

## Chapter 4

# The Forms of Latin Theology

*THIS ESSAY IS NOT intended to provide an account, or even a summary, of the theologies involved in the “Arian controversy”: the twenty-first century has already seen a plethora of such accounts, and adding something substantial to that work would require yet another monograph. What I am interested in here is intra-Nicene dynamics: What is “Nicene theology,” when, and where? How do these “Nicene” theologies relate to one another? Most importantly for this collection is: what language, logic, and formulae would Augustine have received as “the Trinitarian theology of the fathers of Nicaea”? Clearly, Augustine did not regard the formulae, language, and logic of the council(s) to be the last necessary articulated orthodox doctrine of the Trinitarian faith in the Catholic Church. What is necessary for a pious understanding? What is there left to be said?*

Sometime early in the first decade of the fifth century—approximately seventy-five years after the Council of Nicaea—Augustine was challenged to a public debate on the word *homoousios* by Pascentius, an anti-Nicene member of the Imperial Court. This confrontation occurs in roughly the same time period as Augustine started to write *De Trinitate* (*On the Trinity*). The debate begins with the point by Pascentius that the word *homoousios* is nowhere found in Scripture. Augustine replies that *homoousios* is a Greek word and therefore we cannot expect it to occur in the Latin New Testament. Then what does this Greek word mean, given our Latin New Testament? Augustine knows that Pascentius is fishing for him to suggest and commit to some Latin equivalent—such as *eiusdem substantia* or *una substantia*. Then the debate will shift onto the subject that is really at the heart of Pascentius’ question; namely, how can we use a non-scriptural word to name in the creed that which both the Father and the Son are said to be? But Augustine does not do that. He asks: If we have in the Latin New Testament something with the same meaning as the Greek *homoousios*, will that suffice to say “We know the Latin for what the Greek word means”? We can say, “Of course the Greek

word *homoousios* does not occur in our Latin New Testament, but something else, with the same meaning, does occur in the Latin, and so we know what *homoousios* means.” Pascentius has to accept this as true, but he feels safe in his knowledge that *substantia* does not occur in the Latin just as *ousia* does not occur in the Greek. What is the Latin New Testament equivalent to *homoousios*? Augustine’s answer is *Ego et pater unum sumus*, “The Father and I are one” (John 10:30).<sup>1</sup> That is the Latin for what the Greek word *means*. This is a pious and clever answer by Augustine, not least because it brings the conversation to what Augustine thinks is fundamentally at stake: that the Son is the true Son of God who is truly the Father of that Son.<sup>2</sup>

I rehearse Augustine’s argument to make a simple point: approximately seventy-five years after the Council of Nicaea, and a few more than twenty years after Constantinople, the conflict between anti-Nicenes and those aligned with the theology of Nicaea was still going on. That conflict is not equally vigorous throughout Latin Christianity, nor is the same “balance of powers” between the two consistently in place throughout the Western empire.<sup>3</sup> Our own conviction that the Council of Nicaea completely defeated “Arianism” in 325 has only recently ceased to be a commonplace—even by scholars in the field. The full extent of the struggle to bring about a limited consensus at the Council of Constantinople (381) is still not yet widely recognized in the “consciousness” of contemporary theologians on the Trinity.<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter, I will give an account of “Nicene” theology as it was received in Western theology in the second half of the fourth century. I focus on Latin theology as much as possible and is prudent, but the earliest relevant texts are Greek: to state the obvious, the Creed of Nicaea was written in Greek, and the first signs of its reception are Greek, as well. The creed is not referred to in Western theology until approximately 355 or 357.<sup>5</sup> Practically speaking, this is the beginning of the Latin phase of the

1. Despite the convention of translations giving “The Father and I are one,” both the Greek and the Latin begin with “I and the Father . . .”

2. Something very much like this way of exegeting *homoousios* can be found in Gregory of Elvira’s *De Fide* (IV.53): “This is *homoousios*, it is of one substance with the Father, just as the Lord himself said: ‘I in the Father and the Father in me,’ and: ‘I and the Father are one,’ and: ‘I have come from the Father,’ and: ‘Who sees me, sees also the Father.’” We know for certain that Augustine had read Gregory, but we do not know if it would have been this early in his episcopacy. “One substance” is read from John 14:9, 10:30, 16:27, and 14:10. Gregory provides the full Latin neo-Nicene constellation of New Testament prooftexts. From just this one passage by Gregory, Augustine would see the neo-Nicene scriptural “logic” supporting and giving meaning to *homoousios*.

3. Shortly after Augustine’s death, a conquering army, Homoian (anti-Nicene) by self-definition, will defeat all the forces of the Western Roman empire in North Africa, and soon thereafter the bishop of Carthage will be an anti-Nicene.

4. The errant cliché runs strong: “Nicaea settled the ‘problem’ of the Son; Constantinople (381) settled the ‘problem’ of the Holy Spirit.” See my essay, “Fourth Century as Trinitarian Canon,” in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, ed. Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (London: Routledge, 1998), 47–78.

5. Hilary says that he did not hear of the creed until 355. His publication of a translation in his *On the Synods* may have been the first time it appeared in Latin.

“Nicene controversy”: this is the beginning of Latin knowledge of what the Greeks had been talking about.<sup>6</sup> The Creed of Sirmium II—the “Blasphemy”—was communicated and interpreted across Gaul by Hilary and Phoebadius of Agen. Lester Field sums up what Sirmium (357) did, and its substantial effects: “the *blasphemia* not only banned the homoousion and the homoiousian but also asserted ‘*duas personas esse Patris et Filii, maiorem Patrem, Filium subiectum com omni his quae ipsi Pater subiecit*.’”<sup>7</sup> It became clear that much more was at stake than whether Athanasius had been a good bishop or not. No previous creed had overturned (and not just ignored) Nicaea, its logic and language, and its clear doctrines.

If one thinks of 357 as the Latin “beginning” of the controversy, then it is clear that a number of earlier Greek texts—often thought pivotal in the controversy as a whole—are not directly relevant to Latin Trinitarian theology.<sup>8</sup> It has been argued that the Council of Serdica (342) was definitive to the creed’s reception in the West and the beginning of Latin Nicene theology.<sup>9</sup> I do not think Serdica played such a role, but I have included Serdica in my chapter on “Other Latin Nicenes” because it testifies to Western theology within its own confines in 342. However, while the Nicene Creed may not have been the subject of Western episcopal concern before 357, soon after Sirmium there follows another *Western* council fundamental to the course of the “Nicene versus anti-Nicene” controversy for both Latins and Greeks: the Council of Rimini (359)—which resulted in imperially imposed subordinationist Trinitarian theology.<sup>10</sup>

My purpose in surveying Latin theology as I do is to support the thesis that “Nicene” theology developed over the course of its reception in the fourth century. There were various “Nicene” theologies. There is a consensus among those American scholars who still study fourth-century Trinitarian theology that we need to recognize and speak of Nicene *theologies*: plural!<sup>11</sup> The principal reason for such a judgment is

6. I know very well that this “starting point” for the present review is controversial, even if my purposes for recalling this era of Latin theology is limited. Elsewhere I include the Council(s) of Sardica as an entry point. The simple truth is that I do not take Sardica to be the beginning of Latin engagement with the “Arian controversy.”

7. I utilize this kind of quotation because Field happily supplies us with the Latin of the text which so shocked those hitherto on the fence about Nicaea by explicitly linking the rejection of *homoousios* to the acceptance of a clearly subordinationist theology (like Arius). These anti-Nicenes made the controversy an either/or theological encounter, and gave name (and thus gave unity) to their opponents. “If you are not with us then you are a ‘one-essence’ person—like that Athanasius guy!” They drew the line in the sand. See Lester L. Field, *On the Communion of Damasus and Meletius: Fourth Century Synodal Formulae in the Codex Veronensis LX* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2004).

8. Moreover—and this is significant—after 357, Hilary, among others, no longer had to expend time and energy defending Athanasius and could focus on the theological complexities covered over by the political and ethical charges brought against Athanasius.

9. There is a very broad range of scholarly opinions on the extent to which Nicaea, or the doctrines of Athanasius, were significant issues at Serdica; these opinions range from “No significance” to “The Subject of the Synod”(that is, from 0 to 10)!

10. A meaningful account of “the Western response to Nicaea” could be written focusing in detail on “the road from Sirmium II to Ariminum (359/360).”

11. In a short while, we will no longer have a quorum—until, perhaps, a few decades from now.

that the language and logic used in early polemical writings is not the same as later proponents who champion the name.<sup>12</sup> I propose that there were three principle genera of Nicene theology, and that we can separate generations of “Nicene” theology into one or more of these genera, and by doing so, use each genera to help us recognize the reasoning that formed different-but-related understandings of the faith of Nicaea—especially as Augustine received that faith. The first genus of Nicene theology is the creed itself as a document of 325: I reconstruct that theology as best I can, but of the three, this one may—strangely enough—be the least important for later, especially Latin “Nicens.” The second form I call neo-Nicene: we use the word “neo-” to signify a conscious attempt to replicate an earlier way of thinking (whether conceptually, musically, or fashion-wise). The last of the three I call pro-Nicene: we use the word “pro-” to designate a form of thinking that is in sympathy with an earlier way of thinking, but without trying to duplicate the exact shape of the original, “primitive” form. If there is anything radical or idiosyncratic about the divisions I propose here, it is my judgment that there were three and not two kinds or stages in the trajectory I trace out of Nicaea: neo-Nicene theology is different in its logic from pro-Nicene. Most scholars who recognize distinctions in Nicene theology use neo-Nicene as synonymous with pro-Nicene, but preferring one name over the other.<sup>13</sup> Finally, the reader should know that I am not seeking to obscure the fact that *homoousios* played a central role in serving as a litmus test for Nicene Trinitarian theology—one could not claim to be Nicene and reject *homoousios*. One could, however, be Nicene without recourse to an argument based on *ousia*.<sup>14</sup> Augustine’s Trinitarian status cannot be determined by counting the number of times he uses *consubstantialis* or *homoousios*.

## THE CREED OF THE EPISCOPAL COUNCIL SUMMONED IN NICAEA (325)<sup>15</sup>

The most distinctive feature of the Creed of Nicaea is its use of essence—*ousia*—language to describe the fundamental being of divinity—that is, the divinity of the Father.

12. Such a distinction has been recognized by modern scholars who use it as a value judgment: Harnack’s antinomy of Athanasian versus Cappadocian “Nicene” is a well-known case. Usually the distinction is between “real” Nicene theology versus “fraudulent” or “destructive” Nicene theology. Unlike the divisions in or types of Nicene theology early twentieth-century scholars proposed, my distinctions have no modern denominational or ideological motives: I do not offer these distinctions in order to criticize intra- or extra-church identities or self-definitions.

13. Often “pro-Nicene” means something like “in favor of what ‘Nicene’ meant at the time.” Without more lexical sophistication, this usage can result in conundrums like “pro-Nicene sympathies.”

14. One regularly comes across puzzled scholars who recognize Nicene theology in a text “even though the word *homoousios* never appears.” I am showing why a Nicene text need not have *homoousios* in its argument or declaration.

15. For the approach that I take in summarizing the Western parallax view of the “triumph” of Nicaea at Constantinople, I am particularly indebted to the following (alphabetically): Field, *On the Communion*; A.H.B. Logan, “Marcellus of Ancyra and the Councils of AD 325: Antioch, Ancyra,

At times, *ousia* seems to supersede Father language; it always refers to the divine whatness of God (the Father). A few other traditional descriptions of the continuity of nature between Father and Son are taken up in the creed and restated briefly in terms of the *ousia*. Statements such as “Light from Light, true God from true God” are common in pre-Nicene theology; I have named such statements *X from X* causality. Often in such statements, the originating *X* has some ontological priority or superiority over the originated *x*, but sometimes *x from X* names the production of an *x* which entirely equal to the original *X*. “Fire from fire” is a good example of such a causal statement, or “Light from light.” There can be some cases where the originating *X* is different from, or at least superior to, the produced *x*. So although the *x from X* language of the creed is familiar as a context, it cannot in itself tell us anything decisive.

If one sees the Nicene Creed as written in a couplet-type form—such as one often finds in Scripture—in which the initial statement is glossed or unpacked by a second clause (AB AB AB), then the creed reads something like this:<sup>16</sup>

The phrase *the Son of God* means *born of the Father* (*Only-begotten*, means “uniquely,” which in this case means “the only one to be begotten and not created”); to be *Son of God*, *born of the Father* and *Only-begotten* means to be *of the essence of the Father*. Nothing else is “from the essence.”

*God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God*, mean roughly the same as *Son of God born of the Father*, while *begotten not made* revisits *only-begotten*. Finally, *of one essence with the Father* brings us back to that same striking word, *essence*, already in *of the essence of the Father*. Looking at just the second set of clauses, we can also say that *x from X* statements like *God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God* mean the same thing as *of one essence with the Father*.<sup>17</sup> This is how the original proponents of the Nicene Creed understood all true *X from X* statements.<sup>18</sup>

In short, the claim of the creed is that any terms of what might be called “relation language,” such as *born of the Father*, *Only-begotten*, and all *x from X* statements, are to be understood as having to do with the one divine *essence*. Whatever predicates we speak of, whatever verbs we use, these have to do with a divine essence that is acting within itself. No wording in this section of the creed refers to anything outside the divine essence: the essence is the real subject of all such language.<sup>19</sup> If a reader has the

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and Nicaea,” *JThS* ns 43 (1992): 428–46”; Daniel H. Williams, “Monarchianism and Photinus of Sir-mium as the Persistent Heretical Face of the Fourth Century,” *HTR* 99 (2006): 201–20.” Unfortunately, Alistair Logan’s substantial contribution to the recovery of “the road to (and from) Nicaea” has often been overlooked.

16. In each case, “means” is “to say the same as” or “is to be understood as.”

17. *X from X* is the single most common way to express the origin of the Son from the Father, and/or the continuity between Father and Son.

18. Notice that in the original *X from X* statements, as well as in the essence-based understanding of the statements, there are no qualifiers for either *X*. In the late 350s, Eunomius will interpret *X from X* as inherently meaning “begotten *X* from unbegotten *X*,” so that he will understand “Light from Light” to mean “begotten light from unbegotten Light.”

19. One clause may be an exception—as in the case of Marcellus of Ancyra’s reading of the clause: “begotten” may refer to the economy of the Incarnation (only) understood as the divine essence

entire text before them, the key clause(s) would be “Son of God . . . begotten from the essence of the Father.”

If we hope to get some idea of the theological sensibilities of those whose theology was sympathetic to the content and motives behind the Creed of Nicaea, we can compare their vocabulary and logic to what we find in the creed of 325. For example, the writings of Bishop Alexander of Alexandria, the first hierarch to come into open conflict with Arius, express his theology of the unity between Father and Son largely in terms of unbegotten and begotten. The unbegotten what? The Father. The begotten what? The Son. Alexander does not use *ousia*: he refers to *hypostasis*—taking his cue from Hebrews 1:3.

Alexander stresses the perfection of the Son—that he has all that the Father has—and he concludes that if the Son is not, for any interval, the Word or Power or Wisdom or “any other things by which the Son is known,” then that glory is not in the Father’s nature, which is unthinkable.

“Thus he took from his nature an impression of his likeness in all regards and is an unchangeable image of the Father can express the image of the Archetype.”<sup>20</sup>

“We believe that the Son always is from the Father. ‘For he is the brightness of his glory and image of the Father’s *hypostasis*.’”<sup>21</sup>

“We confess him begotten from the unbegotten Father, God the Word, truth, light, righteousness, Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior of all. He is the image not of the will or any other thing but of *hypostasis* of the Father himself.”<sup>22</sup>

“[T]he Son alone is the form and image [of the Father] . . . Our Redeemer is proclaimed [to be] the form of the Father.”<sup>23</sup>

Having cited these passages from Alexander and the Synod of Antioch (325),<sup>24</sup> it is best to remind readers what I intend for you to appreciate in terms of “Nicene theology.” First, as I have already said, the creed uses “from the essence [*ousia*]” as its fundamental description of the Son’s origin (and thus his nature). As we see from

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existing in the human Jesus without partition or duplication. Later texts in sympathy with Marcellus will say, for example, the divine “extended” into the creature. See Joseph T. Lienhard, *Contra Marcellum: Marcellus of Ancyra and Fourth-Century Theology* (Washington DC: CUA Press, 1999).

20. Alexander, “Letter to Alexander of Thessalonika,” 40.

21. Alexander, “Letter to Alexander of Thessalonika,” 42.

22. “Synodal Letter,” 47.

23. “Synodal Letter,” 47.

24. An Armenian council held in Eznik roughly contemporary to Antioch and Nicaea produced a creed that described the Son as “From the Father, and with him and close to him, the one offspring . . . equal in power” (Gabriele Winkler, “The Antiochene Synods, and the Early Armenian Creeds Including the ‘Rezeptionsgeschichte’ of the Synod of Antioch 341 in the Armenian Version of the Anaphora of Basil,” *Bolletino della Badia Greca Grottaferrata* 3 (2006): 275–98. 293). I include the Armenian reconstruction of Antioch as an illustration, not as part of the proof.



Alexander and Antioch (325), the Nicene emphasis on “production *by the essence*” is striking in its ubiquity: no other kinds of production are considered. (Although *ousia* and *hypostasis* are regarded as synonyms, the creed uses *ousia* consistently.) For example, there is no appeal to “image” language despite the fact that it appears strongly in the letters of Alexander and in the Creed of Antioch (325).<sup>25</sup> At Nicaea there are variations on the basic clause—from *the essence* of the Father, *same in essence*, etc.—and “the Son is generated from the essence [*ex ousia*] of the Father” is a succinct and fair articulation of the creed’s theology. In the Nicene Creed, *ousia* language sets the meaning for *the Christ is the “Son of God”*—a proclamation common across all articulations of the faith—as meaning “from the essence of the Father.”<sup>26</sup> The second major point illustrated in the quotations is that those who can be reasonably presumed to be in sympathy with the creed—those bishops who in fact composed the creed to express a clear and distinct line in the sand that could not be crossed (and which Arius had crossed)—did not themselves use *ousia* language previously, though their writings show a concern for the question of the origin and generation of the “true Son” just as the Nicaea does.<sup>27</sup> Finally, we should note and not simply pass over the implicit but fundamental fact that there being no explicit doctrinal statement appeal to sequence other than Father-Son is very important: there is no explicit appeal to *taxis* or *ordo*.<sup>28</sup> For all Trinitarian theologies involved in the Nicene controversy, the Father is first because he is uncaused and first cause of Son and Holy Spirit. The argument can be reduced to: “What is revealed to us by the fact that the Father is first, uncaused, and the Son is ‘second,’ caused?” The spectrum of answers to that question runs from Marcellus to Eunomius.<sup>29</sup> From “first” and “second” enters the concepts of subordinationism, modalism, and even that of “mission.”

25. We have a tenuous grasp of the Creed of Antioch: fragments of the text have traveled through Greek, into Syrian, and finally into Armenian. The word I have twice given as “form” is from Hebrews 1:3, the *xarakter* of *hypostasis*. Even if I had the Greek text before me, I would have trouble coming up with words that are not synonymous with the Greek for form, character, image, or impression.

26. Marcellus of Ancyra, bishop of the city where the council was planned to convene until an earthquake required a change of venue, an early advocate for the creed produced by the council, interprets the exclusive use of “from the essence” language to mean that there is a stage in God’s action which locates the Word within the essence; “Son” refers only to the Incarnation.

27. Looking at other texts by the bishops instrumental in the writing of the creed, one can easily imagine that the Creed of Nicaea could have read along the lines of the Son being “born of the *hypostasis* of the Father, one in *hypostasis* or of the same *hypostasis* as the Father.” The bishops declined a biblical term in favor of *ousia*!

28. This is not a feature unique to this creed, but even when there is no explicit reference to a Trinitarian order, that conceptuality is present and supplying a logic. In some creeds and the supporting logic the order, “first, second, third” are intrinsic to the faith; in others, the Son and Holy Spirit are simultaneously (as it were) from the Father. The order of persons is a basic concept in Tertullian’s Trinitarian logic: the *taxis* of the Trinity is itself embedded in the revelation of the existence of a Trinitarian God. (Compare the logic of sequence or order in the Trinitarian theology of Marius Victorinus.)

29. Marcellus is said to have summarized his Trinitarian theology as, “No number in God! No two or three!”

As is clear from the quotations from the “Epistle of Alexander” and the Creed of Antioch, the bishops who wrote the creed did not use *ousia* in their own texts or creeds: they typically used “image” or “participating perfectly,” following the precedent of Hebrews 1:3. I think the creed is purposely placed outside important scriptural terminology and testimony. We know the creed was written with a polemical or exclusionary intention: to judge the teachings attributed to Arius as heretical. The canons are explicit about that particular condemnation. I believe that the creed was intentionally placed outside the scriptural language or other “production” models in order to use it as a means to test or measure those traditional or commonplace doctrines. It is a hermeneutical device. The Son is from the essence of the Father, the Son is the Son of the Father’s essence, the Son has the same essence as the Father. All other doctrines are measured against the “from the essence” standard. The Son is the Son of what? You have to say “essence.” The Father generates the Son from his—what? Moreover, whatever ambiguity we now find in the creed was not there for its intended audience: they knew this “measure” excluded “from/of the will,” and if pressed it would reject or at least radically reconfigure “image” and “radiance” language. The creed’s perceived measure or canon shifted from “from the essence” or “of the essence of the Father” to “[of the] same essence [*homoousios*]” and to “from the Father.”

The transition from image language (for example) to essence language that occurred at some moment in the council is unknown to us, and will remain unknown, and which, moreover, the authors of the creed took no opportunity to hint at, much less to explain.<sup>30</sup> The Son is fully divine (and truly Son) because he is “from the essence” or “from the essence of the Father” (whom all acknowledge implicitly is truly “God”). This is the theology of the Creed of Nicaea. All the writings that later follow in attempts to explain and to justify the creed as a whole (comparatively few), or as propositions or clauses of the creed (more), or simply as an individual phrase or single words (the goal of most polemical apologies) will have little more conceptual context to work from than that simple summary clause: “from the essence of the Father.” Perhaps just as important to keep in mind is that those who attacked the creed or what it “stood for” had nothing more to sink their teeth into than a Trinitarian theology

30. I am not saying that *ousia* language or even *homoousia* appeared with no theological precedents or philosophical logic; I am concluding from the fact that there are several precedents, each of which could provide a logic or the reason why the council fathers used *ousia* language and even the term *homoousia*. The creed itself, as a text, offers no signs or clues as to which of these several trajectories “supplied” the language of the creed or the tradition of conceptualizing the tri-une God. Christopher Stead’s still useful book, *Divine Substance*, provides evidence of, and insight into, different authors and texts, any of which could have been the decisive source for the language of the creed. Joseph Lienhard’s article, “The Arian Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered,” *TS* 48 (1987): 415–36, gives us insight into why the creed was received by some as it was—it was the product of the “mihypostatic” school, as the council’s first condemnation gives evidence. But the creed does not use “one” (*en* or *mia*), and, moreover, there are precedents for *homoousias* among prior representative of the “dyhypostatic” trajectory. *Perhaps* *homoousios* is most accurately parsed as “one in essence”—except from the unfortunate Marcellan resonance this would have. Perhaps the council fathers used *homoousias* to decline Marcellus’ direct statement “one-essence”?



whose content can be expressed in the propositions “from the essence” of or “same in essence” with the Father.<sup>31</sup> To a great extent, either side will work by building a conceptual context for essence-based clauses, phrases, or a single word (i.e., *homoousios*). Those who argue for essence-based logic for the union of “Father and Son” in order to defend what they think is “the faith of Nicaea” I call neo-Nicenes.<sup>32</sup> Those who argue against essence-based logic in order to attack and end what they think of as “the faith of Nicaea” I call anti-Nicenes.<sup>33</sup> Nicenes answer the question of “from what/who is the Son or the Word *out of*?” with “from the essence [of God the Father].” Second, Nicenes have an answer for the question of *how* he was produced or generated from the essence (of the Father). By what kind of “from” or “out of,” specifically? “begotten.” The decisive language is “from” and “out of” “the essence [of the Father].” In my opinion, *homoousios* is not the central, decisive expression of the theology of the council; rather, the word provides a name for the question: How do we relate the generated essence to the generating essence? We say that the generated essence is the *same in essence* with the generating essence.<sup>34</sup>

I am walking slowly over what is surely evident and hardly needs to be said aloud, but what is not evident and needs to be said clearly—in light of events later—is that the council fathers were saying that a generated essence “out of” an ungenerated essence was still properly said to be *homoousios* with the ungenerated generating essence. “Always the Father, always the Son” was how Alexander had put it. But the council’s assertion that a generated essence was one with its generating essence, even if that generating essence was ungenerated, was a weak use of essence logic, not its cornerstone. Christopher Stead concluded (in 1977) that

the vast majority of the texts examined [in his book] above and elsewhere, including those from Athanasius’ *de Decretis*, indicate that the phrase [from God’s essence] was not designed to make the directly ontological statement

31. Repeating what I said above: all *X from X* statements are to be understood as “essence from the same essence,” just as “[only-begotten] Son of the Father” is understood.

32. Why are these later authors not simply designated “Nicene”? For the same reason 357 anti-Nicenes are not “Arians”: the chain of evidence is broken, and the logic of 357 (in either case) need not be the same as 318–25. See Eusebius of Caesarea’s justification to his parish in “Letter to His Church Concerning the Synod at Nicaea,” in Rusch, *Trinitarian Controversy*, 57–60.

33. A significant number of synods and creeds took no interest in, or were ignorant of, Nicaea. During the 340s, synodal letters take care to reject Arius and his ilk, while at the same time condemning the theological of Marcellus—though the condemnations of Marcellus were more spirited than the rejections of Arius. “Arianism,” as we define the term today, was thought, in the West during the 340s, to be dead letter. See Meslin, *Les ariens d’Occident 335–430* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1967).

34. See Kelly Spoerl, “Two Early Nicenes: Eustathius of Antioch and Marcellus of Ancyra,” in Peter W. Martens, ed., *In The Shadow of the Incarnation* (Notre Dame IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2008), 121–48. Kelly’s purpose is to compare the theologies of two participants of the council to reveal their similarities and differences. Spoerl notes the lack of “any reference to the controversial Nicene watchword *homoousion*” in the writings of these two bishops who attended Nicaea and whose theology was represented in the creed (Spoerl, “Two Early Nicenes,” 125). My thesis explains and indeed expects that “absence.” For those at Nicaea, *homoousios* gave a title to the outcome of a logic.