

## (v) The 'Western' synod of Serdica

If the Easterners were confined together in the imperial palace, the Westerners seem to have slept, worshipped, and met in groups around Serdica.<sup>250</sup>

<sup>250</sup> On the arrangements in general, see L.W. Barnard, *The Council of Serdica 343 A.D.* (Sofia: Synodal Publishing House, 1983).

They were anxious to demonstrate their freedom from the kind of imperial oversight which burdened the East, and with good reason, if Constans was attempting to use the synod as a way to show himself another Constantine. For this reason, presumably, they left the imperial palace to the Eastern party (having arrived first, and being in their patron's own regions, they would have had the choice of accommodation), probably lodging with Protogenes, the Serdican clergy, and wealthy layfolk in the city. They worshipped at least part of the time in groups also: we know from a letter of his in Athanasius' *Apology against the Arians* that Ossius, at least, was given his own church in which to preside,<sup>251</sup>

<sup>251</sup> Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 44.2.

and Protogenes presumably continued to celebrate in the city's other principal church (there were at least two churches, both situated just outside the old city walls a few hundred metres from one another, in fourth-century Serdica).<sup>252</sup>

<sup>252</sup> L.W. Barnard, 'The Council of Serdica—Two Questions Reconsidered', in A. G. Poulter (ed.), *Ancient Bulgaria: Papers presented to the International Symposium on the Ancient History and Archaeology of Bulgaria*, 2 vols. (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 1983), ii, 215–31, at 216, and Barnard, *Council*, 46–9.

There were presumably other churches, too, in a city of Serdica's importance: the imperial palace, once one of Constantine's principal residences, may also have had a Christian building of some sort attached, which the Easterners could have used.

end p.234

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

### **Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345**

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [235]-[239]

---

The full synod, had it ever met, is most likely to have been intended to meet in the imperial palace, as with Nicaea. The full synod, however, may only have been intended to meet part of the time, perhaps even only at the beginning and end of its time in Serdica.

We can deduce from the three lists A, B1, and B2 identified in section (iii) above that the Western party met in three groups on at least one occasion, one important enough for each group to sign some document separately. These three groups, it has already been suggested, were headed by Ossius (A), Protogenes (B1), and Julius' presbyters together with Gaudentius of Naissus (B2). These same names appear together at the head of Athanasius' list, and also (other than Julius' presbyters, absent from the list because the letter being signed is to Julius himself) at positions which may make them the heads of three different groups in Hilary's list, suggesting that the leaders were invariable but the groups they led varied for different tasks.

It may well be that dividing the group in three had from the beginning been part of the Westerners' overall strategy both for ensuring freedom from too much imperial involvement and for breaking down the Eastern phalanx. Three more points are notable about both lists of groups (the Verona Codex groups and those identifiable within Hilary's list). The groups are flexible; those represented in Hilary's list are completely different from those in list AB1B2, and a few names also appear within more than one group in list AB1B2, suggesting that movement between the groups was allowed. Two groups, those led by Ossius and Protegenes, are notably smaller both times than the one led by Gaudentius: in list AB1B2, Ossius' group has twenty-six names, Protogenes' eighteen, and that led by Julius' presbyters and Gaudentius forty-one names, while in the three conjectural sub-lists to be found in Hilary, Ossius' group has fifteen, Protogenes' sixteen, and Gaudentius' twenty-nine. Finally, Athanasius, Marcellus, and Asclepas appear both times in either Ossius' or Protogenes' list, once in each, Athanasius both times in one and Marcellus and Asclepas in the other. It would appear, then, that two smaller groups met to deal with the cases of Athanasius and Marcellus and Asclepas, while the bulk of the synod considered some such problem as the iniquities of the Easterners, or possibly drafted canons to be presented to a plenary session led by Ossius.

The three groups may have met in the different churches presided over by their leaders (assuming that there was a third church somewhere used by Gaudentius and the Roman presbyters), or they may have met in civic buildings. In any case, their existence goes some of the way towards explaining why the Western Serdican documents exist in so many different versions, and in particular how the so-called 'Western creed' can be so conspicuously present in two versions of the Westerners' encyclical letter, and so conspicuously absent from the other two, or how the question of whether the Western synod did in fact officially issue the 'Western creed' could have come to be in such dispute.

## (vi) The 'Western Creed' of Serdica

Athanasius famously claims in the *Tome to the Antiochenes* 5 (PG 26, 800C), written in 362, that Serdica did not issue any official document about the faith:

And, indeed, prevent the memorandum much talked about by some, as put together in the synod at Serdica concerning the faith, from being read or brought forward at all. For the synod defined nothing of such a sort. For some, on the one hand, did hold it fitting to write concerning the faith, on the grounds that the synod of Nicaea was deficient, and indeed rashly tried [to do so]; but the holy synod which gathered in Serdica, on the other hand, was vexed, and defined that nothing more was to be written concerning the faith, but that one was to be satisfied with the faith confessed in Nicaea by the fathers, because it lacks nothing, but is full of piety, and that it was necessary that a second faith not be put forth, in order that the one written in Nicaea not be reckoned as being incomplete, and an excuse be given to those who want to write and to make definitions concerning the faith many times.<sup>253</sup>

<sup>253</sup> κατὰ θρυληθὲν γούνην παρὰ τινων πιπτάκιον, ὡς ἐν τῇ κατὰ σαρδικὴν συνόδῳ συνταχθὲν περὶ πίστεως, κωλύετε καὶ ἄλλως ἀναγινώσκεσθαι ἢ προφέρεισθαι. αἰδὲν γὰρ τοιοῦτον ὤρισεν ἡ σύνοδος. Ἡρώσαν μὲν γάρ τινες, ὡς ἐνδεοῦς ὁ ἰσηστη-κατὰ νικαίαν συνόδου, γράψαι περὶ πίστεως, καὶ ἐπεχειρήσαν γε προπετω-ς. ἡ δὲ ἁγία σύνοδος ἢ ἐν σαρδικῇ συναχθεῖσα ἠγανάκτησε, καὶ ὤρισε μηδὲν τι περὶ πίστεως γράφεσθαι, ἀλλὰ ἄρκεισθαι τῇ ἐν νικαίᾳ παρὰ τῶν Πατέρων ἡμολογηθείσῃ πίστει, διὰ τὸ μηδὲν αἰτῆ- λείπειν, ἀλλὰ πλήρη εἰσεβέας εἶ- ναι, καὶ ὅτι μὴ δεῖν δευτέραν ἐκτίθεσθαι πίστιν, να μὴ ἢ ἐν νικαίᾳ γραφείσα ὡς ἀτελής οὖσα νομισθῇ, καὶ πρόφασις δοθῇ τοις ἐθέλουσι πολλάκις γράφειν καὶ ἠριζεῖν περὶ πίστεως.

This account is in some contrast to a fragment preserved in the Verona codex, here in C. H. Turner's version:

Ossius and Protogenes to our most beloved brother Julius. We remember and hold and have that writing which contains the catholic faith made at Nicaea: and all the bishops who were there consented. But since after this the disciples of Arius moved blasphemies; for three questions were moved: that there was when he was not...a certain argument compelled, lest anyone deceived by these three arguments should deny the faith and their spoil be excluded, and lest it happen, to set forth a wider and longer [faith] agreeing with the former, in order that there be no reproach, we signify to your goodness, most beloved brother. They were pleased that the former things be firm and fixed, and that these things be more fully declared with a certain sufficiency of truth: so that all teaching and catechizing may become clear and those who object might be overthrown, and hold the catholic

and apostolic faith.<sup>254</sup>

<sup>254</sup> EOMIA i.2.4, 644. *Dilectissimo fratri Iulio Osio et Protogenes. Meminimus et tenemus et habemus illam scripturam quae continet catholicam fidem factam apud Niceam: et consenserunt omnes qui aderant episcopi. Sed quoniam post hoc discipuli Arrii blasphemias commoverunt; tres enim questiones motae sunt: quod erat quando non erat;...ratio quaedam coegit, ne quis ex illis tribus argumentis circumventus renuerit fidem et excludatur eorum spoliū et ne fiat, latiore et longiore exponere priori consentientem ut igitur nulla reprehensio fiat, haec significamus tuae bonitati, frater dilectissime. Priora placuerunt firma esse et fixa, et haec plenius cum quadam sufficientia veritatis dictari: ut omnes docentes et caticizantes clarificentur et repugnantes obruantur, et teneant catholicam et apostolicam fidem.*

Hanson sees this as irrefutable evidence that Athanasius is a liar;<sup>255</sup>

<sup>255</sup> Hanson, *Search*, 304 with n. 105.

the synod did decree something beyond what was composed at Nicaea, as its presidents make clear in their letter. That 'something' is the continuation of the

end p.236

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

Westerners' encyclical letter which is generally known as the Western Creed of Serdica, which is to be found in two versions, a Latin version in the Verona codex<sup>256</sup>

<sup>256</sup> EOMIA ii.2.4, 651–3.

and a Greek version in Theodoret's *Ecclesiastical History*,<sup>257</sup>

<sup>257</sup> Theodoret, *HE* II.8.37–52.

of which the Latin is not a translation. On the other hand, the same encyclical letter (again in a Latin and a Greek version neither of which is a translation of the other) can be found without the Western Creed in

Athanasius' *Apology against the Arians*<sup>258</sup>

<sup>258</sup> Athanasius, *Ap c Ar* 42.1–47.6.

(composed 349<sup>259</sup>

<sup>259</sup> At least that would seem to be true of this stratum of that multi-layered work: see Barnes, *Athanasius*, 194–5, for a complex analysis more convincing than Opitz's assumption that the work is a literary unity, written in 357 (note to *Ap c Ar* 1.1 (p. 87)).

) and Hilary's *Historical Fragments*<sup>260</sup>

<sup>260</sup> Hilary, *FH* B.1.1–8 (pp. 103–26 Feder).

(356<sup>261</sup>

<sup>261</sup> Brennecke, *Hilarius*, 310, however, argues against the widely accepted 356 and in favour of 357.

). At the very least, therefore, Athanasius disowned the Western Creed, if it was the Serdican synod's official creed, long before 362. Athanasius' version has a valedictory sentence from Ossius where the creed begins in the other versions, while Hilary has a different valediction and 'explicit'. Both authors make it clear that no continuation of the letter should follow.

But is it possible that this radical ambiguity about the status of the 'Western Creed' goes back to the synod itself? Did Serdica itself in some sense disown its so-called creed? This has to be considered at least a possibility.<sup>262</sup>

<sup>262</sup> This is argued by Tetz, 'Ante omnia de sancta fide'. As usual, his case is made with great insight but slightly over-ingenious textual proposals. Ulrich (*Rezeption*, 100–6) has rightly pointed out various problems with Tetz's case, but rather underestimates the evidence that Athanasius was beginning to distance himself from Marcellus by the time of Serdica.

First of all, we should note the apologetic tone (in both senses) of Ossius and Protogenes' letter. It looks as though they have received an angry letter from Julius, presumably prompted by a report from someone at the synod, either his presbyters or (not implausibly) Athanasius, asking why the faith that was drawn up at Nicaea has been laid aside. They protest that all those at the synod still hold that faith, but that this is a clarification of it.

Secondly, we should look at the position that emerges if the isolated paragraph that survives in the Verona codex is considered as the opening of the letter to Julius given by Hilary, which lacks an opening paragraph. If they are put together, the text continues (probably concluding the opening paragraph), '*Quod semper credidimus, etiam nunc sentimus; experientia enim probat et confirmat, quae quique auditione audivit.*'<sup>263</sup>

<sup>263</sup> 'What we have always believed, we now still give as our sentence; for experience puts to trial and confirms what someone has heard with hearing' (Hilary, *FH B II.2.1.1* (p. 126 Feder)).

It then goes on to talk in rather oblique terms (probably in response to Julius' letter) about Julius' excusable absence in body from the synod, while present by concord of mind and will, calling Julius, as in the address of the Verona letter, '*dilectissime frater*' ('most beloved brother'). At the end of this paragraph comes a key sentence:

end p.237

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

*'hoc enim optimum et valde congruentissimum esse videbitur, si ad caput, id est ad Petri apostoli sedem, de singulis quibusque provinciis domini referant sacerdotes.'*<sup>264</sup>

<sup>264</sup> 'For this will seem to be best and most fitting, if the priests of the Lord from every single province refer to the head, that is to the seat of Peter the Apostle.'

If this sentence still refers to the 'Western Creed', then it may mean to give Julius the casting vote in the matter. (This is not out of keeping with the role Ossius accords the see of Rome in the canons of Serdica, which allow for final appeal to Rome on disciplinary matters also.)<sup>265</sup>

<sup>265</sup> On the complex question of the textual tradition and juridical force of these, see Hess, *Early Development*, 179–200.

In other words, it may in effect represent Serdica's official renunciation of the 'Western Creed', if Julius has indeed insisted on this. On the other hand, if it is responding to an objection of Julius', it may merely be a reassurance of the honour intended towards him, by stressing that the 'Western Creed' is not meant to supersede the Nicene formula, without actually intending to nullify what the synod has already passed. Without Julius' letter, it is impossible to tell.



It is quite possible, however, that the situation was left ambiguous. Athanasius (and, presumably, Julius) might deem the creed not to count among the official documents<sup>266</sup>

<sup>266</sup> The Western party at Serdica produced a considerable number of documents, besides issuing a series of synodal canons, themselves also fraught with problems. Nine are at least partly extant: the Encyclical Letter (in four versions, two Greek and two Latin, all four related but at least partially independent of one another (the Encyclical Letter is *CPG* 8560 and the attached statement of faith *CPG* 8561)); the beginning of the letter to Julius of Rome from Ossius and Protogenes (in Latin in the Verona codex, also summarized in Greek by Sozomen, *HE* III.12.6; *CPG* 8566); what purports to be a letter to Julius from the synod (in Latin, in Hilary's *Fragmenta Historica*; *CPG* 8564), which may, in fact, be most of the rest of the letter of Ossius and Protogenes to Julius; five letters to Egyptian churches (the synod's letter to the church at Alexandria (*CPG* 8562 = 2123.3), the synod's letter to the bishops of Egypt and Libya (*CPG* 8563), Athanasius' letter to the church at Alexandria (*CPG* 8567 = 2111), the synod's letter to the churches of the Mareotis (*CPG* 8565), and Athanasius' letter to the churches of the Mareotis (*CPG* 8568 = 2112), the first two in Greek in Athanasius' *Apologia contra Arianos* and the remaining three in Latin in the Verona codex); and the synod's letter to Constantius (in Latin in Hilary's collection; *CPG* 8569), as well as twenty-one canons (*CPG* 8570). In almost every case, the letters appear to be translated from the language they are not in; all four versions of the encyclical must have been translated at least once, and the Verona codex documents are probably a Latin translation of a Greek translation of a Latin document, possibly itself a translation of a Greek original.

(although he retained a copy in the Alexandrian archives, which found its way in Latin translation into the Verona Codex), but Marcellus and Asclepas<sup>267</sup> and, through them, the Eustathian churches at Antioch,

<sup>267</sup> Ulrich (*Rezeption*, 106) plausibly suggests that Theodoret derived his copy of the encyclical with the 'Western Creed' attached from the library of the Eustathians in Antioch.

might take a very different view. At the very least, there is good reason to suppose that Athanasius himself took no part in drawing up the 'Western Creed', always disapproved of its existence, and perhaps took a prominent role in undermining it at Serdica itself.

Athanasius had a strong motive for upholding the theology of Nicaea: it was very close to his own theology.<sup>268</sup>

<sup>268</sup> See above, Chapter 2.

In addition, he could probably see very well even as early as 343 that holding Nicaea as non-negotiable was the best

end p.238

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

chance of thwarting all attempts to circumvent it. If the 'Westerners' at Serdica admitted it to be in principle revisable by adding to it themselves, they would be conceding to their opponents a large patch of their own remaining defensible ground. At Rome, Athanasius had managed to persuade Marcellus not to go beyond that theology, or at least the theology of *Henos Somatos* and the Nicene anathemas, even though it was not entirely Marcellus' theology and did not guard against what Marcellus saw as some of the most dangerous tendencies of Eusebian theology, above all the three hypostases. At Serdica, however, there was no holding Marcellus back, and he seems to have been supported by most of the synod.

The 'Western Creed of Serdica' has long been recognized as Marcellan in its



theology, but has generally been ascribed to Ossius and Protogenes, by dint either of assuming Marcellus' theology to be fairly widespread (Loofs, Gericke),<sup>269</sup>

<sup>269</sup> Loofs, 'Glaubensbekenntnis', 37–8; Gericke, 19.

or of assuming Ossius and Protogenes to be particularly gullible (Hanson).<sup>270</sup>

<sup>270</sup> Hanson, *Search*, 303–4, notes some terminology characteristic of Marcellus in the creed, but concludes, 'Whether the profession is influenced by Marcellus or not cannot easily be determined.' He thinks, however, that 'there can be no doubt that Ossius and Protogenes were the authors (or main authors)' (304 n. 105). He adds, 'Declercq's defence of Ossius here...is very lame.'

As Klaus Seibt has pointed out, however, it is not merely the creed's one-hypostasis theology which resembles Marcellus': from its use of language, it is unmistakably either the work of Marcellus himself or deliberately modelled on his thought.<sup>271</sup>

<sup>271</sup> Seibt, *Markell*, 143–4 n. 133.

Phrases that can be paralleled in *Against Asterius* abound. The pair μονογενῆ and πρωτότοκον (Only-begotten and First-born) are taken and distinguished from one another, just as in *Against Asterius* (Re 3 Kl 3 S /V 10 P 4), and the second defined as πρωτότοκον ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν (First-born from the dead), and first-born of the new rather than the first creation, as there. The singling out for particular condemnation of the exegesis of John 10: 30 ('I and the Father are one') as meaning one διὰ τὴν συμφωνίαν καὶ τὴν ἁμῶν (because of harmony and concord) matches the long section from the *Against Asterius* lambasting this view (Re 63 Kl 72 S /V 125 P 86; Re 64 Kl 73 S /V 74 P 87), and the same counter-argument is used, that human beings are said to be in concord precisely because of the possibility of their also having quarrels and disagreeing with one another. The phrase προσήνεγκε τῷ πατρὶ ἑαυτοῦ δῶρον, ὃν ῥέλευθῆρωσεν,<sup>272</sup>

<sup>272</sup> 'He presented to his own Father as a gift the one whom he had made free.'

though it does not appear in any of the extant fragments of the *Against Asterius*, is absolutely characteristic of Marcellus' soteriology, which comprises both the Word's action of freeing humankind from slavery to the devil by the Resurrection (Re 96 Kl 107 S /V 80 P 111), and the bringing of redeemed humanity represented by his own body to the throne of God at the Ascension, to sit at the right hand of the Father (Re 114 K 127 S /V 84 P 116). Finally, in discussing John 17: 21 ('That they may be one in us'), the Creed makes a

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [240]-[244]

distinction: ἀκριβῶς διέσπειλε τὴν θεῖαν φωνή...οὐκ εἶπεν...,<sup>273</sup>

<sup>273</sup> 'The divine voice defined precisely...he did not say...'

just as Marcellus distinguishes τὸν σωτη-ρα ἀκριβῶς [λέγειν] προσήκει...οὐ[κ]

...φησιν (Re 65 Kl 74 S /V 75 P 88).<sup>274</sup>

<sup>274</sup> 'It is fitting that the Saviour says precisely...he does not say...'

Ἀκριβῶς ('precisely') is indeed one of Marcellus' favourite words in discussing either scripture or doctrine.

The target of the 'Western Creed' is the Fourth Creed of Antioch, together with the anathemas added by the Easterners when publishing it once more in their own encyclical. It was presumably Asterius of Arabia and Arius of Palestine who brought this version across with them to the Westerners' party. The Fourth Creed had presented itself as a mild and conciliatory document. Marcellus was at pains to prove it was nothing of the kind.

The first half of the 'Western Creed' deals with the anathemas appended to date to the Fourth Creed. These latter can be divided into the following theological propositions, here given in bold and assigned letters in order to facilitate comparison:

Those saying that the Son is **out of nothing (A)**, or **from another hypostasis and not from God (B)**, or that **there was a χρόνος** (stretch of time) or an age **when he was not (C)**, the holy and catholic Church knows as alien.

Likewise those saying **that there are three gods (D)**, or that **Christ is not God (E)**, or that he was not Christ **πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων** (before the ages) **(F)**, nor **Son of God (G)**, or that **Father and Son and Holy Spirit are the same (H)**,

or that the Son is **ἀγέννητον** (unbegotten) **(I)**, or that the Father did not **beget the Son by will (J)**, the holy and catholic Church anathematizes.<sup>275</sup>

<sup>275</sup> Latin and reconstructed Greek in Feder, 72-3.

The first part of the Western Creed<sup>276</sup>

<sup>276</sup> Greek text and section numbers cited from Tetz, 'Ante omnia de sancta fide'; I have usually preferred the readings of Stuart Hall, however, which generally give better sense (Stuart G. Hall, 'The Creed of Sardica', *St Pat* XIX (1989), 173-84).

picks these up according to the following structure:

*We condemn and place outside the catholic church those asserting:*

1. that **Christ is indeed God, but not true God (E),**

because he is Son, and **yet not true Son (G)**, because he is at once γεννητῆς (begotten) (I) and γενητῆς (produced) (A)...

and because, despite the fact that he is ἀρχὴν (F) they give him a beginning and an end, which he does not have at a moment in time but ἀπὸ παντὸς χρόνου (before every stretch of time) (C).<sup>277</sup>

<sup>277</sup> Western Creed 1–2 Tetz.

2. And of a sudden also two sand-vipers have been born (ἐ γ ε ν ν ῆ θ η σ α ν)<sup>278</sup>

<sup>278</sup> According to Aristotle (*Historia Animalium* 5.34 = 558<sup>a</sup>25–30), the ἔχιδνα is distinguished from other snakes because its eggs are secreted within itself and the young burst forth violently. A fairly vicious satire on the 'Arian' understanding of γεννητῆς is clearly intended; Arius' view of his opponents' understanding of the word is not dissimilar.

from the Egyptian cobra, Arius: Valens and Ursacius, who boast and do not doubt, saying

end p.240

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)  
© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

that they are Christians, and that the Word, even the Spirit, was wounded and killed and died and rose,<sup>279</sup>

<sup>279</sup> Western Creed 3. This reading of S. G. Hall's ('Creed of Serdica', 175), already suggested by J. H. Newman (*Treatises of Athanasius* (1842–4), i, 123 n. u), is the only plausible way of making sense of the bizarre ὅτι ὁ λόγος καὶ πνεῦμα; the spirit describes the Word qua Word, distinguishing it from the man assumed (see Grillmeier, i, 278).

3. and, just as the whole battery of heretics contends, that **the hypostases of Father and Son and Holy Spirit are differentiated and separate (B, D).**<sup>280</sup>

<sup>280</sup> Western Creed 3.

*But we have received and been taught this, we hold this as the catholic and apostolic tradition and faith and confession:*

that **there is one hypostasis**, what they call *ousia*,<sup>281</sup>

<sup>281</sup> This is perhaps the most crucial phrase in this creed. Theodoret, *HE* II.8.39 (p. 113.13–14 Parmentier-Scheidweiler) has ἡν αὐτῷ οἱ ἀίρετικοὶ οὐσίαν προσάγομεν; the Verona codex has *quam ipsi graeci usian appellant* (EOMIA i.2.4, 651.25). I suggest that the original had simply αὐτῷ/*ipsi*, and that each of the groups identified is a gloss. The significance of this would be that Marcellus—or at least the group that ratified his creed—meant to indicate that by 'hypostasis' they meant precisely what the Eusebians meant by 'ousia', i.e. substance rather than person.

**of Father and Son and Holy Spirit (B, D)...**

<sup>282</sup>

<sup>282</sup> Western Creed 4.

No one of us denies 'Begotten' (τὸ γεγεννημένον) **(I)**, but [we deny] begotten for things, to wit those things which are known as invisible and visible things (Col 1: 16), begotten as artificer of archangels and angels and the world, and for the human race...

<sup>283</sup>

<sup>283</sup> Theodoret, *HE* II.8.41 (p. 114.5 Parmentier-Scheidweiler) reads τ ι σ ι ν, to which corresponds *quibusdam* in the Verona codex (*EOMIA* i.2.4, 652.38). Turner (apparatus to 652.38) proposed κ τ ι σ ι ν, which is at least palaeographically very attractive. Tetz then proposed an emendation of an emendation and reads κ τίςμα (discussion in Tetz, 'Ante omnia de sancta fide', 255–6). But Hall, who retains the transmitted reading (and whose interpretation I follow here) seems to make the most sense of the passage. See his discussion in 'Creed of Serdica', 180.

for he could not exist forever **(C, F)** if he had got a beginning of being, because the Word God, who always exists, has no beginning, and is never subject to an end.

<sup>284</sup>

<sup>284</sup> Western Creed 5.

We do not say that **the Father is Son, nor therefore the Son Father (H)...**

but we confess the Son to be...**true Word God (E)**, wisdom and power

and we hand on a **true Son (G)...**

<sup>285</sup>

<sup>285</sup> Western Creed 6.

This allows us clearly to see, nearly twenty years after Nicaea, to what point the argument had come. The central issue, the eternity of the Logos /Son, was still not resolved. Αεξ οὐκ ὄντων ('from non-being') had been completely dropped by the Eusebians and post-Eusebians, for the time being—indeed, as a positive affirmation, it had been dropped by Arius himself even before Nicaea.

<sup>286</sup>

<sup>286</sup> For a full discussion of this point, see Hanson, 'Who taught ΕΞ ΟΥΚ ΟΝΤΩΝ?'

But although the post-Eusebians anathematized over and over again the statement that there was a time or an age or a καιρὸς when the Son was not, they would not anathematize either ἦν ποτε ἥτε οὐκ ἦν as such, or

end p.241

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

'before he came to be he was not'. Marcellus clearly saw this as the central problem of the Eusebian and post-Eusebian position. For him (as for Athanasius), it meant that they proclaimed themselves not even to be Christians: a Son begotten in time, a Son who has come to be, a Son who has a beginning and an end, is not true Son and not true God, but one of the

perishable world of coming to be and ceasing to be. If Christ is not true God, he cannot save; those who are willing to countenance a perishable Christ are willing to countenance the unravelling of the whole Christian mystery, and cannot be allowed (if the 'Western' synod had any power to prevent them) to remain in the Church disseminating such a view. It might be noted that, had Athanasius been drafting this section, he would certainly have picked up the fact that the 'Eastern' party, although they retain a form of the anathema 'those saying he is from another hypostasis', have dropped 'or *ousia*', but *ousia* language is for Marcellus the language of his opponents, not his own. It might also be noted that Marcellus has probably picked up some of his language from the continuing Eustathians (perhaps Asclepas?), since the argument that true birth argues a true Son was very much the theology of Eustathius; or perhaps Marcellus had been rereading Eustathius' works.<sup>287</sup>

<sup>287</sup> See Chapter 2 above.

There are two ancillary problems, for Marcellus, which Nicaea clearly failed to solve, in the light of the current teaching of the post-Eusebians. The first is that the doctrine of the mutability and passibility of the Logos, originally taught by Arius, has now been revived by Ursacius and Valens, and is therefore not being rejected by their fellow-travellers: the Nicene anathemas against saying that the Son of God is  $\tau\rho\epsilon\pi\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$  or  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\iota\omega\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$  (changeable or alterable) have been quietly dropped.

Secondly, there is the thorny question of the three hypostases. Marcellus had polemicized against these from the first (what he made of Alexander's teaching of them we do not know), because he saw them as of a piece with the assertion that the Logos was not true God.<sup>288</sup>

<sup>288</sup> See Eusebius of Caesarea in *Urk* 3.3 (p. 5.5–10 Opitz).

It could be argued that Marcellus was probably right to interpret the three hypostases as taught by Eusebius of Caesarea (and probably Asterius) thus, but he was unfortunately not prepared to admit that they could also be used by those (such as Alexander) who did believe in the Son's eternity and true divinity.

Marcellus believed that the only way to exclude a doctrine of the three hypostases such as Asterius', where each hypostasis was a quite separate entity with no real union but of will, was to insist on one hypostasis; the same end was eventually achieved by the word *homoousios*. Athanasius' instinct here, that room had to be left for 'benign Origenists', was rather sounder. Athanasius did not himself teach three hypostases, but he refused to attack or rule them out, either—a stance which was eventually to be crucial in restoring some kind of unity to Eastern doctrinal confession. It should be noted

end p.242

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

nonetheless that the 'Western Creed' does not anathematize three hypostases as such, but only the proposition that the hypostases of Father and Son and Holy Spirit are  $\delta\iota\alpha\phi\acute{\omicron}\rho\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  and  $\kappa\epsilon\chi\omega\rho\iota\sigma\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\varsigma$  (divided and separated off), and that although it proclaims one hypostasis, it specifies this to be hypostasis in the sense of *ousia*.<sup>289</sup>

<sup>289</sup> Western Creed 3 and 4.

A non-Origenist might want to argue that Marcellus was right about the problems associated with teaching three hypostases (as Zahn, Harnack, and various other German 'biblicists' have pointed out). The solution he proposed was nonetheless unworkable in the East as a whole, outside the areas that shared his theological approach, as Athanasius could see all too clearly. Too much of the Greek-speaking world was now led by Origen's theological heirs for 'one hypostasis' to be a uniting formula. The solution had to come instead by refining the word 'hypostasis' and restricting it to a very specific and narrow meaning, and doing the work Marcellus had wanted to do with 'one hypostasis' with 'one *ousia*' and 'one *physis*'.

Marcellus' arguments are nonetheless impressive: they both take the Eastern leaders on on their own ground, and recast the theological problems at issue in ways more congenial to Marcellus' own thought. In the case of Christ's being 'God, but not true God', Marcellus is returning to an earlier debate with Eusebius of Caesarea;<sup>290</sup>

<sup>290</sup> See n. 288 above.

in that of his being 'Son but not true Son', he is turning the tables on the Eusebians, who accused Marcellus himself of not believing in the sonship of Christ before the incarnation<sup>291</sup>

<sup>291</sup> See e.g. Eusebius, *CM* II.1.1–2.

(Marcellus had made the necessary adjustments to his language in this case in the Letter to Julius two years before). Marcellus had objected to Eusebius of Caesarea's use of γεννητῶν in *De Sancta Ecclesia*;<sup>292</sup>

<sup>292</sup> See above, Chapter 2.

here he more or less rehearses Eustathius' distinction between the two words γεννητῶν and γεννῆται. He turns the tables also on his enemies' accusation that he claims the Word was not Christ before the ages;<sup>293</sup>

<sup>293</sup> See e.g. Eusebius, *CM* II.1.3, the continuation of the passage cited above.

despite the fact that they confess him to exist before the ages, it is they who give Christ a beginning and an end.

Marcellus seems, after largely finishing his criticism of the anathemas in the first half of the Western Creed, to have returned next to the main body of the Fourth Creed, picking out points which particularly interested or enraged him. He picked up the word only-begotten (μονογενής), and returned to Asterius's pairing μονογενής καὶ πρωτότοκος, reiterating his arguments from *Against Asterius*.<sup>294</sup>

<sup>294</sup> Re 3 Kl 3 S/V 10 P 4.

He noted and dealt with the clause inserted against his own alleged claim that Christ's kingdom would have an end, as usual making the Logos rather than Christ the subject of his repudiation of the view.<sup>295</sup>

<sup>295</sup> Western Creed 10.

He modified the article τῶν σταυρωθέντων καὶ ἀποθανόντων καὶ ταφέντων

end p.243

('who was crucified, and died, and was buried') by noting, against Ursacius



and Valens, that what suffered specifically was the mortal human being capable of suffering.<sup>296</sup>

<sup>296</sup> The Latin, which says *'et hunc credimus passum, sed homo, quem se induit, quem adsumpsit ex Maria virgine, hominem qui potuit pati'* ('And he, we believe, suffered, but the human being with whom he clothed himself, whom he assumed from the Virgin Mary, the human being who was able to suffer'; *EOMIA* i.2.4, 653.95–98) is probably a better rendition of the original; it is indeed the masculine subject doing the suffering, if through the man he assumed. Theodoret's καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἔπαθεν, ἀλλὰ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ('But this one did not suffer, but the human being'; *HE* II.8.48 (p. 117.5–6 Parmentier-Scheidweiler)) is surely meeting the text more than halfway.

His picture of the Ascension also added its own soteriological gloss, and by changing καὶ ἔρχομενον ἐπὶ συντελεῖ τοῦ αἰῶνος ('and is coming at the close of the age') to εἰς τὴν καιρῶν καὶ ὁρισμένῶν ('at the fitting and appointed time'), he was able to restore some of his own sense of the immediacy of Christ's return.<sup>297</sup>

<sup>297</sup> Western Creed 11.

There is much that is attractive about the theological vision that emerges from the 'Western Creed': the stress on the eternity of the Son, the insistence on the truth of the Son's divinity, the unity of Father and Son, the reality of the Paraclete (for all Eusebius of Caesarea believed in a separate hypostasis of the Holy Spirit, Marcellus had a far more distinctive view of the Spirit's role), the intimacy of the incarnate Word's ascension to the Father bearing saved humanity as a gift. But it ultimately shows Marcellus' political limitations, when compared with Athanasius, at least, if not his opponents. Marcellus was not prepared to compromise, to propose a formula which a broad spectrum of Eastern as well as Western bishops might be prepared to sign up to. He was not ready to recognize, as Athanasius apparently already was, that doctrinal definition should be kept to the minimum necessary, to leave room for various possible interpretations within the parameters of orthodoxy. The 'Western Creed of Serdica' was a return to the old-fashioned statement of faith like those of Alexander in *He Philarchos*, or the Faith of Antioch 324, long and technical and specific, as though the Nicene Creed itself had never existed. The Nicene Creed was a basic baptismal-type profession of faith onto which the absolute minimum of non-scriptural definition was grafted. That was its power, which the Eusebians and their heirs had recognized all along in using baptismal-type creeds as possible replacements. The 'Western Creed of Serdica' was in formal terms a step backwards. But its comprehensive and powerful theological attack on the Western synod's opponents was no doubt very welcome to all but the most far-sighted of that synod's members, particularly, after the contemptuous treatment they had received, to its leaders Ossius and Protogenes. Even if Julius managed to quash the 'Western creed' as an authentic document of the synod (which is far from certain), the initial approval it gained shows that even as late as 343 Marcellus' theology was considered mainstream by a large gathering of bishops which contained at least as many Greek as Latin



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [245]-[249]

theologians. He reached the age of 60, or very nearly, still a widely revered theologian and defender of orthodoxy, however much some of the new generation of pro-Nicenes found it very hard to understand why.

## 5. After Serdica

The delegation from Serdica to Antioch in the spring of 344, besides bringing a letter from Constans to his brother, also brought a letter from the synod of Serdica itself, which called on Constantius to decree that all judges in his territory should stop involving themselves in church matters, and urged that 'Catholics' should be allowed to live in peace without being compelled to join the worship of 'Arians', and that the exiled bishops be recalled.<sup>298</sup>

<sup>298</sup> Hilary, *FH* Appendix (*Liber I ad Constantium*) I(pp. 181–4 Feder).

Its sentiments are similar to those which Ossius expressed on a later occasion,<sup>299</sup>

<sup>299</sup> In Athanasius, *Hist Ar* 44.1–11.

and one or two of its phrases sound like the partisans of the Eastern exiles rather than the exiles themselves<sup>300</sup>

<sup>300</sup> For example, '*nuper didicimus commenta haec fuisse inventa et a duobus Eusebiis et a Narcisso et a Theodoro et ab Stefano et Acacio et Menofanto et imperitis atque improbis duobus adolescentibus Ursacio et Valente*' ('We have learned that these lies were recently invented both by the two Eusebii and by Narcissus and by Theodore, and by Stephen and Acacius and Menophantus and those two untried and shameless youths Ursacius and Valens'; *FH* Appendix (*Liber I ad Constantium*) I.5.2 (p. 184.5–8 Feder)).

(besides the fact that its general tone was not in the least likely to recommend itself to Constantius, a fact of which the exiles themselves would have been more acutely aware than their champions). But it does contain one short section which sounds very much as if it was written by Marcellus:

Who does not see, who does not comprehend? Almost four hundred years after the only-begotten Son of God deemed it worthy to come to the aid of a perishing human race, as if earlier there had not been any apostles, as if after their martyrdom and death there had not been any Christians, now has a new and most foul pestilence been poured out—not a pestilence of rotten air, but an Arian pestilence of execrable blasphemies. So was it in vain that those who earlier believed had their hope of immortality?<sup>301</sup>

<sup>301</sup> *Quis non videt, quis non intellegit? Post quadringentos fere annos, postquam dei unigenitus filius humano generi pereunti subvenire dignatus est, quasi ante non apostoli, non post eorum martyria et excessus fuerint Christiani, novella nunc et teterrima lues non corrupti aeris, sed*

*exsecrandorum blasphemiorum Arriana effusa est. Ita illi, qui ante crediderunt, inanem spem immortalitatis habuerunt? (FH Appendix (Liber I ad Constantium) I.5.1 (p. 183.21–p. 184.5 Feder).*

The theology, the ecclesiology, the poetic vituperation, and especially the four hundred years all have the Marcellan stamp, and the *aeris* /*Arriana* pun is obviously originally Greek (ἄριου / Ἀρρίου). The only-begotten Son of God is the incarnate Son, acting, as Marcellus always stresses, in generosity; the time of the apostles is marked off from the time which succeeds them, in which Christians in general receive the Spirit and are the heirs of the mystery; Christ's birth is dated not to the middle but to the beginning of Augustus'

end p.245

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

reign, making it possible to round up the time since his advent.<sup>302</sup>

<sup>302</sup> See Chapter 1.2. We might again invoke the Irenaeus passage cited there as a parallel to the passage above: '*Homo...nec speravit Virginem...parare filium, et hunc partum Deum esse nobiscum, et descendere in ea quae sunt deorsum terrae quaerentem ovum quae perierat...*' (Irenaeus, *AH* III.19.3).

Surely this is Marcellus' voice, heard by us for the last time?

For after this, Marcellus lapses into silence, so far as we can tell. He continues to be much talked about, but he no longer talks. Athanasius continues to mention him in his historical works (though somewhat selectively) as one of the many victims of the 'Arians', and refuses Basil of Caesarea's request to condemn him; the continuing Eustathians at Antioch remain in communion with him, as do various bishops of the Balkan peninsula and the West in general.<sup>303</sup>

<sup>303</sup> Lienhard, 'Did Athanasius Reject Marcellus?', 76–7.

Marcellus can be found living in Ancyra, surrounded by a band of faithful followers, as late as 372 (he seems to have died in 374).<sup>304</sup>

<sup>304</sup> Martin Tetz, 'Marcellianer und Athanasius von Alexandrien. Die markellianische Expositio fidei ad Athanasium des Diakons Eugenius von Ankyra', *ZNW* 64 (1973), 75–121; Epiphanius, *Pan* 72.1.1.

He may even be responsible for the burial of Paul of Constantinople at Ancyra in 350, as suggested above. But from his pen comes nothing more, or at least no more that survives.

Some scholars, of course, have thought otherwise. A number of pseudonymous works ascribed to Marcellus' later years were attributed to him in the mid to late twentieth century. *On the Holy Church*, the first of them, was originally assigned to the third quarter of the fourth century, before Alastair Logan pointed out how much better it fits the earlier part of the controversy (he dates it to just after Serdica).<sup>305</sup>

<sup>305</sup> See Chapter 5.1.

Others include the *Sermo Maior de Fide* (*Epistula ad Antiochenos*), a little creed called *Contra Theopaschitas* (*Epistula ad Liberium*), and an *Expositio Fidei*/*Ekthesis Pisteos* (all added by Scheidweiler),<sup>306</sup>

<sup>306</sup> F. Scheidweiler, 'Wer ist der Verfasser des sog. Sermo maior de fide?',

*Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 47 (1954), 333–57.

as well as the pseudo-Athanasian *De Incarnatione et Contra Arianos* (added by Martin Tetz).<sup>307</sup>

<sup>307</sup> Tetz, 'Zur Theologie des Markell von Ankyra I'.

The different reasons against Marcellan authorship of the *Sermo Maior* given by Simonetti,<sup>308</sup>

<sup>308</sup> Manlio Simonetti, 'Su alcune opere attribuite di recente a Marcello d'Ancira', *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa* 9 (1973), 313–79, and 'Ancora sulla paternità dello ps.-atanasiano "Sermo maior de fide"', *Vetera Christianorum* 11 (1974), 333–43.

Dowling,<sup>309</sup>

<sup>309</sup> Dowling, 'Marcellus of Ancyra', 5–16.

and Alexandra Riebe<sup>310</sup>

<sup>310</sup> Alexandra Riebe, 'Marcellus of Ancyra in Modern Research', MA dissertation (University of Durham, 1992).

seem to me unanswerable; Seibt defends it,<sup>311</sup>

<sup>311</sup> Seibt, *Markell*, 70–84.

but he addresses only the less convincing of Simonetti's arguments, ignoring, for example, the telling point that in the *Sermo Maior* it is the pre-incarnate Logos that is the image of the invisible God. Meanwhile, even Martin Tetz, the great champion of

end p.246

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

pseudonymous Marcellan works, has given up the ascription to Marcellus of the *Ekthesis Pisteos* that is associated with the *Sermo Maior*.<sup>312</sup>

<sup>312</sup> Martin Tetz, 'Zur Theologie des Markell von Ankyra III: Die pseudoathanasianische Epistula ad Liberium, ein markellisches Bekenntnis', *ZKG* 83 (1972), 145–95.

In the case of *De Incarnatione et Contra Arianos*, Tetz's analysis of the work<sup>313</sup>

<sup>313</sup> Tetz, 'Zur Theologie I'.

is as ever full of interesting and suggestive observations, but as Simonetti pointed out,<sup>314</sup>

<sup>314</sup> Manlio Simonetti, 'Sulla paternità del De incarnatione Dei Verbi et contra Arianos', *Nuovo Didaskaleion* 5 (1953–55), 5–19.

would only prove Marcellan authorship if we knew that it had to be by a named individual already known to modern scholarship. (This criticism might also be levelled at Christoph Riedweg's ascription of the pseudo-Justinian *Cohortatio ad Graecos* to Marcellus on the basis of a TLG search of the works of eleven other authors.<sup>315</sup>

<sup>315</sup> Christoph Riedweg, *Ps.-Justin (Markell von Ankyra?): Ad Graecos de vera religione (bisher Cohortatio ad Graecos)*, *Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft* 25 (Basle: Reinhardt, 1992), 167–82.

) Simonetti and Dowling<sup>316</sup>

<sup>316</sup> Dowling, 'Marcellus of Ancyra', 18 ff.

give a number of reasons, some good ones, for doubting Marcellan authorship of *De Incarnatione et Contra Arianos*, particularly its use of the very un-Marcellan ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς ('from the Father's *ousia*'), a point which even Seibt's full textual study does not address. The only pseudo-Athanasian work whose ascription to Marcellus seems to me to be at all plausible (also the only one which Markus Vinzent<sup>317</sup>

<sup>317</sup> Vinzent, *Markell*, pp. ciii–civ.

accepts as possible) is the very short creed *Contra Theopaschitas*. Marcel Richard proposed in 1949<sup>318</sup>

<sup>318</sup> Marcel Richard, 'Bulletin de patrologie II', *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 6 (1949), 117–33, at 129.

that it issued from Marcellan circles; Tetz ascribed it straightforwardly to Marcellus in 1972 ('Zur Theologie I'). The theology is miahypostatic (in Lienhard's term), and the parallels with Marcellus' soteriology in particular are impressive. But as Simonetti (*Crisi*, 45) and Dowling ('Marcellus', 36–7) have both pointed out, and as Richard himself acknowledged, this still cannot be considered probative of authorship by Marcellus himself. There are one or two phrases which sit oddly with Marcellus' theology elsewhere—μία ἐκ τῶν τριῶν ('of the one image of the Triad'), for example. Since it holds a place in its manuscript immediately before the creed of Eugenius the Deacon of Ancyra, authorship by Marcellus' circle is as likely as authorship by Marcellus. In any case, even if this creed is by Marcellus, it is the briefest of pieces: not a teaching document, but simply an exposition of faith to inform its recipient of the beliefs of its author(s). As such, it hardly counts as a re-entry to the theological lists.

Richard Hanson<sup>319</sup>

<sup>319</sup> Hanson, *Search*, 222.

and Timothy Barnes<sup>320</sup>

<sup>320</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius*, 93.

have both suggested that the reason for Marcellus' silence in later years was that he suffered from senility. This conjecture is prompted by the wording of the introduction to the creed

end p.247

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE (www.oxfordscholarship.com)

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

taken to Athanasius in Alexandria by Eugenius the Deacon in 372: 'The clergy and the others in Ancyra of Galatia who celebrate together with our father Marcellus sent us to Your Piety.'<sup>321</sup>

<sup>321</sup> Martin Tetz, 'Markellianer und Athanasios von Alexandrien. Die markellianische Expositio fidei ad Athanasium des Diakons Eugenius von Ankyra', *ZNW* 64 (1973), 75–121, at 78; text also in Hahn and Hahn, 262–3 n. 70.

It is inferred from this that Marcellus was not *compos mentis* enough to take part himself in the decision to send the envoy. Barnes even conjectures that he was already suffering from senility when 'the Western bishops dropped him in 345'. There is, however, another possible explanation for Marcellus' silence after 345.

The 340s saw a series of condemnations of Marcellus' pupil and deacon Photinus, bishop of Sirmium, not only by Eastern but also by Western bishops, though he was only removed from his see once Constantius had become emperor of the West as well as the East. Photinus, like many other theologians before and after him, was accused of teaching that Jesus was a mere man, though it is highly unlikely that he did. Rather, he probably taught a formal doctrine of two hypostases—one of God (in the Marcellan tradition) and one of the man Jesus. This is the doctrine attacked in the pseudo-Athanasian tract *Contra Sabellianos* (PG 28, 96-121) under the code-name Paul of Samosata. As Joseph Lienhard points out, 'Paul of Samosata is Photinus [of Sirmium]' (*Contra Marcellum*, 220).

Photinus' downfall is almost bound to have involved Ursacius and Valens, whose sees flanked his, and who were accepted back into communion by Julius of Rome shortly after the Romans had condemned Photinus.<sup>322</sup>

<sup>322</sup> Hilary, *FH* B II.5.4.3 (p. 142.23–30 Feder); B II.7 (p. 145.2–3 Feder).

It begins with the 'Long-winded Creed' of 344 (or early 345).<sup>323</sup>

<sup>323</sup> The gathering which sent this creed West took place 'after three years' (i.e. more than two), according to Athanasius (*Syn* 26.1; the creed follows in *Syn* 26 (pp. 251–4 Opitz)). The point of reference may in the context be either the Dedication Synod or the envoy to Gaul with the Fourth Creed of Antioch.

This was apparently brought to Milan by Macedonius of Mopsuestia, Demophilus of Beroe, Eudoxius of Germanicia, and a certain Martyrius, for a synod which seems to have been meant to be another attempt at a reconciliation. The 'Long-winded creed' condemns both Photinus (under the nickname 'Scotinus') and Marcellus, though it does not formally anathematize them (just as it condemns but does not formally anathematize 'There was when he was not'), and it uses the form οἱ ἀπὸ Μαρκελλοῦ καὶ Σκοτεινοῦ ('those from Marcellus and Scotinus'), condemning their disciples rather than the bishops themselves. How near the West came to accepting this formula is hard to tell, though it seems unlikely that either Julius or Athanasius would have been happy with the idea of a creed different from the Nicene. However, the delegation from the East seems to have stormed out when they were asked to anathematize Arius by name.<sup>324</sup>

<sup>324</sup> Hilary, *FH* A VII.4.1 (p. 91.1.6–21 Feder).

end p.248

Nonetheless, the synod had, it seems, already condemned Photinus. This had apparently been agreed beforehand by the relevant bishops in the West, including Julius and Athanasius: Hilary mentions a specifically Roman condemnation of Photinus,<sup>325</sup>

<sup>325</sup> Hilary, *FH* B II.7 (p. 145.2–3 Feder).

and gives us some very interesting information about the manoeuvres between Athanasius and Marcellus before Photinus' condemnation. Hilary insists, firstly, that Athanasius separated from communion with Marcellus before Photinus' trial, because he did not like the Photinian direction in which Marcellus' theology seemed to be heading; secondly, that Marcellus was nonetheless never condemned by any synod after Serdica had exonerated him; and thirdly, that it was in any case Marcellus who had chosen

voluntarily to refrain from entering a church after Athanasius refused him communion.<sup>326</sup>

<sup>326</sup> Hilary, *FH B II* 9.1.2–3.2 (p. 146.8–p. 147.1 Feder).

A story clearly lurks behind these moves, though it can be written up in various ways. Newman saw the break between Athanasius and Marcellus as a tragic tale of two comrades-in-arms, the one eventually forced to break with the other on account of his tainted theology, the second divinely preserved so that they might be silently reconciled in extreme old age.<sup>327</sup>

<sup>327</sup> Newman, *Select Treatises of St. Athanasius*, 2nd edn. (1881), ii. 197–8.

Brennecke saw the break as a cynical political move on Athanasius' part, the dropping of a former ally who was no longer useful.<sup>328</sup>

<sup>328</sup> Brennecke, *Hilarius von Poitiers*, 57–62.

Joseph Lienhard, meanwhile, sees the break as a temporary one, a genuinely theological disagreement, certainly, but one which was resolved sooner rather than later, and one which pushed Marcellus in a more moderate direction once again.<sup>329</sup>

<sup>329</sup> Lienhard, 'Did Athanasius Reject Marcellus?', 73–4.

Several facts suggest that Marcellus was rather more in control of events in 345 than might be imagined. First of all, although Hilary's account is somewhat confused, it is clear that Marcellus was an active partner in the breaking off of communion with Athanasius. Whatever his feelings on the subject, he met Athanasius halfway, which made the situation a great deal easier for Athanasius. If Marcellus had decided to push the issue and attend the synod of Milan, Athanasius would have been forced either to communicate with him or to be left in a seriously weakened position in front of the Eastern delegates, repudiating his former staunch ally. Marcellus, for whatever reason, chose to spare him that.

Secondly, the West were not really in a position to 'drop' Marcellus without his cooperation: once again, he could have forced the issue if he had chosen to do so. Not all Western bishops are likely to have wanted to drop him in any case. We have no idea who was present from the West at the synod of Milan, but Julius and Athanasius seem to have been to the fore in its actions, and it is quite likely that it was attended in the main by different bishops from those who had been at Serdica (perhaps those from the North



---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006

pp. [250]-[252]

---

Italian highway listed in *Apology against the Arians* 50.1). Elsewhere, it is likely that Marcellus still had a great deal of support, as witnessed by the fact that the Western communion refused to condemn him at any point, even under considerable pressure from the East, and even after he and Athanasius broke off communion.<sup>330</sup>

<sup>330</sup> Hilary reports that the 'Easterners' took the opportunity in their reply to the Westerners' notification of the deposition of Photinus to attempt to tar Marcellus with the same brush, but denies that this corresponds to any condemnation on the Western side. Hilary, *FH B II.9.2.2* (p. 147.1–9 Feder).

It seems, therefore, that in absenting himself from the synod of Milan, though he knew what was likely to happen there beforehand, Marcellus was meeting the leaders of that synod also (and above all Julius, presumably) more than halfway.

In the case of Photinus, once again, Marcellus seems to have made a free choice. He was presumably under considerable pressure to drop his former deacon. Everybody else did, from very early on, other than Photinus' congregation, who seem to have adored him.<sup>331</sup>

<sup>331</sup> Hilary, *FH B II.9.1.1* (p. 146.7–8 Feder).

Athanasius condemns Photinus, the continuing Eustathians at Antioch do, Rome does, the synod of Milan does; even Eugenius the deacon and Marcellus' circle of followers do. Only Marcellus never anathematizes Photinus.

He chose instead to follow the advice of the Easterners at Serdica, and withdraw from the controversy altogether; to leave the Western network of communion intact, never having formally broken off with it, but to remain in communion also with Photinus, which could only be done by himself disappearing from the scene. He withdrew from the Church itself long enough for Athanasius to be re-established in his see at Alexandria without having to answer any awkward questions about intercommunion with universally condemned heretics, and then presumably settled down to a life of retirement with his own little circle. He probably returned to Ancyra in 361, if not before, under Julian's amnesty; he would have shared his status as anti-bishop at this point with his old rival Basil, himself deposed the previous year.<sup>332</sup>

<sup>332</sup> Socrates, *HE II.42.3*; Sozomen, *HE IV.24.5*.

His silent withdrawal, freeing Athanasius and Julius to try to move towards reconciliation with the more moderate elements in the East, seems to have earned Marcellus considerable respect. The younger generation of pro-Nicenes were mystified by the loyalty that Marcellus still attracted even in their day. Basil of Caesarea tried and failed to have him generally condemned.<sup>333</sup>



In repudiating Basil's attack, Marcellus' deacon Eugenius brought to Athanasius in Alexandria a creed which condemned Photinus of Sirmium, possibly a crucial move in restoring links between Marcellus and Athanasius. But thanks to the creed's opening formula, Marcellus was able still to avoid directly condemning Photinus. Marcellus did not say that the creed was his; instead, Eugenius and the others who signed it merely stressed that they were in communion with Marcellus. Athanasius, in accepting their

end p.250

---

PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

communion, accepted Marcellus', without Marcellus abandoning his former deacon.

'The happiest people, like the happiest nations,' wrote George Eliot, 'have no history.' Marcellus has no history, or precious little, for the last thirty years of his life, and he may, in the end, have been very happy with that fact. His absence from Constans' manoeuvres to restore Athanasius and Paul to their sees in 345–6 may even have been his own choice: Basil of Ancyra, unlike Athanasius' successor Gregory, was still very much alive, and after the events that had ensued at his last return, it would have been a Pyrrhic victory to return as part of Constans' political schemes, against the will of Constantius, with no general recognition of his innocence among his Eastern peers, and liable to be turned on by his former enemies at any moment, meanwhile attracting persecution and possibly execution on all his closest friends and connections. Paul accepted these terms, and was executed within four years. Whatever can be said about Marcellus, he was not stupid—he could read the signs of the political times as well as anyone else. If Constans survived Constantius, Marcellus could perhaps hope to return honourably and safely to his see. In other circumstances, he might have concluded that there was far more to be lost than gained in trying to return.

Thirty years before, the synod of Ancyra had laid down (Canon 18) that a bishop who was unable to occupy the diocese to which he had been elected should refrain from stirring up trouble, but be content to act as a presbyter without getting involved in factionalism. This seems to be the choice which Marcellus eventually made. He gathered a small group around him who were loyal to him, perhaps including monks and virgins among the 'clergy and the rest' referred to in the creed of Eugenius. He took no further part in the events of the 'Arian controversy', except perhaps by responding to direct requests as to his orthodoxy. He made no other move, so far as we can tell, to defend his good name—it is Athanasius who seems to be responsible for the fact that those in communion with him generally only attack Marcellus under the code-name 'Sabellius'.<sup>334</sup>

<sup>334</sup> On this tendency, see Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum*, chapter VIII.

It would be years and years before any kind of unity returned to the East; when it did, the theological landscape had changed utterly. Marcellus' theology became a position against which the new generation would define their own, and three hypostases became enshrined as orthodoxy. Athanasius was able brilliantly to attract back towards one another on the basis of the Nicene creed huge swathes of the divided Christian world, making use of their respect for the authority of the past, and of the size and ecumenicity of

the synod of Nicaea. The best Marcellus could really do in these circumstances was to stay out of the way, as he himself seems to have concluded—at first out of a mixture of pique, self-sacrifice, and loyalty to Photinus, perhaps, and

end p.251

---

**PRINTED FROM OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ONLINE ([www.oxfordscholarship.com](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com))**

© Copyright Oxford University Press, 2006. All Rights Reserved

---

maybe later out of a conviction that the younger generation were simply no longer able to understand either him or his theology.

And so, I suggest, Marcellus allowed himself to vanish from fourth-century history, slowly becoming more insubstantial until all that was left was

Athanasius' smile.<sup>335</sup>

<sup>335</sup> Epiphanius, *Panarion* 72.4.4.

I hope that this study has allowed him at least partly to reappear.

end p.252

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
 pp. [254]

### APPENDIX *The Synodal Bishop-lists*

**TABLE 1. *The Bishops at Antioch 324* \***

Province	Bishops
[Baetica in the Spains]	Ossius of Corduba
Palestine	Peter of Nicopolis or Aila, Longinus of Ashkelon, Antiochus of Capetolia, Macarius of Jerusalem, Macrinus of Jamnia, Germanus of Neapolis, Aetius of Lydda, Paul of Maximianopolis, Maximus of Eleutheropolis, Marinus of Sebaste, <sup>a</sup> Asclepas of Gaza, [Eusebius of Caesarea]
Arabia	Sopatrus of Barata, Nicomachus of Bostra
Phoenice	Gregory of Berytus, Magnus of Damascus, Hellanicus of Tripoli, Anatolius of Emesa
Syria Coele	Eustathius of Antioch, Bassianus of Rhaphanea, Zenobius of Seleucia, Piperius of Samosata, Salamines of Germanicia, Peter of Gindarus, <sup>b</sup> Manicius of Epiphaneia, Paul of Neocaesarea, Bassones of Gabbola, Seleucus the country-bishop, Archelaus of Doliqe, Zoilus of Gabbala, Eustathius of Arethousa, Philoxenos of Hierapolis, Euphrantion of Balanea, Pegasius of Arbocadama, Alphaeus of Apameia, Bassus of Zeugma, Gerontius of Larissa, [Theodotus of Laodicea] <sup>c</sup>
Cilicia	Amphion of Epiphaneia, Macedonius of Mopsuestia, Nicetas of Flavias, Paulinus of Adana, Moses of Castabala, Lupus of Tarsus, Tarcondimantos of Aegeae, Hesychius of Alexandria, [Narcissus of Neronias]
Cappadocia	Eupsychius of Tyana
Unknown <sup>d</sup>	Agapius (of Seleucia in Isauria?), James (of Nisibis?), Cyril (of Humanades in Isauria?), Mocimus, Alexander, Irenaeus, Rhabboulas, Eirenikos, Avidius, Terentius

\* Data from Opitz, *Urk* 18 (The Letter of the Synod of Antioch).

<sup>a</sup> Or possibly Marinus of Palmyra in Phoenicia.

<sup>b</sup> Two out of the three Peters present from these provinces at Nicaea were at this synod. There is no means of determining which two, but Gindarus is the closest to Antioch of the three sees.

<sup>c</sup> Theodotus, Narcissus, and Eusebius did not sign the letter, but were present at the synod.

<sup>d</sup> i.e. names not listed at Nicaea under any of the provinces included in the synodal letter.

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006

pp. [256]

**TABLE 2. *Provinces and Significant Bishops at Nicaea 325* \***

Province	Significant bishops with numbers of remaining bishops
Baetica in the Spains	Ossius of Corduba
[Rome]	[The presbyters Vito and Vicentius]
Egypt	Alexander of Alexandria, 'Paphnutius' + 9 others
Thebaid	2 bishops
Upper Libya	Dachius of Beronike, Zopyrus of Barce
Lower (dry) Libya	Sarapion of Antipurgus, Titus of Paraetonium
Palestine	Macarius of Jerusalem, Germanus of Neapolis, Marinus of Sebastena, Eusebius of Caesarea, Longinus of Ashkelon, Peter of Nicopolis, Macrinus of Jamnia, Maximus of Eleutheropolis, Paul of Maximianopolis, Aetius of Lydda, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, Asclepas of Gaza, Peter of Aila, Antiochus of Capetolia + 4 others
Phoenice	Zeno of Tyre, Aeneas of Ptolomais, Magnus of Damascus, Theodore of Sidon, Hellanicus of Tripoli, Gregory of Berytus, Marinus of Palmyra, Anatolius of Emesa + 2 others <sup>a</sup>
Syria Coele	Eustathius of Antioch, Zenobius of Seleucia, Theodotus of Laodicea, Alphaeus of Apameia, Philoxenos of Hierapolis, Salamines of Germanicia, Piperius of Samosata, Archelaus of Doliqe, Euphrantion of Balanea, Zoilus of Gabbala, Bassus of Zeugma, Bassianus of Rhaphanea, Gerontius of Larissa, Manicius of Epiphaneia, Eustathius of Arethusa, Paul of Neocaesarea, Siricius of Cyrus, Seleucus the country-bishop, Peter of Gindarus, Pegasius of Arbocadama, Bassones of Gabbola + 1 country-bishop
Arabia	Nicomachus of Bostra, Cirion of Philadelphia, Sopatrus of Barata + 2 others
Mesopotamia	James of Nisibis + 4 others
Cilicia	Theodore of Tarsus, Amphion of Epiphaneia, Narcissus of Neronias, Moses of Castabala, Nicetas of Flavia, Paulinus of Adana, Macedonius of Mopsuestia, Tarcondimantos of Aegeae, Hesychius of Alexandria + 1 country-bishop
Cappadocia	Leontius of Caesarea, Eupsychius of Tyana + 5 others (of whom 2 are country-bishops)
Armenia <sup>b</sup>	Eulalius of Sebaste + 4 others (of whom 2 are country-bishops)
Diospontus	Heraclius of Zela + 1 other <sup>c</sup>
Pontus	Longinus of Neocaesarea + 2 others
Polemoniacus	
Paphlagonia	3 bishops
Galatia	'Pancharius' of Ancyra, <sup>d</sup> Diciasius of Tavia, Philadelphus of Iuliopolis + 1 other
Asia	Menophantus of Ephesus + 5 others
Lydia	Florentius of Ancyra + 7 others
Phrygia	Flaccus of Hierapolis + 6 others
Pisidia	10 bishops
Lycia	1 bishop
Pamphilia	7 bishops
The Isles	2 bishops
Caria	5 bishops
Isauria	Agapius of Seleucia, Cyril of Humanades + 13 others (of whom 5 are country-bishops)
Cyprus	2 bishops

Bithynia	Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon + 8 others (of whom 2 are country-bishops)
Europe	1 bishop
Dachia	Protogenes of Serdica + 1 other
Moesia	1 bishop
Macedonia	Alexander of Thessalonica + 1 other
Achaia	2 bishops
Thessalia	1 bishop

\* List based on Honigmann's 'Liste originale', likely to be the list of those who actually signed the Creed, as opposed to the canons, of Nicaea. This list is c.195 names; the combined creed/canons list is 218. 'Significant' = mentioned in other documents.

<sup>a</sup> Assuming, against Honigmann, that 'Thaddoneus of Emisa' in A V hides two names, the Anatolius of Emesa of the other lists, and some other name which has become the garbled 'Thaddoneus of Alassus'.

<sup>b</sup> Probably one province so designated in the original.

<sup>c</sup> Eutychius of Amaseia seems not to have signed the creed.

<sup>d</sup> Marcellus is in the list of 218 bishops, but the shorter list was signed by an unknown 'Pancharius'. This suggests he had a presbyter or deacon sign in his place. A further Galatian bishop, Gorgonius of Kinna, also appears in the longer but not the shorter list.

end p.256

---

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006

pp. [257]

---

**TABLE 3. *The Bishops at Antioch 328* \***

Province	Bishops
Syria Coele	Siricius of Cyrus, Archelaus of Doliche, Eustathius of Arethusa, Manicius of Epiphaneia, Theodotus of Laodicea, Alphaeus of Apameia, Bassus of Zeugma, Peter of Gindarus
Phoenice	Theodore of Sidon, Magnus of Damascus, Aeneas of Ptolomais, Anatolius of Emesa
Palestine	Eusebius of Caesarea, Antiochus of Capitolia, Paul of Maximianopolis, Peter of Nicopolis (or Aila), Aetius of Lydda (for Aetherius?)
Arabia	Cirion of Philadelphia
Mesopotamia	James of Nisibis
Cilicia	Narcissus of Neronias/Irenopolis, Hesychius of Alexandria minor, Macedonius of Mopsuestia, Tarcondimantus of Aegeae, Nicetas of Flavia, Moses of Castabala, Theodore of Tarsus
Isauria	Agapius of Seleucia
Unknown	Alexander, a second Agapius, Patricius, Mokimus, Theodosius

\* The names are given in Turner, *EOMIA* ii.2, 231, 312–15; the provinces they represent are given on p. 231. The individual sees have been supplied where plausible from the Nicene names (Honigsmann, 'Liste originale', 44–8). See also Schwartz, *GS* iii. 219–20.

end p.257

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [258]

**TABLE 4. *The Bishops at Tyre 335* \***

Province	Bishops
Macedonia	Alexander of Thessalonica
Pannonia	Valens of Mursa
Moesia	Ursacius of Singidunum
The Persian bishops <sup>a</sup>	one bishop 'very learned in the sacred Scriptures'
Bithynia	Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon
Thracia (diocese of) <sup>b</sup>	Theodore of Heraclea
Cilicia	Macedonius of Mopuestia, Narcissus of Neronias, other 'leading Cilicians'
Cappadocia	The 'first in instruction of the Cappadocians' [Dianius of Caesarea with Asterius?]
Syria	'All Syria', including Flacillus of Antioch
Mesopotamia	[James of Nisibis? and others?]
Phoenice	[The bishop (Paul?) of Tyre, presumably plus others]
Arabia	[Antonius of Bostra? Others?]
Palestine	Eusebius of Caesarea, Maximus of Jerusalem, Patrophilus of Scythopolis [plus others?]
Egypt	Callinicus of Pelusium, Euplus, Pachomius, Isaac, Achilleus, and Hermaeon (all Melitian bishops)
Libya	[probably Secundus of Ptolemais and other pro-Arius bishops]
Thebaid	[at least one bishop]
Unknown	34 bishops, at most, thus remain unaccounted for from the sixty. The signatories of the 328 synod of Antioch would give us up to another 27 names from the provinces Eusebius lists, and Libya and the Thebaid might well supply the rest.

\* Known names are supplied from Athanasius' works; provinces are from Eusebius, *VC* IV.43. Only those likely to be among the sixty signatories to the synodal acts are included.

<sup>a</sup> Eusebius says 'an outstandingly holy man of the Persian bishops, most learned in the sacred scriptures'.

<sup>b</sup> Eusebius' 'the Thracians adorned the fullness of the synod' must refer to a wider area than the contemporary province of Thracia, since it has to cover Heraclea.

end p.258



Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006

pp. [259]

**TABLE 5. *The Bishops at Constantinople 336* \***

Province	Bishops (all speculative)
Pontus	<i>Eulalius of Amaseia, Bithynicus of Zela, Prohaeresius of Sinope</i> <sup>a</sup>
Cappadocia	<i>Dianius of Caesarea</i>
Asia	<i>Menophantus of Ephesus</i>
Phrygia	<i>Antonius of Docimium, Eusebius of Doryleum, Flaccus of Hieropolis</i>
Bithynia	<i>Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicaea, Maris of Chalcedon</i>
Thracia	<i>Theodore of Heraclea</i> <sup>b</sup>
The regions beyond Thracia	<i>Ursacius of Singidunum, Valens of Mursa, Protogenes of Serdica, Cyriacus of Naissus</i>

\* We have no indications of the numbers at this synod, but we do have a list of provinces from Eusebius, *Against Marcellus* II.4.29, and can sketch out some speculative names on the basis of Serdica and of general activity during this period in the provinces in question. The sixteen bishops suggested would seem a plausible minimum for this synod.

<sup>a</sup> Pontus is almost always represented by Amaseia and Zela in fourth-century synods; all three of these bishops, as well as being at the Eastern synod of Serdica, were at the synod of Gangra.

<sup>b</sup> Cf. Eusebius' loose use of 'Thracians' in Table 4.

end p.259

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
pp. [260]

---

### TABLE 6. *Known Bishops at the Dedication Synod of Antioch 341* \*

Province	Bishops
Egypt	Gregory of Alexandria
Palestine	Acacius of Caesarea, Patrophilus of Scythopolis
Phoenice	Eusebius of Emesa
Syria Coele	Flacillus of Antioch, George of Laodicea, Eudoxius of Germanicia
Cilicia	[Narcissus of Neronias, Macedonius of Mopsuestia] <sup>a</sup>
Cappadocia	Dianius of Caesarea, Theophronius of Tyana?
Galatia	Basil of Ancyra
Bithynia	[Maris of Chalcedon]
Europe	Eusebius of Constantinople, Theodore of Heraclea
Unknown	Considerable overlap is likely between the remaining 82 bishops and the remaining 68 bishops of Eastern Serdica.

\* Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* IV.22.22; Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Synods* 28. The synod included 90 bishops (Socrates) or, more probably, 97 (Sozomen).

<sup>a</sup> Narcissus, Maris, and Macedonius are only linked to the synod as addressees of the letter of Julius of Rome.

end p.260

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
 pp. [262]

**TABLE 7. *The Bishops at the 'Eastern' Synod of Serdica 343***

Province *	Bishops †
Thebaid	Theogenes of <b>Lycos</b> , Lucius of <b>Antinoe</b>
Egypt	'Squirius' of Mareota, Callinicus of <b>Pelusium</b> , Isaac of Letopolis, Eudemon of <b>Tanis</b>
Palestine	Acacius of <b>Caesarea</b> , Quintianus of <b>Gaza</b>
Arabia	Antonius of <b>Bostra</b> , Quirius of <b>Philadelphia</b> <sup>a</sup>
Phoenice	Vitalis of <b>Tyre</b> , Macedonius of <b>Berytus</b> , Dominus of Politiane
Syria Coele	Stephen of <b>Antioch</b> , Olympius of <b>Dolike</b> Gerontius of <b>Rhaphanea</b> , Marcus of <b>Arethusa</b> , Antonius of <b>Zeugma</b> , Eudoxius of <b>Germanicia</b> , Eustathius of <b>Epiphaneia</b> , Severus of 'Gabbula'
Mesopotamia	No see identified
Cilicia	<b>Macedonius of Mopsuestia</b> , Cyrotus of Rhosus, Dionysius of <b>Alexandria minor</b> , Pison of <b>Adana</b> , <b>Narcissus of Irenopolis [=Neronias]</b>
Cappadocia	Dianius of <b>Caesarea</b> , Pancratius of Parnassus
'Pontus'	Eulalius of <b>Amaseia</b> , <sup>b</sup> Prohaeresius of Sinope, Bithynicus of <b>Zela</b> , Theodulus of <b>Neocaesarea</b> <sup>c</sup>
Paphlagonia	Philetus of Cratia
Galatia	Basil of <b>Ancyra</b> , Philetus of <b>Iuliopolis</b> , Cartherius of Aspona, Pison of Trocnada
Bithynia	<b>Maris of Chalcedon</b> , Adamantius of <b>Cios</b>
Hellespontus	Leucadas of <b>Illium</b> , Niconius of <b>Troas</b> <sup>d</sup>
Asia	<b>Menophantus of Ephesus</b> , Eusebius of Pergamum, Eusebius of Magnesia
Phrygia I	Antonius of Docimium, Eusebius of <b>Doryleum</b>
Phrygia II	<b>Flaccus of Hieropolis</b> , <sup>e</sup> Sabinianus of Chadimena <sup>f</sup>
Pisidia	Nonnius of Laodicea <sup>g</sup>
The Isles	Edesius of <b>Co</b> , Bassus of Carpathus, Agapius of Tenos
Pamphilia	Eugeus of Lisinia, Sisinnius of <b>Perge</b>
Caria	Ambracius of <b>Miletus</b>
Lydia	<b>Florentius of Ancyra</b> , Pantagatus of Attalea
Europa	Theodore of <b>Heraclea</b>
Thracia	Eutychiu of Philippopolis, Demophilus of Beroe <sup>h</sup>
Haemimontus	Timotheus of Anchialus
Moesia	Ursacius of Singidunum
The Pannonias	Valens of Mursa
No see given	Paul, Sion, Eudemon, Diogenes, Nestorius, Eugenius, Thelafius ('of Calchedonia'), <sup>i</sup> Timasarcus, Thimotheus, Cresconius, Ammonius

\* Provinces from Hilary, *On the Synods* 33; names from Hilary, *FH* A IV.3, plus A IV 1.18.1 (Maris of Chalcedon) and B II I.7.3 (Ursacius of Singidunum): Feder, 74–8, 60, 119.

† Sees represented at Nicaea in bold; names in bold indicate same incumbent at Nicaea.

<sup>a</sup> Or Philadelphia in Lydia.

<sup>b</sup> A bishop of Amasia was present at Nicaea but does not seem to have signed the Creed.

<sup>c</sup> Presumably Neocaesarea of Pontus Polemoniacus, although conceivably Neocaesarea in Syria, which was also represented at Nicaea.

<sup>d</sup> A bishop 'Marianus of Troas' is mentioned in the Greek Nicene list of Theodore Lector (Gelzer, 66); in the other lists, he appears as 'Marinus of Illium of Hellespontus' (alongside a bishop Orion of Illium). His name does not appear on list A V, the list of those who actually signed the creed. Honigmann, 'List originale', 36, considers him a doublet – reasonably enough, but the presence of both cities at Serdica is still interesting.

<sup>e</sup> Assuming Hieropolis is the Nicene Phrygian see of Hierapolis, or vice versa.

<sup>f</sup> For the identification, see Feder, *Studien*, 77ff.

<sup>g</sup> Or Laodicea in Phrygia II, represented at Nicaea; but if so, there would be no bishop from Pisidia, despite the Easterners' listing of that province. This cannot be Laodicea in Syria; George, who did not attend Serdica, was bishop there (Hilary, *FH B II* I.8.2).

<sup>h</sup> Or Beroe in Syria.

<sup>i</sup> Assumed here to be elided with Maris of Chalcedon through haplography.

end p.262

---

Parvis, Sara , Lecturer in Patristics, University of Edinburgh

## Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345

Print ISBN 9780199280131, 2006  
 pp. [264]

**TABLE 8. *The Bishops at the 'Western' Synod of Serdica 343* \***

Province	Bishops
[Rome]	[The presbyters Archidamus and Philoxenus <sup>B2</sup> Ossius of Corduba <sup>A</sup> , Praetextatus of Barcelona <sup>B2</sup> , Florentius of Emerita <sup>B2</sup> ,
The Spains	Domitianus of Asturica <sup>A</sup> , Castus of Caesarea Augusta <sup>B2</sup> , Annianus of Castolona <sup>B2</sup>
The Gauls a	<i>Verissimus of Lyons</i> <sup>B2</sup> , [ <b>Maximus of Gaul</b> <sup>B1</sup> ] <sup>b</sup>
Italia	Fortunatus of Aquileia, Ursacius of Brescia <sup>B2</sup> , Lucillus of Verona <sup>B1B2</sup> , Protasius of Milan <sup>B2</sup> , Severus of Ravenna <sup>A</sup>
Tuscia	Maximus of Lucca
Campania	Calepodius of Neapolis <sup>A</sup> , Vincentius of Capua <sup>A</sup> , Januarius of Beneventum <sup>B2</sup> , Dioscorus of 'Terasia' <sup>A</sup> (=Tarracina?)
Calabria	No sees identified
Apulia	Stercorius of Canusium <sup>B2</sup>
Africa	<b>Vitalis of 'Vertarensis'</b> <sup>B2</sup>
Sardinia	No sees identified
Pannonia	Eutherius of the Pannonias
Moesia	<b>Amantius of Viminacum</b> <sup>B2</sup> , <b>Zosimus of Horreum Margi</b> <sup>B2</sup>
Dacia	Protopogenes of Sardica <sup>B1</sup> , Gaudentius of Naissus <sup>B2</sup>
Dacia Ripensis	Vitalis of Aquae <sup>A</sup> , Calvus/Chalbis of Castra Martis <sup>B1B2</sup> , Valens of Oescus <sup>A</sup>
Noricum	<b>Aprianus of Poetovio</b> <sup>B1B2</sup>
Savia <sup>c</sup>	Marcus of Siscia <sup>B2</sup>
Dardania	Macedonius of Ulpiana <sup>B2</sup> , Paregorius of Scupi <sup>AB2</sup> Bassus of Diocletianopolis <sup>A</sup> , Palladius of Dium <sup>B2</sup> , Evagrius/Eugenius of Heraclea Linea <sup>B1B2</sup> , Porphyrius of Philippi <sup>AB1</sup> , Zosimus of Lignidus <sup>B1B2</sup> , Jonas of Macedonia
	Particopolis <sup>A</sup> , Aetius of Thessalonica <sup>A</sup> , Gerontius of Beroea <sup>AB1</sup> , <b>Antigonus of Pallene</b> <sup>B2</sup>
Thessalia	<i>Alexander</i> of Larissa, <sup>d</sup> Musaeus of Thebes, Hymenaeus of Hypata <sup>B2</sup> , Severus of Chalcis <sup>B2</sup> Eutychius of Methone <sup>B2</sup> , Socrates of Asphoebia, Martyrius of Naupactus <sup>B1B2</sup> , Achaia
	<b>Eucarpus of Opuntius</b> <sup>B1B2</sup> , Athenodorus of Elataea <sup>AB1</sup> , Irenaeus of Scirus <sup>B2</sup> , Julianus of Thebes Eptapilos <sup>B1B2</sup> , Alypius of Megara <sup>A</sup> , <b>Hermogenes of Sicyon</b> <sup>B2</sup> , Plutarchus of Patrae <sup>A</sup> , Trypho of Macaria <sup>B2</sup> , Dionysius of Elis <sup>A</sup> , Alexander <sup>A</sup> of Coronaea, Alexander of Cyparissa <sup>B2</sup>
Epirus	Heliodorus <sup>A</sup> of Nicopolis
Thracia	<i>Eutherius</i> of Gannos, <sup>e</sup> Lucius of Kainopolis (=Adrianopolis) <sup>A</sup>
Scythia Minor	<b>Domitianus of Acaria Constantia</b> <sup>B2</sup>
Rhodope	<b>Olympius of Aenus</b> <sup>B2</sup>
Asia	Diodorus of Tenedos <sup>B1</sup> , 'Eutycius of Asia' <sup>f</sup>
Galatia	Marcell[in]us of Ancyra <sup>B1</sup> <sup>g&gt;</sup>
Palestine	Asclepas of Gaza <sup>B1</sup> , 'Arius of Palestine' <sup>A</sup>
Arabia	'Asterius of Arabia' <sup>A</sup>

Crete	<b>Symphorus of Herapytna</b> <sup>B2</sup> , <b>Musonius of Heraclea</b> <sup>B2</sup> , <b><i>Eucissus of Cisamus</i></b> <sup>B2</sup> , <b><i>Cydonius of Cydonia</i></b> <sup>B2</sup> , <b>Aelianus of 'Tyrtanis' (Gortyna?)</b> <sup>B2</sup> <sup>h</sup>
Egypt	Athanasius of Alexandria <sup>A</sup> <b>Eulogius</b> <sup>B1</sup> , <b>Restitutus</b> <sup>A</sup> , <b>Peter</b> , <b>Philologius</b> , <b>Spoudasius</b> , <b>Zosimus</b> <sup>A</sup> ,
Unknown	<b>Patricius</b> , <b>Adolius</b> , <b>Sapricius</b> , <b><i>John</i></b> <sup>A</sup> , <b><i>Vincentius</i></b> <sup>A</sup> , <b><i>Ammonius</i></b> <sup>B1</sup> , <b><i>Appianus</i></b> <sup>B1</sup>

\* From Hilary, *FH* B II.4 (pp. 132–9 Feder); Athanasius, *Apology Against the Arians* 50; Turner, *EOMIA* i.2.4, 658, 660–2. The numbers refer to the three lists in the latter: A = p. 658, B1 = p. 660 nos. 1–18; B2 = p. 660–2, nos. 19–60. Names not in Athanasius are in italics; names not in Hilary are in bold.

<sup>a</sup> Both included by Athanasius among signatories from Gaul after the close of the synod.

<sup>b</sup> By letter.

<sup>c</sup> Athanasius has Siscia in his list of provinces, but clearly means Savia.

<sup>d</sup> Athanasius and AB1B2 each only have two of the three Alexanders.

<sup>e</sup> Athanasius has only one of the two Eutheriuses.

<sup>f</sup> See Feder, 139.

<sup>g</sup> Athanasius' list of provinces does not include Galatia, and his list of names includes not Marcellus but Marcellinus, but no bishop of that name appears elsewhere at the synod.

<sup>h</sup> See Ulrich, *Rezeption*, 93.

end p.264

---