

# EUNOMIUS (HETEROOUSIANS)

The Development of the Doctrine of the Trinity

## AETIUS

Born c. 313

Supported by bishops in Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine

Ordained a deacon in Antioch before 351

Welcomed to Alexandria by George in 351, Eunomius becomes his secretary

Returns to Antioch at the death of Leontius in 357-358 to support Eudoxius

Aetius active in Alexandria in 357

Exiled in 358

Active in Constantinople in 359-60 when he presents his *Syntagmation*, then exiled again

Recalled by Julian in 362 and died shortly after

## EUNOMIUS

### LIFE

- Born around 335 at Oltiseris, between Cappadocia and Galatia, according to Gregory of Nyssa (CE 1 34, 105; CE III 10, 50). Sozomen has him born at Dakora. (See Winling, 23)
  - He seems to have been born to a family of farmers and decided to take up rhetoric rather than farm himself. Theodore of Mopsuestia says that he was fired from teaching because of a compromising situation with a student (Winling, 24 and 24 n 3).
- He moved to Constantinople. (Winling, 24)
- 357: He met Second, Bishop of Ptolemais, who sent him to Alexandria to become secretary to and student of Aetius under bishop George of Cappadocia (356-358). (Winling, 25)
  - He may have studied with or with students of Iamblichus (Winling, 25)
- When Eudoxius of Germanicie became bishop of Antioch they moved there and became the spokespeople for extreme Arianism, playing a significant role in the 358 Synod of Antioch (Winling, 25).
- 358: After a synod in Ancyra led by Basil of Ancyra, Aetius was exiled to Pepusa. Eunomius was ordained deacon and sent to Constans by Eudoxius to defend the Anomian cause (Winling, 25). On the way he was arrested by Basil's people and exiled to Midea in Phrygia (Winling, 26).
- When Eudoxius became bishop of Constantinople, Eunomius was made bishop of Cyzicus, probably in 360 (Winling, 26).
- In 361, he was called to Constantinople to defend his position. (Winling, 27)
- Eudoxius asked him to subscribe to the formula of Rimini and the deposition of Aetius. He refused and renounced his see, returning to Cappadocia (Winling, 27).
- The reign of Julian from 361 to 363 gave Eunomius, and Aetius, freedom to act and preach, returning to Constantinople (Winling, 28).
- Eudoxius had him exiled to Chalcedon and Aetius to Lesbos, where he died in 365-66. Eunomius returned to Constantinople in 365-66 with Procopius where he gave Aetius a grand funeral, but he was forced to leave the city by the clergy and returned to Chalcedon (Winling, 29).
- Basil of Caesarea wrote *Against Eunomius* against his theology
- In 361 Eunomius renounced his see
- In 378 he wrote his *Defense of his Apology*
- Died after 380

# THEOLOGY

## CHARACTERIZATIONS

- Called the "logic-chopper" by Gregory of Nyssa
- Called neo-Arian but had no connection with Arius and did not approach questions in the same way
- Called anhomioian, heterousian

## CONCERNS

- Concerned to defend the intelligibility of the faith
- Eunomius proposes two approaches to the mystery of God: the way of substance and the way of activity. He claims to be restating the tradition and gives a summary according to Father, Son, and Spirit. He then moves to discuss the activities. Substance, he says, is attained by pure reason; activities by reflection on created works and their effects. (*Apology*, Introduction, 179-180, see *Apology*, 20.6-10).

## UNDERSTANDING GOD

- God can be known by the human mind to be unoriginated
- If God is unoriginated, then the Son cannot be God
- The Son and Spirit must be different from the Father in substance
  - Not homousios but heterousios
- The names of God tell us God's essence: "the designation truly represents the essence, the substance is the very same as that which is signified by the name" (*Liber Apologeticus*, 12, quoted in Golitzen, 286)
- There is a divine hierarchy: the Father, then the Logos (the *Liber Apologeticus* calls it the Father's solidified energy and our demiurge at 24, see Golitzen, 287), then the Spirit, then us (Golitzen, 287).
- Philosophy tells us about God.
- A pure concept of God is reached by stripping away all that comes from human experience and human invention. The name "ingenerate" is prior to any creaturely reflection. It has its source in God alone and is thus the applies to God as he is in himself (see *Apology*, Introduction, 181-182).

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