

Request: <---Write the request you are responding to

Information on things mentioned in The Da Vinci Code: witches hammer, Council of Nicaea, Knights Templar, hieros gamos, invincible sun

Contents: <--- List the resources you've included (if you've made something like a table include the sources of the information you used)

1. "Malleus Maleficarum" in *The Historical Dictionary of Witchcraft*, Scarecrow Press, pages 131-33, 2012.
2. "The First Council of Nicaea Codifies Christianity." *Global Events: Milestone Events Throughout History*. Cengage Learning, Volume 5, pages 91-94, 2014.
3. "The First Council of Nicaea" by Mark Edward in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, Cambridge University Press, Volume 1, pages 552-67, 2006,
4. "Knight Templars" in *Encyclopedia of Historical Warrior Peoples and Modern Fighting Groups*, Grey House Publishing, Third Edition, 2016.
5. "Forget The Da Vinci Code: This Is Real Mystery of the Knights Templar." by Dominic Selwood. *The Telegraph Online*, 2013.
6. "Hieros Gamos" *Britannica Encyclopedia Of World Religions*. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2006.

You can use this space to include any important notes about a source or alternatives you weren't able to include

Date Complete <---Date you sent your response to the coordinator

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typical late-medieval or early-modern witchcraft cases, witch suspects were accused by their neighbors of causing harm to human beings, especially **children**, or their livestock and other property. This harm might include murder, disease, and impeding the fertility of people as well as their livestock and crops. In such cases, the death, disease, or destruction caused to the victim was generally regarded as inexplicable in natural or providential terms; instead, the witch suspects were believed to have caused the *maleficium* out of enmity. The punishment of the convicted witch was thought to give relief from the *maleficium* in cases where the harm could still be remedied. Witch suspects were also sometimes accused of causing pestilence or famine, often by raising **storms** or hail, and performing **love magic** to arouse affection or enmity between people.

Maleficium was a feature of both secular and ecclesiastical witchcraft trials in the early-modern period. For most ecclesiastical authorities, diabolism was the main crime of the witches, and their acts of harm, frequently confessed under **torture**, were merely further evidence of their true nature. Although secular judges might have shown a personal interest in diabolism, they could usually only prosecute the witches' *maleficium*. In **England** and other regions of Europe where witches were generally prosecuted in secular courts and the focus was mainly on *maleficium*, **witch-hunting** was noticeably less severe. In early-modern **Spain**, witchcraft continued to be defined as a delusion. The *maleficium* attributed to witches by ordinary people was therefore regarded by the Spanish **Inquisition** as an illusion that was not punishable in law.

MALLEUS MALEFICARUM

MALLEUS MALEFICARUM

The most notorious treatise on **witchcraft** and **witch-hunting**, the *Malleus maleficarum* (Hammer of Witches), was written in 1486 and first published in or before 1487. Until the 19th century, it was assumed that the *Malleus* was co-authored by two Dominicans, **Heinrich Kramer**, an inquisitor, and **Jakob Sprenger**, a theologian and head of the Teutonic (or German) province of the order. Since then, however, Sprenger's role has been disputed, and he may, in fact, have been an opponent of Kramer's activities, driving the inquisitor from his province. The appearance of Sprenger's name in both the foreword to the *Malleus* and the papal bull *Summis desiderantes affectibus* that was published as part of the text did, however, lend the treatise additional authority.

Kramer wrote the *Malleus maleficarum* in response to the opposition he encountered during his **inquisition** in Innsbruck in 1485. Kramer's unorthodox methods of interrogation, including the use of intimidation and excessive **torture**, led the local bishop of Brixen, Georg II Golser, backed by the citizens, clergy and nobility of the Tyrol, to stop the investigations and free all the **women** suspected of witchcraft; Kramer was forced to leave the territory in February 1486. Despite this failure, Kramer used his presence in Innsbruck to suggest that he had been aided by Bishop Golser and the archduke of Tyrol. Like the use of Sprenger's name and the publication of the bull *Summis desiderantes affectibus* issued on

Kramer's behalf by **Pope Innocent VIII** prior to the events in Innsbruck, this was a piece of manipulation designed to enhance the authority of the *Malleus*. He added to the luster of the treatise by referring to a letter of approbation issued by the University of Cologne (denied by two of the alleged authors) and suggesting that King Maximilian I, later the **German Emperor**, backed the work (which he did not). Kramer clearly understood how to manipulate the new technology of printing to give credence to a treatise that he knew would be controversial.

The *Malleus maleficarum* itself consists of three parts. The first addresses theological issues, arguing that witchcraft was a threat to Christianity. Kramer based much of this part of the *Malleus* on his reading of **Saint Augustine of Hippo** and **Thomas Aquinas**, emphasizing the necessity of God's permission and the witch's free will. It conformed to the new **demonology** that had emerged from about 1400 in the work of **Jean Gerson**, **Johannes Nider**, **Claude Tholosan**, and **Hans Fründ**, as well as in the *Errores Gazariorum*, in which witchcraft had become a **heresy** rather than a mere superstition. In this part, Kramer also argued that **women** were more likely to fall into the heresy of witchcraft than men because they were emotionally weaker. The **devil** did not have to tempt them away from God through rational argument; he only had to offer to meet their emotional or everyday needs. The second part of the *Malleus* deals with protection against witchcraft and how to cure bewitchment. The final part of the treatise hands jurisdiction over witchcraft cases to all courts, ecclesiastical and secular as well as inquisitorial, and was designed as a manual of procedure and formula. It set witchcraft aside as a **crimen exceptum** (exceptional crime) that was not subject to the normal limits on the types of witnesses who could testify in such cases or the amount of torture that could be applied to the accused under interrogation.

The influence of the *Malleus maleficarum* over the prosecution of witchcraft at the height of the witch-hunts is disputed. The text offers a detailed and comprehensive, if contradictory, set of arguments and information about the new witch sect as one inquisitor understood it. As one of the earliest printed demonologies, it also achieved a wide circulation throughout Europe. That does not mean, however, that it was widely read or that it directly influenced later works or the actions of witch-hunters. Sixteenth-century demonologists, judges, and legislators did sometimes reference the *Malleus*, but they tended to draw on a wide range of other texts as well and to defer to contemporary authorities like **Jean Bodin**, **Peter Binsfeld**, or **Martín Del Rio**. The **Reformation** also reduced the influence of the *Malleus* in areas that did not remain Catholic.

MAMBABARANG

A type of **mangkukulam**, or witch, from the Philippines, the mambabarang kills using black **magic**. He takes a strand of his victim's hair and ties it to insects or worms. These insects or worms are then pricked and the victim's body becomes infested with creatures that will eventually kill them.

MANDRAKE

A herb native to the Mediterranean region, mandrake has long been thought to possess magical powers and has been used in a wide variety of medicines, spells, and potions. The ancient Greeks associated the plant with the semi-divine sorceress **Circe**. The mandrake contains atropine, hyoscyamine, and scopolamine, all of which have medical uses today. In small doses, these drugs in the medicines and **poisons** made from the mandrake can induce hallucinations or a feeling of lightness associated with out-of-body experiences like astral-planing. They can also be used to bring on a coma or as an anesthetic. In large doses, the mandrake is highly poisonous and can be used to harm people.

The power of the mandrake was attributed to its root, which can appear as a small, human-shaped figure. Supposedly, the mandrake will shriek loudly when uprooted and will kill whoever digs it up. Anyone wanting to use the mandrake root was therefore advised to dig up most of the plant but not fully remove it from the ground. A dog was then tied to the plant with a rope, and its master would leave. As the dog tried to follow, it would pull the mandrake from the ground and, in doing so, be killed. The master could then return to collect the root. Witches were said to pick the root from beneath gallows trees, where it supposedly grew from the blood or semen of hanged criminals. The striking visual appearance of the root and the myths that surrounded it made the mandrake a central feature in the work of several 17th-century artists who painted pictures of witches' **sabbaths**, including Frans Francken the Younger, Jacques de Gheyn, and David Teniers the Younger.

See also [ART, WITCHCRAFT IN](#); [MAGIC](#).

MANGKUKULAM

A witch or sorcerer in the Philippines, a mangkukulam uses spells, curses, and potions to harm his or her victims. In more recent times, mangkukulams have been accused of using **Voodoo** dolls to inflict pain and injury on people. They are mostly associated with areas of the Philippines where traditional healers are commonly consulted because illness there is often regarded as being supernatural in origin. Victims will sometimes seek out the mangkukulam and bribe him to remove the spell. Mangkukulams are sometimes known as “bruho” (male witch) or “bruha” (female witch) from the Spanish words *brujo* and *bruja*.

See also [MAMBABARANG](#).

MAP, WALTER (ca. 1140–1208/10)

An English cleric who served as a royal justice under King Henry II, from about 1182, Map recorded various stories, anecdotes, and observations in a work entitled *De nugis curialium* (On the Folly of Courtiers). Here, he included accounts of diabolical **pacts**, demonic activity, **sorcery**, and **heresy**. He described a heretical sect known as *Publicans* or *Patarines*, the members of which gathered secretly to feast, celebrate, and worship a **demon**, who appeared in the form of a large black **cat**. Although Map did not describe them in any way as witches, his account of their activities, and the stereotypes of

GLOBAL EFFECT

The cenobitic monastic movement founded by Pachomius eventually spread outside Egypt and went on to influence the growth of monasteries all over the world. Cenobitic monasticism reached the Byzantine Empire fairly rapidly. Dalmatou, the first monastery in Constantinople (present-day Istanbul, Turkey), was founded during the fourth century. By the sixth century, monasteries had spread throughout the Byzantine Empire. The Rule of St. Basil, influenced by Egyptian anchorites, established the guidelines for monastic life in the Byzantine Empire. Basil (c. 329–379) had visited Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia, examining the young Christian religious communities in each country.

Monasticism traveled to Western Europe relatively quickly. One of the most influential figures in the spread of monasticism to the West was John Cassian (c. 360–435). Cassian visited Palestine, taking vows in a monastery in Bethlehem under Abbot Germanus (c. fourth century). The two went on to Egypt while Cassian was still a young man, spending several years visiting a number of monastic foundations. Cassian was familiar with several monastic systems, including that of Pachomius. Some rules focused on a master-disciple relationship, whereas others were more concerned with the relationship of the brothers or sisters in the community.

Cassian remained in Egypt until 399. Growing controversy in the monastic communities led Cassian and a number of Egyptian monks to flee to the Byzantine Empire. Cassian appealed to John Chrysostom (c. 347–407), the archbishop of Constantinople, for assistance. Chrysostom made him a deacon of the church. Cassian eventually went on to Rome in 404, at the request of the archbishop to seek the assistance of the pope.

Cassian spent some time in Rome. He may have witnessed the sack of Rome by Alaric (c. 370–410) in 410, increasing his belief in the importance of a spiritual retreat from the world. Cassian was given permission to found an Egyptian-style monastery in France at some time during his stay in Rome. He may have worked or visited Antioch before 414. Cassian reached Marseilles in Gaul (present-day France) around 415 and founded the Abbey of Saint-Victor. The abbey included both a monastery and a convent for nuns.

After founding the Abbey of Saint-Victor, Cassian produced two books on monastic life. The first provided a guideline for the external life of religious men and women. His rule was inspired by Eastern monasticism, including the monasteries founded by

Pachomius almost a century before. The second volume focused on the internal life and prayer of monastic individuals. In the early twenty-first century, monks are still encouraged to read Cassian's work.

In the West, cenobitic monasteries often follow a religious order, such as that of Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–543), founder of the Benedictine monastic order. Benedict was significantly influenced by the monastic rules written and established by Cassian. Benedictine monks take many of the same vows as those early religious in the monasteries and convents founded by Pachomius. They engage in work, pray together, and take vows of poverty and obedience. Although the notion of the house and tribe did not continue into the Middle Ages, each group of monks was watched over by a supervisor, and each monastic house was headed by an abbot.

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The First Council of Nicaea Codifies Christianity

325

GLOBAL CONTEXT**Africa**

In the fourth century, the Kingdom of Aksum in present-date Ethiopia adopts Christianity.

Asia and Oceania

Chandragupta I (died 335) ascends the throne around 320 to rule a small kingdom in India. He then expands the kingdom to include most of the central Ganges, and his descendants rule northern India for almost 150 years.

Central and South America

In 378 the fourteenth king of Tikal (in present-day Guatemala), Chak Tak Ich'aak (c. 340–378), is killed.

Europe

Old St. Peter's Basilica is completed in Rome in 360. St. Peter's Basilica in modern times stands on the same site where the previous basilica stood.

Middle East

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is consecrated in 335.

North America

In the fourth century agricultural communities begin to emerge throughout North America.

KEY FIGURES

Political Leaders

Athanasius (c. 296–373), bishop of Alexandria, Egypt.
Constantine I (272–337), emperor of the Roman Empire.

BACKGROUND

In 312 Constantine I (272–337) and his brother-in-law Maxentius (c. 278–312) were embroiled in a struggle over the throne of the Roman Empire. Constantine had already won a couple of battles, and on October 27, 312, he and his troops waited to engage Maxentius's men the next morning at the Milvian Bridge, an important route over the Tiber River into Rome. According to tradition, as he was preparing for this battle, Constantine saw a blazing cross of light shining down from the sky with a message: *in hoc signo vinces* (in this sign you shall all conquer). Constantine was not a Christian, but he believed this to be a sign from the Christian god. He ordered his troops to inscribe a cross on their shields. The two armies faced each other in battle the next day. Constantine emerged victorious, and credited his success to the Christian god. As the new Roman emperor, Constantine legalized Christianity and extended to Christians all the rights of Roman citizenship, putting an end to the persecution of Christians.

At this time, the people of the diverse Roman Empire followed many different religions. Most people living in the capital of Rome worshipped

Roman gods, but people living in far-flung communities held pagan beliefs and rituals. Within the young Christian religion, too, people held widely different beliefs and practices. As the numbers of Christians grew, so did the number of beliefs about what it meant to be a Christian. Christian leaders disagreed on many things, but the disagreement about the central question of the relationship between Jesus (c. 6 BCE–c. 30 CE) and God threatened to tear apart the early church.

In an article in *Christian History*, Christian Orthodox scholar John Anthony McGuckin observes that it is difficult for modern Christians to understand the public turmoil created by the argument among church leaders that resulted in “graffiti emblazoned on walls, a vicious war of pamphlets, riots in the streets, lawsuits, [and] catchy songs of ridicule.” Social turmoil caused by factions that held different views on Jesus's divine status caused Constantine to take action.

THE EVENT

In 325 Constantine decided to hold a meeting at which Christian bishops were to resolve the major issues



A fifteenth-century painting depicts Constantine presiding over the First Council of Nicaea, at which the rules and principles of Christianity were codified in 325. © GIANNI DAGLI ORTI/THE ART ARCHIVE/ART RESOURCE, NY

facing the church. He invited all eighteen hundred bishops to join him at his vacation palace in the Turkish town of Nicaea. The bishops began arriving in May, and the First Council of Nicaea officially convened on June 19, in the presence of the emperor. According to Athanasius (296–373), the bishop of Alexandria, Egypt, there were 318 attendees at this first worldwide gathering of bishops.

The Christian leaders set about resolving their differences. The biggest controversy involved the divinity of Jesus. Some church leaders believed that Jesus was less divine than God, whereas others argued that he was equally divine. Constantine proposed a compromise, saying vaguely that Jesus and God were of the same substance, to which the majority of bishops agreed. The Council of Nicaea affirmed that Jesus was divine. For the first time, the holy trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—was defined as three equal divine parts of a single whole. The statement of belief agreed to by the bishops, which became known as the Nicene Creed, was to be upheld by the church and defended by the Roman emperor.

The bishops also clarified the rules by which the church would operate. Athanasius, who as the bishop of the great city of Alexandria held a position of great respect, worked with his colleagues to codify Christian rules and practices. The canons established at the First Council of Nicaea became the reference points for all future Christian laws. Some of these canons dealt with rules for ordination of priests, the living arrangements of the clergy, elections within the church, the process of excommunication, rights of bishops, how certain prayers should be recited, and many other rules dealing with the workings of the Christian faith.

The council also took up some practical matters, including the date for celebrating Easter. This holiest of Christian holidays, which celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, was being celebrated on different days in different parts of the Roman Empire. This sometimes meant that the celebration of Easter coincided with the Jewish holiday of Passover, the holiday that celebrates Jesus going to Jerusalem to celebrate before he is crucified. Therefore, the holidays falling on the same date would have been a major source of historical inaccuracy and simply would not have made sense for Jesus's story. To avoid this conflict, the bishops agreed to celebrate Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox. The council concluded on August 25.

GLOBAL EFFECT

Contrary to popular modern belief, the First Council of Nicaea had nothing to do with selecting which

gospels, stories, or verses to include in the Bible, nor did the bishops burn books that they perceived to be heretical. The council also did not immediately put to rest all of the questions and differences of opinions that church leaders had. But the bishops had come together on perhaps the most fundamental issue plaguing the church: the question of Jesus's divinity.

The men who met in Nicaea likely did not realize the import of their decisions, but modern historians believe the council to be a fundamental step forward in the church's history. In helping determine the essence of Christianity, the bishops helped prevent the religion from splintering into many different factions. In the early twenty-first century, Christians of many different denominations continue to follow the basic precepts of the Nicene Creed. In churches throughout the world, Christian worshippers recite the Nicene Creed during weekly services, repeating the words of faith that were written almost seventeen hundred years ago.

FURTHER RESOURCES

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The first Council of Nicaea

MARK EDWARDS

The first Council of Nicaea was summoned in 325 CE by Constantine, within seven months of the victory that installed him as sole ruler of the empire. It was held, according to Socrates (*HE* 1.8), because the Christian sovereign hated discord and had, therefore, set himself three tasks: to resolve the Melitian schism in Alexandria, to establish a date for Easter, and to bring the church to a common mind in the wake of the controversy ignited by Arius, an Alexandrian presbyter. These issues will be explained below, but we may begin by noting that the council itself was a sign that Christianity had assumed a new mode of government, as well as a new position in the empire. Hitherto, no dispute had been debated in full synod by representatives of all provinces. Doctrine had seldom divided the bishops, and each had therefore imposed the orthodoxy of his forebears on his own clergy; synods convened to chastise a truculent churchman seldom required the notice, let alone the personal attendance, of bishops from outside his province. It was because the questions pending were so momentous, because Christendom was now too large to act as a body even in matters which touched it as a body, and, above all, because the monarchy of Constantine could not tolerate a fragmented church, that this became the first 'oecumenical council', to use the expression of an illustrious participant, Eusebius of Caesarea.

Eusebius, the archivist of church affairs for the three preceding centuries, is also the chief historian of his own epoch. It is from his elliptical narrative in the *De vita Constantini* that we learn most about the prelude to the council and the imperial correspondence that succeeded it; most versions of the creed that it framed against Arius are based upon the letter that he addressed to Caesarea in vindication of his own signature. For the rest, we depend on retrospective allusions, on the stitching together of papyrus fragments, on the partisan testimony of Athanasius (who, if present at all, as deacon to

The first Council of Nicaea

Alexander of Alexandria,¹ would not have been a participant in debate) and on the ecclesiastical historians, some four of whom – Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret – offer credible increments to our knowledge, while two of the most loquacious, Philostorgius and Gelasius of Cyzicus, may have done little more than embellish or parody what they read elsewhere. The later the historian, the more apt he is to follow Athanasius in assuming that the defence or definition of a contested orthodoxy was the main object of the council. Yet the creed itself – the vague yet polemical *Symbolum Nicaenum* which will furnish the centrepiece of the present chapter – is an expression not so much of unanimity as of a common desire for unity. Those bishops (the great majority) who came nursing other quarrels may have seen in it nothing more than a placebo for a new, abstruse and local controversy, which, like any other controversy, would be forgotten once it had been resolved.

The protagonists

Constantine himself, though an apologist, was never a dogmatic theologian. He could tolerate a modest idiosyncrasy in doctrine far more readily than conspicuous disparity in practice. In 314 he had used the Council of Arles² to subject the west to the Roman calendar, which required that Easter always fall on the Sunday after the new moon which succeeded the vernal equinox. In Asia Minor, however, many churches held to the ‘Quartodeciman’ reckoning, according to which the remembrance of the Passion was to coincide with the day of preparation for the Passover (14 Nisan), whenever that Jewish festival chanced to fall. To the first Christian emperor, a Judaising anomaly was peculiarly unpalatable, and Constantine’s instructions to the bishops after the Nicene council³ give the immediate force of law to the Roman date. It is not the creed but the paschal computation that was remembered in the canons attached to the Council of Antioch in 341,⁴ and even today the date of the chief Christian holiday continues to rotate according to principles laid down in 325.

Eusebius of Caesarea, the biographer and encomiast of Constantine, seems none the less to disapprove of the Council of Nicaea altogether when he

1 His attendance is recorded first by Gregory of Nazianzus (*Or.* 21); in a list preserved by Gelasius of Cyzicus, he is the only cleric of a lower order to sign the creed (*HE* 2.38.2). In his tract *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, Athanasius speaks of the delegates in the third person.

2 Jonkers, *Acta*, 23–4.

3 Euseb. *V.C.* 3.17–19, with 3.5.1–2; see Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, Cameron and Hall (eds. and trans.), 268–71.

4 Often assigned now to the earlier council which deposed Eustathius.

imputes the beginnings of it to malevolence or *phthonos*.⁵ He was certainly not inimical to public shows of harmony. Eusebius records with satisfaction the unanimity of the bishops who approved the Roman date for Easter in the late second century (*HE* 5.24), and he counts the suppression of synods among the impieties of Licinius, the pagan precursor of Constantine in the east (*V.C.* 1.51.1). If Eusebius thus admits that there were matters which required a synod after 321, he could hardly think it a fault in Constantine, the first Christian emperor, to convene one in 325, within a few months of assuming the eastern throne. Unity of doctrine was, however, not so clearly a matter for an episcopal gathering as was conformity in worship. Eusebius does not tell us in his *Historia ecclesiastica* – though it was subsequently accepted by all parties as a fact – that the Council of Antioch in 268 had denounced the application of the adjective *homoousios* ('consubstantial') to the persons of the Trinity; and in his *Demonstratio evangelica*, written before the Nicene council, he discourages the pursuit of any question to which the answer is not revealed in the sacred texts. To judge from the events that followed the council, the prescription of Eusebius – uniformity of practice within the latitude of opinion permitted by the scriptures – commanded wide support among the prelates of the east.

Theological inquiry in Alexandria was, however, more tenacious – which is not to say more philosophical, let alone more Platonic. This was the seedbed of the controversy which became – at least in retrospect – the main business of the council. During the previous hundred years, the catechists and clergy of the city had taken every opportunity to castigate the Libyan Sabellius for his teaching that the Father and the Son are a single entity (*prosōpon*). The view of the majority in Egypt, and throughout the eastern empire, was that the Father, Son and Spirit are three *hypostases*, or self-identical beings, who coexist as a triad, but without compromising the unity of God. This was the opinion of Arius,⁶ an Alexandrian presbyter, who proclaimed the distinctness of the three hypostases with such vehemence that his bishop, Alexander, rightly suspected him of denying that the second and third participated in a common Godhead. Arius in turn accused Alexander of an inclination to Sabellianism. When Alexander demanded a recantation of his tenet that the Son was 'out of nothing' (*ex ouk ontōn*),⁷ he refused, and an Egyptian synod was convened against him. As was their wont, the bishops of this province cast their votes en bloc with

5 Euseb. *V.C.* 3.4; cf. 2.61 and his comment on the origins of the council at Tyre (4.41).

Athanasius bears the stigma of anonymity throughout Euseb. *V.C.*

6 On his theology see Williams, *Arius*, 95–116. Dates are much contested, but the letters of Alexander and Arius were probably composed between 318 and 323.

7 See Arius' letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia (*Epiph. Pan.* 69.7; Thdt. *HE* 1.5). Stead, 'Word', surmises that Arius rested his theology on Prov 8:22.

The first Council of Nicaea

the patriarch – all except two Libyans, Theonas and Secundus, who were particularly wary of any statement which might seem to lend support to their fellow countryman, the errant Sabellius.⁸ Far from submitting, Arius sought the protection of Eusebius, the astute and powerful bishop of Nicomedia in Bithynia, and by some accounts a courtier of Licinius, who resided there as monarch of the east.

Three considerations may have induced Eusebius of Nicomedia to take up the cause of Arius. First, as he was reminded at the end of Arius' letter, both were pupils of the eminent scholar Lucian of Antioch, to whom Constantine's new capital, Constantinople, was later dedicated. Next, there may have been rivalry between Nicomedia and Alexandria, for while the former was an imperial seat, the latter remained the wealthiest city of the Greek world and claimed the apostle Mark as the founder of its church. Finally, Eusebius may have thought in good faith that his suppliant had been wrongly condemned, for, while he does not appear to have held that the Son was 'out of nothing', one of his letters denies that the Son proceeds from the being or *ousia* of the Father.⁹ Whether or not this statement was intended to contradict the ancient principle that the Son is 'from the *hypostasis* of the Father',¹⁰ it certainly excludes the term *homoousios*, which, however the second half of it is rendered, must imply that the *ousia* (being, substance, entity or essence) of the Son and the Father is one.

Arius also shunned this term: in a letter to Alexander¹¹ he explains that to conceive of the Son as a *homoousion meros* ('consubstantial part') of the Father would be to follow the Manichaeans by introducing passibility and division into the Godhead. Even after the Council of Nicaea, opponents of the *homoousion* declared that it could only connote the homogeneity between two lengths of the same material, or else the result the result of kneading two materials into a stuff of uniform texture.¹² Arius concedes that one could also preserve the unity of nature between the Father and the Son by 'dividing the monad', like Sabellius, by making the Son a physical projection from the Father, like Valentinus, or by likening him to a fire lit from a fire, like Hieracas. But all these would be blasphemies: the First Commandment requires that all divinity be invested in the Father, and consequently the Son must be a *ktisma* or creation,

8 Cf. Soz. HE 2.18.

9 Letter to Paulinus of Tyre at Thdt. HE 1.6.

10 Cf. Tertullian, *ex substantia patris* at Prax. 7.14, which, like the phrase translated by the same Latin terms in Or. Comm. Heb. (Pamph. Ap. Or., in PG, vol. xvii, 581–2), seems to paraphrase the dictum at Heb 1:3 that the Son is the impression (*charaktēr*) of the Father's *hypostasis* (Latin *substantia*). The Council of Antioch in 325 invoked the same text; see Stevenson and Frend, *New Eusebius*, 336.

11 Ath. Decr. 1.16; Soz. HE 1.15.

12 See Hanson, *Search for the Christian doctrine*, 190–202; Williams, *Arius*, 218–22.

albeit the first and ‘not as one of the creatures’. Perfectly, unchangeably and timelessly, the Son retains the likeness of the Father – but only by virtue of the Father’s will.

Alexander retorted that, if the Son is unchangeable only by the Father’s will, he is changeable by nature. For evidence that the Son is derived uniquely from the Father, he proceeds in his encyclical,¹³ we need look no further than the title *logos* in the gospel of John; for this means speech, and what is speech, as Psalm 44 reminds us, but an effusion of the heart? Arius in fact made sparing use of this appellation before Nicaea, but in a subsequent confession of faith he employed it in a position which suggests that he took *logos* to signify not the speech of God but the rational principle of governance in creation. Origen held a similar view, denouncing those who had reasoned from the same psalm that Christ was merely an epiphenomenon or function of the Father (*Comm. Jo.* 1.24); and there were no doubt many contemporaries of Arius who feared that Alexander’s words, in the manner of his Egyptian predecessor, Valentinus, subjected the Father himself to change. Yet Origen had his detractors also, chiefly bishop Marcellus of Ancyra (modern Ankara), who accused him of inferring, from a dubious equation of Christ with the Wisdom of Proverbs 8, that the second *hypostasis* is a creature and therefore no part of the Godhead. The principal exponent of this fallacy in his own time, for Marcellus, was Eusebius of Caesarea, who, as a keen admirer of Origen, had gone so far as to say that the Son and the Father were not only two *hypostases* but two *ousiai*.¹⁴ In response, Marcellus denied (according to Eusebius) that God was a triad before the incarnation. In terms that would once again have savoured of Valentinianism to some contemporaries, he spoke of the nativity as the evolution of uttered speech (*logos prophorikos*) from the latent reason (*logos endiathetos*), which eternally inhabits the mind of God.

Both Eusebius and Marcellus in fact had exposed themselves to censures that had already been passed on Origen;¹⁵ each had appropriated half the vocabulary of bishop Dionysius of Alexandria, who, but for age and infirmity, would have presided over the deposition of Paul of Samosata in the third century.¹⁶ Their quarrel became more strident after the council, and was to prove fatal to the tenure of Marcellus; up to 325, however, it seems to have embroiled no other

¹³ This letter, *henos sōmatos* (‘of one body’), is preserved by Socr. *HE* 1.6, and ascribed to Athanasius by Stead, ‘Athanasius’ earliest written work’. Alexander’s letter to Alexander of Byzantium concedes that the Father, as father, is prior to his Word, though not in rank or nature (Thdt. *HE* 1.3, citing John 14:28).

¹⁴ Defended by Euseb. *Marcell.* 1.4.45.

¹⁵ For Origen’s supposed Valentinianism, see *PG*, vol. xvii, 582.

¹⁶ See n. 37; Ath. *Dion.* 14–25.

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parties except for the shadowy Narcissus of Neronias and one Theodotus of Laodicea.¹⁷ The controversy in Alexandria may have been fanned by the presence of a faction which acknowledged a rival claimant to the bishopric. It seems that one Melitius of Lycopolis had appointed himself lieutenant to the imprisoned bishop Peter in Alexandria during the years of persecution.¹⁸ When Peter died without resuming office, his place was taken by Achilles, but Melitius refused to give up the right of ordination. On the death of Achilles, Melitius and his cohort turned their rancour on his successor Alexander. We have no reason to think that the Melitians made common cause with Arius at the outset,¹⁹ but such concerted insubordination could not fail to impair the authority of the patriarch. That a bishop should not inquire into the opinions of his presbyters, but that, if he did, the presbyter should submit to his superior, was the advice of Constantine in a letter quoted with approbation by Eusebius (V.C. 2.64–72); but how was any truce possible, when one had a see to rule and the other a conscience to defend?

In matters of this kind, Constantine desired nothing so much as ‘peace’ (Socr. *HE* 1.10). This is not to say that he failed to comprehend the debate, for his *Oratio ad sanctorum coetum*, if authentic, must have been delivered at the latest within a few years of the council.²⁰ Adopting terms that would have been old-fashioned had they not been used concurrently by Marcellus, he speaks of Christ as the *logos prophorikos* issuing from the *logos endiathetos*. He assumes the Son’s inferiority to the Father, but this tenet, though it came to be regarded as an accommodation to the views of Arius, was at that time a harmless platitude, designed to forestall the inference that the Father was not the cause of the Son, and hence that there were not so much two *hypostases* as two independent gods.²¹ Whatever his own convictions, he handed over the theological question to a preliminary hearing at Antioch early in 325.²² In a fragment of a Syriac record, the president’s name is given as Eusebius, yet we learn from other sources that Eusebius of Caesarea was condemned here for his

17 See Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, Cameron and Hall (eds. and trans.), 262, with notes below on the Council of Antioch in 325.

18 The evidence, as appraised by Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 202–3, suggests that Peter had delegated authority to Melitius in the Thebaid, but had not approved his role in Alexandria.

19 Williams, ‘Arius and the Melitian schism’. A coalition before the Nicene council is alleged by Socr. *HE* 1.6 and by Soz. *HE* 1.15.2. Athanasius, however, says nothing of it, while Epiph. *Pan.* 68.4 reports that Melitius was an early critic of Arius.

20 For bibliography and discussion, see Edwards, *Constantine and Christendom*.

21 See Edwards, ‘The Arian heresy’.

22 For what follows see Stevenson and Frend, *New Eusebius*, 334–7; Chadwick, ‘Ossius’. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 643–4, suggests that Const. *Or. s.c.* was delivered on this occasion.

assertion of two *ousiai* in the Godhead, and Narcissus for his bolder but more consistent assertion of three. Eusebius of Nicomedia would not have taken offence at either statement; scholars have therefore proposed the emendation of 'Eusebius' to 'Ossius', a change of only one letter in the Syriac. In that case the inquisitor was Ossius (or Hosius) of Cordova, an aging statesman of the Latin church whom Constantine had retained as his confessor. His judgement, like the emperor's *Oratio ad sanctorum coetum*, reveals a solicitude for the unity of the Godhead which was characteristic of the Latin west.

It was known by now that a plenary session would be unavoidable, but the Syriac record anticipates a 'great council' not at Nicaea, but at Ancyra.²³ If, as has been suggested, the notoriety of its bishop made Ancyra an unsuitable location, it is difficult to account for the substitution of Nicaea, whose bishop, Theognis, in contrast to Marcellus and the majority of the participants, was deposed in the wake of the council. If the object is to be inferred from the outcome, it seems more probable that Constantine resolved on a change of venue because he was now assured of the innocence of Marcellus, while Nicaea was appointed as a tribunal for Theognis (just as Antioch was for Paul in 268 and Sirmium for Marcellus' friend Photinus in 351).

Enactments of the council

Constantine's letter summoning the bishops to Nicaea commends its climate and its accessibility to western travellers;²⁴ Eusebius, who coined the expression 'oecumenical council' for this occasion, adds that the name connoted 'victory' (*nikē*). He states that the number of bishops who attended it exceeded 250, with an 'incalculable' retinue of presbyters and deacons.²⁵ His estimate is confirmed by extant lists of those who signed the creed, though later historians raised it to 300, and it was soon fixed by tradition at 318, one for every member of Abraham's household.²⁶ This figure is attained in an Arabic list, but the total in Greek and Latin versions never rises above 220.²⁷ Twenty came from Egypt and Libya, another fifty from Palestine and Syria, over a hundred from Asia Minor. We read of only six from provinces ruled by Constantine before 324: Ossius of Cordova, Caecilian of Carthage, Protogenes of Sardica, Marcus from Calabria, Domnus from Pannonia and Nicasius from Gaul. Silvester the bishop

²³ Logan, 'Marcellus', 440, suggests that Constantine moved the council to Nicaea to make his own attendance possible.

²⁴ Stevenson and Frend, *New Eusebius*, 338.

²⁵ See Euseb. *V.C.* 3.6.1 and 3.8, with Chadwick, 'Origin'.

²⁶ See Eustathius and Liberius at Socr. *HE* 4.12.

²⁷ Figures from Gelzer, Hilgenfeld and Cuntz, *Patrum Nicaenorum nomina*.

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of Rome was represented by two legates, in accordance with a precedent set at Arles in 314.²⁸

The debates which preceded the signing of the creed wore on from early June²⁹ to late July; the common sentiment of the church historians is conveyed in Socrates' anecdote that on the eve of the council idle disputants traded subtleties in public, until a simple old man reminded them that faith, not eloquence, is the key to heaven.³⁰ Rufinus says that the Emperor, showered with letters from litigious bishops, burnt them on his arrival without having read them (Ruf. *HE* 1.2). Eusebius dwells on the august mien of Constantine, his eirenic counsels, the shrewdness of his kindly interventions. These he made in Greek, though at the outset, having been welcomed by the 'bishop in the first row',³¹ he replied in Latin (Euseb. *V.C.* 3.10–11). This oration has not survived, although the words ascribed to Constantine by Rufinus – 'you are not to be judged of men, you are as gods to us' – are characteristic of him, and not such as a theologian would have coined.³²

An encyclical issued after the council shows that Alexander gained the better part of a compromise in the Melitian controversy. Melitian ordinations were upheld, but on condition that Alexander be acknowledged as the bishop of Alexandria, and that no further ordinations be performed without his consent (Socr. *HE* 1.9). Canon 6 confirmed the supremacy of the metropolitan in his province;³³ another, which could be taken as a reflection on Eusebius of Nicomedia, forbade the translation of bishops from see to see, and was widely flouted after the council, as before.³⁴ The *philanthrōpia* ('humanity') of the ruling on those who had lapsed under persecution would have been more gratifying to Eusebius, whose intimacy with Licinius had exposed him to suspicion and reproach.³⁵ Penance, after a period of exclusion, was to be the price of return for those who had sacrificed, the heaviest burden falling on

28 See, Opt. Appendix 4. Ossius and the legates (or Silvester) come first in all lists.

29 Though Socr. *HE* 1.13 states that it opened on 20 May.

30 Socr. *HE* 1.8. In a different encounter (Ruf. *HE* 1.3, much expanded in Gel. *HE*, bk 2), an old man armed with nothing but the scriptures converts an Arian philosopher. On the sentiment of the historians see Lim, *Public disputation*, 217–29.

31 Identified as Eusebius of Nicomedia by the chapter heading, by Theodoret as Eustathius of Antioch (Thdt. *HE* 1.7), and by Sozomen as the historian himself (Soz. *HE* 1.19).

32 Ruf. *HE* 1.2; cf. Opt. *Donat.* 1.23.4. On the speech attributed to Constantine by Gel. *HE* 2.7.1–41 see Ehrhardt, 'Constantinian documents'.

33 Especially in Egypt; canon 7 gives Jerusalem second rank in Palestine after Caesarea. For the text see Jonkers, *Acta*, 38–47.

34 On canon 15 see Socr. *HE* 7.38, with Bright, *Notes*, 47–51. Alexander had made it a charge against Eusebius of Nicomedia that he migrated there from Berytus / Beirut (Socr. *HE* 1.6).

35 Constantine calls him a creature of Licinius, according to Thdt. *HE* 1.19.

those who apostatised under Licinius, when there was no threat to their lives (canons 11 and 12).

Clergy of the Novatianist or 'puritan' sect,³⁶ who refused to hold communion with lapsed ministers or with those who had contracted a second marriage, could be reconciled to the catholic church by the laying on of hands. Their orders would remain valid, though a bishop of the Novatianists would become a presbyter under a catholic bishop (canon 8). The followers of Paul of Samosata,³⁷ on the other hand, were mere heretics who could not be re-admitted until they received a new baptism in the threefold name (canon 18). Although this canon intimates by its silence that the baptisms of Novatianists were valid, this is not expressly stated. We owe to Socrates the information that the council licensed the marriage of lower clergy (Socr. *HE* 1.11); he also tells us that the Novatianists, having declined the summons of Constantine, were so far from being appeased by the decisions of the council that they subsequently took up the Asiatic date for Easter although they had hitherto observed the Roman calendar.³⁸ There is nothing to corroborate the tradition that the bishops removed another source of discord by proclaiming a canon of scripture. But since there is no evidence, apart from Constantine's letter, of a regulation on the date of Easter, it seems probable that more work was transacted at Nicaea than our records now disclose.

The creed

As to the composition of the creed, we possess conflicting testimonies. Basil of Caesarea in Cappadocia (the Turkish hinterland) ascribes it to his own countryman Hermogenes (*Ep.* 81). Eusebius the historian, in a letter to the church of Palestinian Caesarea, asserts that, at the beginning of the council, he recited their local creed, which was then adopted by the council except that Constantine required the addition of the term *homoousios*.³⁹ In the creed that he recited, there was in fact a great deal more that found no place in the Nicene version, and there is also more than one clause in the creed which was not anticipated in the Caesarean formula. Yet the story may be true in part, his own account of the episode in which, Theodoret tells us, the confession of one Eusebius was read out and condemned.⁴⁰ Theodoret fails to say which

36 Including Donatists? See Epiph. *Pan.* 59.13.

37 See Euseb. *HE* 7.30.11 on his denial of Christ's divinity.

38 Socr. *HE* 1.10 on the abstention of Acesius; 4.28 on the Phrygian calendar.

39 Appendix to Ath. *Decr.*

40 Thdt. *HE* 1.8.1; see Stead, "Eusebius".

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Eusebius suffered this misadventure, whether it was he or another person who read the document, and whether the rehearsal was intended as a proof or as a test of his orthodoxy. At any rate, Theodoret cannot (if he is right) be describing the formal deposition of either Eusebius, for both retained their sees throughout the council. Notwithstanding the presence – and, as some maintain, the presidency⁴¹ – of Ossius, the sentence passed at Antioch on Eusebius of Caesarea had plainly been revoked.

Text and translation

Whatever the provenance of the ‘Nicene symbol’, our earliest text of it is quoted in the letter of this Eusebius, which is appended to the treatise of his opponent Athanasius, *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*. In the following translation, I have italicised those phrases which are lacking in previous creeds: ⁴²

We believe in one God, Father almighty, maker of all things seen and unseen;
 And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, *begotten from the Father monogenēs*,⁴³ that is, *from the substance of the Father*,
 God from God, light from light, *true God from true God*,
begotten not made (poiētheis), homoousios *with the Father*,
 through whom all came to be, both things in the heavens and those on earth
 the one who on account of us humans and our salvation
 came down and took flesh, becoming man,
 suffering and rising again on the third day and going up [*or back*] to the
 heavens,
 and who is coming again to judge living and dead;

And in the Holy Spirit.

*But those who say ‘there was when he was not’,
 and ‘before being begotten he was not’,
 and ‘he came to be from what was not’,
 or assert that the Son of God is from another hypostasis or ousia,
 or created (ktistos)⁴⁴ or alterable or changeable:
 These the church catholic anathematises.*

41 Barnes, ‘Emperors and bishops’, 57, marshalls Ath. *Apol. sec.* 5.2 and *H. Ar.* 42.3 against those who opine that the emperor presided.

42 Greek text of Creed and anathemas follows Jonkers, *Acta*, 38–9. Eusebius’ letter is also cited by Socr. *HE* 1.8; for the Eustathian version see Socr. *HE.* 4.12; for Alexandrian and Cappadocian variants, Cyril of Alexandria, *Third Letter to Nestorius* 3 and *Bas. Ep.* 125. Hilary of Poitiers, *Adversus Valentem et Ursacium* (‘Against Valens and Ursacius’) 1.9.1 transcribes an early Latin rendering. See n. 49 and Dossetti, *Simbolo di Nicea*.

43 Eustathius appears to omit this term.

44 See n. 49.

Commentary on the creed

Monogenēs may signify either 'unique' or 'only begotten'.⁴⁵ It was not perverse of Arius to take it in the former sense, for even after Nicaea *unicus* rather than *unigenitus* was the common reading of the Apostles' Creed in Latin writers. The council, however, enforced the meaning 'only begotten', adding a gloss that foreshadows and partly elucidates the word *homoousios* in a later clause. It appears that the older phrase 'from the *hypostasis* of the Father' was now deemed insufficient to exclude the 'Arian' tenet that the Son was a product of the Father's will. Origen, while asserting this, had granted a common *physis* or 'nature' to the two *hypostases*,⁴⁶ but neither he nor other Greeks had chosen to characterise the Godhead as a single *ousia*. When used in contradistinction to *hypostasis*, the noun *ousia* denotes the stuff or substrate of a concrete individual; here it perhaps implies that the first *hypostasis* is not merely the cause but the source or ground of the second, propagating his attributes by an act which, while it cannot but transcend mundane analogies, resembles a corporeal emanation.

If we believe Philostorgius, it was Alexander and Ossius who conspired to introduce the word *homoousios* (Philost. *HE* 1.7). Athanasius contends that the word was Alexander's only means of forcing an open rupture, as the Arians were able to put their own construction on every other article. Though not defined, the term seems to be paraphrased obliquely by the juxtaposition of 'God from God' as well as by the gloss on *monogenēs*. Nevertheless, Eusebius of Caesarea, in a letter addressed to his congregation within a few weeks of the council, could assert that the *homoousion* merely predicates divine attributes of the Son without determining anything as to his mode of origin. This letter, our only comment on the creed by one of its signatories, is quoted by Athanasius to prove that Eusebius subscribed to it, not to convict him of deceit. Thus it appears that, while the Alexandrians knew their own meaning, they were forced to concede some latitude of interpretation in order to win the suffrage of the majority.

'God from God' is traditional, but 'light from light' rehabilitates a metaphor from Justin and Hieracas, which was impugned in Arius' letter to Alexander. 'True God from true God' vindicates the eternal deity of Christ the Son against the teaching that he became divine through adoption or by fiat. The council assumed, against Arius, that the 'one true God' who is certainly the Father at

⁴⁵ See Skarsaune, 'Neglected detail'. Logan, 'Marcellus', 441–6, argues that Marcellus was a prime mover in the drafting of the Creed.

⁴⁶ *Or. Comm. Jo.* 2.10; see also n. 10.

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John 17:3 is the Son at 1 John 5:20. For all that, the creed affirms not the equality of the persons and an identity of nature – or, as Eusebius held, community of attributes. The procession of the Son was asserted only to prove his likeness to the Father, and nothing was said to countermand the western view that this procession entailed subordination within the triune monarchy. Monarchy and the one substance (*una substantia*) are concomitants, if not synonyms, in Tertullian, and we have already seen that, according to Eusebius, it was Constantine, the Latin-speaking emperor, who enjoined the addition of the *homoousion*. This story is the more likely to be true because Eusebius credits Constantine with the argument that Christ is the *logos prophorikos* who issues from the *logos endiathetos*⁴⁷ – a doctrine wholly consonant with Tertullian and the sovereign's own *Oratio ad sanctorum coetum*, but not with the idiom of Eusebius elsewhere. Moreover it is clear that both before and after the council there were many Greeks who regarded the *homoousion* as a treacherous neologism: who but Constantine could have induced them to accept it with such unanimity in 325?

The assertion 'before he was begotten, he was not' was made by Arius in his letter to Alexander, against the notion of a latent or anhypostatic existence of the *logos* in the Father before he became (or acquired) a distinct *hypostasis*. The Alexandrian signatories concurred with him (and thus disowned the teaching of Marcellus) by rejecting this ingenerate phase, but they presupposed a doctrine of eternal generation which was expressly denied by Arius and discreetly overlooked in the polemics of Eusebius against Marcellus after the council. Arius postulated not an eternal but a timeless generation, and it is consequently improbable that he ever wrote 'there was when the Son was not'. Unless, then, the third anathema is a caricature of his thought, it will have been aimed at a different target. On the other hand, there is no doubt that it was Arius who said that the Son was 'out of nothing'. For him this phrase secured the impassibility of the Godhead while distinguishing the Son from all the beings created through him out of matter; for many at the council, it served only to estrange Christ from his Father, making nonsense of his titles and his cult. In the fourth anathema, on those who derive the Son 'from another *hypostasis* or *ousia*', a distinction may be intended between the Father as cause and the Father as source; on the other hand, terms of similar import are often coupled in legal documents to ensure that an offender cannot escape by giving his crime a different name.⁴⁸

47 Ath. *Deocr.* 33.16; cf. Const. *Or. s.c.* 9.

48 Binsley, *Oecumenical documents*, 51, considers the words synonymous; Hanson, *Search for the Christian doctrine*, 167, suspects deliberate ambiguity.

The anathema on the words changeable (*treptos*) and alterable (*alloiōtos*) was most probably inspired by Alexander's charge that, if the Arian Christ is unchangeable only by the Father's will, he is changeable by nature. Athanasius states (or surmises) that the life of Christ on earth was seen by Arius as a probation of the Son, the attributes of divinity being conferred on him as the prize of merit – not, however, posthumously, as Philippians 2:9–12 suggests, but proleptically, as the Father foresaw his victory in the hour of his generation (Ath. *Apol. sec.* 1.5–6). Eusebius, however, turns the anathema against those – and here he can only mean Marcellus – who assert that the Godhead undergoes some change in the propagation of the Son. The prohibition of the term 'created' (*ktistos*) he does not explain at all, and, in his writings against Marcellus after the council, he continues to urge that creation and generation are synonymous in the Bible. There are a number of witnesses, including bishop Cyril of Alexandria, successor and disciple of Athanasius, who quote the Nicene Creed without the anathema on *ktistos*.⁴⁹ Some suspect Athanasius of a poor memory, if not of wilful fraud.⁵⁰

In any case, the creed was drafted cleverly enough to win the assent of the great majority (including Eusebius), while the recusants – Theonas, Secundus and Arius – were excommunicated. Theognis of Nicaea and Eusebius of Nicomedia were deposed, although the subsequent restitution of Eusebius, and the letter by which he procured it (Socr. *HE* 1.14), suffice to prove that he withheld his signature only from the anathemas. So far as we know, the creed was not intended for the laity; we do not hear that it was ever recited at baptism or inserted (like the creed of 381) into regular services of the church.

The aftermath

Few delegates can have been entirely satisfied with their work at the Nicene council. It had promulgated a formula which was neither strict nor latitudinarian – not strict, since (as Eusebius showed) its sense was often equivocal, yet not latitudinarian, as it had canonised a term which, being new, unbiblical and uninterpreted, could hardly fail to irritate the conscience. The last twelve years of Constantine's reign saw a change in the tide of affairs that is often

49 Cyril, *Third Letter to Nestorius* 3. Cf. Theodoret, citing Eusebius, *HE* 1.12; Hilary of Poitiers, *Adversus Valentem et Ursacium* 1.9; Bas. *Ep.* 125; Eustathius at Socr. *HE* 4.12. *Ktistos* appears in the latter's transcript of the Eusebian letter (*HE* 1.8), as well as in Ath. *Ep. Jov.* 3 and in his appendix to *Decr.*, which is the first citation of Eusebius' letter.

50 On Whiston's view see Wiles, "Textual variant". 'Made' (*poiētheis*), which does not imply perfection and nearness to God, was indisputably condemned.

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described, after Athanasius, as an 'Arian reaction'.⁵¹ Perhaps the first prominent casualty, condemned in his native city, was Eustathius of Antioch; yet, although he was a harsh critic of both Arius and Origen, the charge against him was not heresy but traducing the Emperor's mother.⁵² Marcellus of Ancyra was condemned as a Sabellian, something worse than an Arian in the eyes of many easterners.⁵³ Eusebius of Nicomedia, on the other hand, was not only restored to his see but underwent a new translation in 338 to the see of Constantinople (Thdt. *HE* 1.19). Constantine himself was reconciled, at least temporarily, to Arius by the submission of a creed which did not contain the words 'true God' or *homoousios* (Socr. *HE* 1.26). The Alexandrian church, however, refused to comply with the emperor's demand that he be admitted to communion, and Constantine appears to have reverted at some time to a more hostile view of Arius. The knot that human wiles could not untie was cut in 335, when Arius died painfully in the privy – an event which Athanasius ascribed to the mercy of the Triune God.⁵⁴

There was no concerted denunciation of the Nicene faith and no explicit championship of Arian tenets; yet those who had opposed the opponents of Arius were in the ascendant outside Alexandria. Even there the new bishop Athanasius was under siege from the time when he succeeded Alexander on his death in 328. It is true that he was reproached not with errors in doctrine but with tyranny in government, not by Arians but by the followers of Melitius;⁵⁵ he, however, professed to believe that his trials were orchestrated by an Arian conclave under the direction of Eusebius of Nicomedia, with the connivance of Eusebius of Caesarea.⁵⁶ He was charged with murder, riot, fornication, breaking a chalice, arresting the grain supply from Alexandria; even when the gravest accusations had been refuted at Tyre (he tells us), he was found guilty of the sacrilege.⁵⁷ He appealed to Constantine, who at first reinforced

51 See Ath. *H. Ar.* 1; Elliott, 'Constantine and the Arian reaction'.

52 Ath. *H. Ar.* 4–5. This occurred late in 328, according to Burgess, 'Date of the deposition'. For Eustathius' denunciation of Eusebius of Caesarea see Socr. *HE* 1.23.

53 This event follows hard on the plot against Eustathius in Ath. *H. Ar.* 6; yet, Socr. *HE* 1.35–6 implies a date of 335, while 336 is proposed by Barnes, 'Emperors and bishops', 64. Barnes observes that Schwartz ('Eusebios von Caesarea') suggested 328 and Bardy ('La réaction Eusébienne') 330.

54 See Ath. *Ep.* 54 (to Serapion on the death of Arius). The tergiversations of Constantine continue to baffle historians: for one account see Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 229–34.

55 A papyrus containing part of their indictment has been discovered: Arnold, *Early episcopal career*, 187–9. For a less sympathetic account of Athanasius' career than that of Arnold, see Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*.

56 Euseb. *V.C.* 4.41–8 makes Athanasius (without naming him) the cause of his own misfortunes.

57 See Ath. *H. Ar.* 71–89, with Ruf. *HE* 1.17 and Soz. *HE* 1.25.12–19. In 335, a council in Jerusalem rescinded the sentence on Arius.

his deposition by exile; a brief restoration followed, but Constantius II, the heir of Constantine, confirmed the decision of Tyre in 339. Ejected from his diocese, Athanasius joined Marcellus as a petitioner to Julius of Rome.

Relations between Alexandria and Rome were always cordial, and Julius was quickly convinced of the plot against Athanasius. Marcellus was absolved on the recitation of a creed resembling the so-called Apostles' Creed of the Latin church.⁵⁸ In 341, the Greek bishops met at Antioch, where, denying that they were Arians, they drafted a creedal statement that repeated most of the articles from Nicaea, not excepting (in one statement) an anathema on the word *ktistos*.⁵⁹ Yet the word *homoousios* did not appear in any of them, and their insistence that the Son is the Father's image seemed to militate against the doctrine of a common nature.⁶⁰ The policy of the easterners from 341 to 360 was to steer between the (imaginary) heretics who posited two unbegotten entities (*duo innata*) and those (not so imaginary) who reduced the Godhead to a single person or *prosōpon*. Both errors could have been substantiated by an aberrant reading of the word *homoousios*. Meanwhile in 343, an attempt to bring east and west together at Serdica foundered; the easterners held their own council, while the westerners took occasion to confirm the prerogatives of the Roman see.⁶¹ They issued a creed asserting 'one *hypostasis*' in the Godhead – an injudicious rendering of *substantia*, which ripened into heresy if *hypostasis* was assumed to bear its usual sense in Greek.⁶²

The Council of Antioch, known for the next two decades as the 'great council', had ratified the condemnation of Arius while purging the creed of clauses which, in the eyes of many easterners, were more of a snare than a prop to orthodoxy. The western council of Serdica, while asserting Christ's divinity in its own fashion, had accorded to Rome a position which enabled her to pose henceforth as the champion and interpreter of Nicaea. Oecumenical force was given to the canons of western Serdica by annexing them to those of 325. It cannot be said, however, that the council and its creed became prescriptive for the whole of Christendom until 381, when, after forty years of schism and vacillation, Theodosius I convened the Second Oecumenical Council at Constantinople. The Nicene Creed was ratified, though it was still considered

58 Kinzig and Vinzent, 'Recent research'.

59 Ath. *Decr.* 23. See 22–5 for other formularies, with Kelly, *Early Christian creeds*, 265–74, and Jonkers, *Acta*, 57–61. The so-called 'second creed', which contains the anathema on *ktistos*, is the one that is clearly a statement of the whole council.

60 Cf. Euseb. *Marcell.* 1.4.40 and 2.4.30–2.

61 For text and translation of the canons, see Hess, *Early development of canon law*, 212–55.

62 Ath. *Tom.* 5; Hess, *Early development of canon law*, 105–6. Liberius (Socr. *HE* 4.12) cites only this term of the Nicene anathema.

The first Council of Nicaea

expedient to omit the gloss on *monogenēs*, to dispense with the anathemas, to add that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, and to append the clauses on baptism, the church and resurrection which had figured in older creeds. In the west the Apostles' Creed held sway as the rule of faith, though it was common enough for the papacy to resist any innovation from the east on the ground that no increment to the doctrine of Nicaea was necessary. For all that, when the west adopted the amplified creed of 381, it enlarged it again to accommodate the purely western tenet that the Spirit proceeds *a patre filioque*, 'from the Father *and the Son*'. It seems to have been the catholics of Visigothic Spain in the late sixth century who made this interpolation as a defence of the Son's divinity against Arian innuendo. Two centuries later the Franks made it an instrument of policy, in their rivalry with Byzantium, to impose this tenet on Rome and hence on the whole of western Christendom.⁶³ The so-called *filioque* took its place at the head of a swelling list of grievances which were freely exacerbated by both sides until in 1054 the Old Rome excommunicated the New. The divisions between the churches since that date have been too deep to admit of any reunion by a form of words.

63 Kelly, *Early Christian creeds*, 357–68.

As was the case on Rhodes, the order advanced the art of fortification building on Malta. Immediately after taking possession of Malta, the best master builders in Europe were hired to strengthen existing fortifications. Some of the advances were routine, like strengthening and heightening walls, while others were major innovations like dedicated structures designed to use as gunpowder artillery platforms. These platforms had self-contained powder and munitions magazines, which gave a rate of fire that the Ottoman attackers were not able to match. The knights of the order also used a long-existing siege technique in order to sally out against the enemy siege lines. This involved mass artillery at a small point, with dismounted, heavily armed knights moving out under the cover of smoke to rupture the enemy lines. This was to prove very dangerous to the Ottomans attacking Malta, who continually had their camps overrun, with great loss in materiel and munitions. By the time the relief army arrived from Sicily, the Ottomans had already lost most of their artillery to capture and counter-battery fire.

In the years following the battle of Lepanto, the order fell into the hands of men who were less interested in defending the faith and more concerned with turning a profit. Malta became a major slave trading port, and the ships of the order were manned by some of the most dangerous pirates in the Mediterranean. The Emperor Napoleon finally broke the power of the Hospitallers in 1798, when his forces captured the island of Malta.

The order exists today as a humanitarian organization named the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Its members have participated as United Nations observers in Somalia, Angola and Liberia.

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Knights Templar

An organization of religious warriors in the Middle Ages.

The early twelfth century saw two major developments in European society: the Crusades to reclaim the Christian Holy Land from Muslim rule and the armored knight to do the fighting.

The knight was the cream of European feudal society. He swore loyalty to the aristocrat or king above him and received similar loyalty from vassals below him. A man with lands and income, the feudal knight was able to afford the necessary accoutrements for serious warfare and supplied himself with horse, armor, and weapons. These warriors, fighting as heavy cavalry, responded to the call of Pope Urban II in 1097 to march to the Holy Land and liberate it from the possession of the Muslims. The knights succeeded in establishing European control in Jerusalem and the area surrounding it, dominating the eastern Mediterranean coastal region from Turkey to the Red Sea. However, one of the main goals of the Crusades—the protection of Christian pilgrims to holy sites in the Middle East—was not accomplished. The Europeans controlled the major cities, but were too few in number to control the countryside. It was this need for protection of European pilgrims that brought the Knights Templar into existence.

In 1118, a French knight, Hugh de Payans, offered his services to the newly installed king of Jerusalem, Baldwin II, to organize a force to patrol and protect the countryside. Baldwin assigned de Payans quarters at the al-Aqsa Mosque, reputedly the site of Solomon's Temple, hence the name for de Payans's new

organization—the Poor Fellow Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon. At a time when most European nobility were obsessed with gathering wealth any way they could (and many had profited in land and money during the Crusades), the knights who joined the Templars were as ascetic as monks. They wore second-hand clothing and lived by charity. Theirs was a poor existence without worldly diversions. Gambling, fraternizing with women, and hunting were banned. In 1128 the new hierarchy of the Catholic Church, riding a wave of reform, recognized the Templars as a force that could be controlled by them and that would swear no loyalty to king or aristocrat.

The result was basically a force of fighting monks. They trained in and mastered the martial skills of the age, but never had huge numbers. Rarely did Templars fight in groups of more than a few hundred, about 500 being the maximum on duty in the Holy Land, with some 2,000 support troops. They established a network of recruiters throughout Europe that maintained a steady supply of men to the ranks. Many of those who joined were not aristocrats, but outlaws or excommunicants. Nevertheless, as long as they swore to fight for God and their fellow Templars, they were accepted. The Templars' success spawned other, similar elite units dedicated to fighting for God's kingdom on earth. These organizations sometimes fought among themselves, but always united in the face of the infidel threat.

The Templars started out fulfilling their role as protectors by building forts, patrolling the roads, and attacking Muslim bands or strongholds. They even forced tribute from the infamous order of the Assassins. All of this construction and military activity required funding, and the recruiting groups in Europe also raised money. In doing so, the order became fabulously wealthy and they became history's first international bankers. In order to pay for recruitment, training, and the needs of the knights in the Holy Land, the Templars had to have sufficient funds to pay for these things no matter where the necessity arose, so a promissory note from one Templar

headquarters was payable at any other. Their annual income reached the equivalent of billions of dollars in today's terms. They received vast amounts of land, donated by nobles who did not go to the Holy Land but wanted to contribute, or by nobles who joined and pledged their wealth to the order. It is said that by 1250 the Templars controlled 9,000 manors throughout Europe and the Holy Lands.

The Knights Templar were organized into a hierarchy with the Grand Master at the top, followed by the Seneschal, Provincial Marshals, Commander of the Land and Realm of Jerusalem, and the commander of the fleet based at Acre. The Knights wore white mantles with a red cross emblazoned on front and back. Lower ranks had the red cross sewn onto brown or black clothing. The organization's banner was black on top and white beneath; black symbolizing their sternness toward their enemies and the white their devotion to Christianity.

After the end of the Crusades in the late thirteenth century, the Knights Templar were left without a military role. Instead, they turned to banking. Not just their wealth, but also their secretive ways, excited jealousy—even among kings. Eventually, Philip IV of France campaigned against the Knights Templar in an attempt to replenish his own coffers and acquire the Templars' lands. He accused them of a variety of heinous crimes, supported with confessions tortured out of captured Templars. Fifty-four knights were burned at the stake in 1310 and within two years the order was almost completely suppressed. Since that time, however, the Knights Templar have become almost mythical. Persecuted knights fled, taking their wealth and military knowledge to distant lands. The nature of the order's origins, based in what was supposedly Solomon's Temple, led to legendary attributions of mystical powers to the Knights Templar, which they allegedly gained by acquiring religious artifacts found there. Even into the modern day, superstitions about the ultimate fate of the Knights Templar abound: Recent books have claimed that the Templars possessed the Holy Grail and that Christ did not rise to Heaven after

his resurrection but moved to France to wed and father children with Mary Magdalene—their descendants being in one way or another involved with a Templar/Masonic conspiracy. The truth is undoubtedly more prosaic: Like most of the orders of their time, the Knights Templar outlived their mission and usefulness with the end of the Crusades.

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HICKS, ELIAS

Assyrian king, who nevertheless demanded the city's unconditional surrender (2 Kings 18:19–35; 19:8–13; 2 Chronicles 32:9–19; Isaiah 36). At this point Jerusalem was unexpectedly spared, according to some traditions, by a plague that decimated the Assyrian army (according to the *SCRIPTURE*, an ANGEL saved Jerusalem; 2 Kings 19:35; 2 Chronicles 32:21). This event gave rise to the belief in Judah that Jerusalem was inviolable, a belief that lasted until the city fell to the Babylonians a century later.

HICKS, ELIAS \ˈhɪks\ (b. March 19, 1748, Hempstead Township, Long Island, N.Y., U.S.—d. Feb. 27, 1830, Jericho, Long Island, N.Y.), early advocate of the abolition of slavery in the United States and a liberal QUAKER preacher whose followers were one of two factions created by the schism of 1827–28 in American Quakerism.

After assisting in ridding the SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers) of slavery, Hicks worked for general abolition. He urged a boycott of the products of slave labor, advocated establishment of an area in the Southwest as a home for freed slaves, and helped secure legislation that brought an end to slavery in New York state. In 1811 the first of several editions of his *Observations on the Slavery of the Africans and Their Descendants* was published.

One of the first to preach progressive revelation, which allowed for continuing revision and renewal of doctrinal beliefs, Hicks in 1817 successfully opposed the adoption of a set creed by the Society of Friends at the Baltimore Yearly Meeting. He was subsequently called a heretic for his opposition to Evangelicalism, which stressed established beliefs, and he was held responsible by some for the Quaker schism of 1827–28. After this separation Hicks's followers called themselves the Liberal branch of the Society of Friends, but orthodox Quakers labeled them Hicksites. The Hicksites became increasingly isolated from other Quakers until the 20th century, when mutual cooperation began to prevail.

HIEI, MOUNT \ˈhē-ä\, *Japanese* Hiei-zan \ˈhē-ä-zän\, mountain [2,782 feet [845 meters] high] near Kyōto, the location of the Enryaku Temple, a Tendai Buddhist monastery complex built by the monk SAICHŌ (767–822). When Sannō (Japanese: “Mountain King”; the mountain's KAMI, or SHINTŌ deity) became identified with the Buddha Śākyamuni (Japanese: Shaka; the principal figure of Tendai BUDDHISM), the Sannō Shintō school emerged, based on the Tendai belief in Buddhist unity. Thus, Shaka was identical to Dainichi Nyorai (the Buddha VAIROCANA), and Sannō to AMATERASU (the Shintō sun goddess). Imperial patronage made the Hiei monastery one of the most powerful centers of Buddhist learning in Japan. HŌNEN and many other famous monks who later established their own schools came there for training.

HIEROPHANT \ˈhī-ə-rə-fant, hī-ˈer-ə-fənt\, *Greek* hierophantēs (“displayer of holy things”), chief of the Eleusinian cult, the best known of the MYSTERY RELIGIONS of ancient Greece. His principal job was to display the sacred objects during the celebration of the mysteries and to explain their secret symbolic meaning to the initiates. At the opening of the ceremonies he proclaimed that all unclean persons must stay away, a rule that he had the right to enforce.

Usually an old, celibate man with a forceful voice, he was selected from the Eumolpids, one of the original clans of the ancient Greek city of Eleusis, to serve for life. Upon taking office he symbolically cast his former name into the sea and was thereafter called only *hierophantēs*. During the

ceremonies he wore a headband and a long, richly embroidered purple robe.

HIEROS GAMOS \ˈhē-ə-ròs-gä-mòs\ (*Greek*: “sacred marriage”), sexual relations of fertility deities in myths and rituals, characteristic of societies based on cereal agriculture, especially in the Middle East. At least once a year humans representing the deities engaged in sexual intercourse, which guaranteed the fertility of the land, the prosperity of the community, and the continuation of the cosmos.

As ritually expressed, there were three main forms of the *hieros gamos*: between god and goddess (most usually symbolized by statues); between goddess and priest-king (who assumed the role of the god); and between god and priestess (who assumed the role of the goddess). In all three forms there was a relatively fixed form to the ritual: a PROCESSION that conveyed the divine actors to the marriage celebration; an exchange of gifts; a purification of the pair; a wedding feast; a preparation of the wedding chamber and bed; and the secret nocturnal act of intercourse. In some traditions this appears to have been an actual physical act between sacred functionaries who impersonated the deities; in other traditions it appears to have been a symbolic union. On the following day the marriage and its consequences for the community were celebrated.

Some scholars have applied the term *hieros gamos* to all myths of a divine pair (e.g., heaven–earth) whose sexual intercourse is creative. The term, however, should probably be restricted only to those agricultural cultures that ritually reenact the marriage and that relate the marriage to agriculture, as in Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, CANAAN, Israel (the Song of SOLOMON has been suggested to be a hierogamitic text), Greece, and India.

HIGH GOD, also called Sky God, a type of supreme deity found among many indigenous peoples of North and South America, Africa, northern Asia, and Australia. A High God is conceived as being utterly transcendent, living in or identified with the sky and removed from the world that he created. Among North American Indians and central and southern Africans, thunder is thought to be his voice, and in Siberia the sun and moon are considered his eyes. He is connected with food and heaven among American Indians.

The High God sometimes is conceived as masculine or sexless, although in a number of traditions, especially in Meso-America, he is a balanced combination of male and female powers and identity. He is the sole creator of heaven and earth. Although he is omnipotent and omniscient, he is thought to have withdrawn from his creation and therefore to be inaccessible to prayer or sacrifice. If he is invoked, it is only in times of extreme distress, but there is no guarantee that he will hear or respond. His name often is revealed only to initiates, and to speak it aloud is thought to invite disaster or death; his most frequent title is Father. In some traditions he is a transcendent principle of divine order; in others he is senile or impotent and is replaced by a set of more active deities.

Some scholars consider the conception of the High God to be very old, preceding the creation of particular pantheons, while some see him as a recent development stimulated by monotheistic missionaries of CHRISTIANITY. In recent times the figure of the High God has been revived among some African messianic groups.

HIGH PLACE, *Hebrew* bamah, or bama \ˈbä-mä, bä-ˈmä\, Israelite or Canaanite open-air shrine usually erected on an

Forget The Da Vinci Code: this is real mystery of the Knights Templar

[The Telegraph Online](#)

Byline: Dominic Selwood

Not so long ago, casually throwing the Knights Templar into polite conversation was a litmus test of mental health. One of Umberto Eco's characters in Foucault's Pendulum summed it up perfectly. He declared that you could recognise a lunatic "by the liberties he takes with common sense, by his flashes of inspiration, and by the fact that sooner or later he brings up the Templars".

But all good things come to an end. The enigmatic medieval monk-knights are no longer a fringe interest for obsessives. They are now squarely mainstream. And as 18 March 2014 draws closer, Templarmania is going to be ratcheted up several more notches.

Everyone loves an anniversary, and this is going to be a big one. It will be exactly 700 years since the legendary Jacques de Molay, last Grand Master of the Templars, was strapped to a stake in Paris and bonfired alive. For centuries after de Molay's execution in 1314, everyone wanted to sweep the ashes of the whole dreadful affair under the carpet. The official line was that the Templars, the former darlings of Christendom,

had fallen from grace. Power had gone to their heads, and they had degenerated into something unspeakable (for a medieval order of monks, at any rate): spitting and urinating on crucifixes, worshiping idols, and finding sexual release with each other.

King Philip IV "the Fair" of France had personally overseen seven years of inquiry into the order's suspicious practices. Based on the information it unearthed, he was convinced that he had exposed something rotten in society. The world, he was sure, would be better off without their sort so he moved to have the Order stamped out. In the end, faced with Philip's sustained pious outrage, the yellow-bellied pope of the day (a stooge who owed everything to Philip) had little alternative except to close the Templars down on the basis their reputation was irreparably shot. Philip then spent the next few years getting his hands on the Templars' vast wealth, which he justified as compensation for having financed the enquiry to expose their dreadful sins.

For the following centuries, no one really spoke of the Templars. They were an embarrassment, and the less said about them the better. It was as if they had never been.

An attempt to rehabilitate them came first from a Scottish Freemason in the early 1700s, but his views did not spread wider than the royal Jacobite court where he presented them. A century later, the Order's traditional reputation as depraved deviants re-emerged, but this time as the arch-villains in books -- most famously in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. But fast-forward to 2013, and for some reason the Templars are everywhere. Promotional stands in bookshops buckle under the weight of credulity-busting Templar plots. Bug-eyed computer gamers, cloaked in the Templars' iconic white robes and blood red crosses, slash and

parry through historical adventures of derring-do. Cruise-ships of sightseers descend on original Templar buildings. And in central London, you can now even unwind with a pint in The Knights Templar pub.

Yet the increasing popularity of the Templars is something of a mystery, because it is hard to see how or why the modern world identifies with the Order at all. The Templars were medieval monk-knights, the crack troops of the Crusades -- so effective and feared on the battlefield that Saladin once famously executed all captured Templars for fear of ever having to face them again. As a sideline to fund their wars, the knights experimented with international finance. They proved so talented at it that they were soon richer than Europe's leading kings, whom they dutifully bankrolled.

They were, by anybody's standards, then or now, a startling bunch: one only the medieval world could have conceived of. It is difficult to imagine what a modern equivalent would be. Perhaps a massive international army of chaste militant Christian zealots who also happened to own most of the world's investment banks? It is hard to see how such a modern group would be remotely popular with the public. So what do people see in the Templars?

Darker interests focus on the Templars as the rallying point of a network of violent European white supremacism -- a lodestar of racial hatred around which extremism can gravitate. The appeal of the Templars to extremists is probably inevitable. The Templars were founded during the Crusades, which can hardly be described as a time of religious and cultural tolerance. But the Templars are always full of surprises, and the historical record shows that even in that climate, the Templars' sworn mission was in fact to protect pilgrims and the

vulnerable. Nowhere in the over 600 provisions of their medieval Rule does it ever refer to anything approaching a mandate for ideological murder of people holding a different faith.

The extremists' vision of the Templars as a kind of proto-SS ethnic extermination squad is simply ahistorical. The evidence does not bear it out. For instance, take Usamah ibn Munqidh, an adventurous 12th-century Syrian nobleman, diplomat, and poet. He recorded that when he used to visit Jerusalem, the Templars, who were his friends, would let him into their headquarters in the Temple of Solomon (the al-Aqsa mosque), where they would clear a space for him to pray. On one occasion, a nameless European knight repeatedly seized him, and spun him so he was facing East, ordering him to pray as a Christian. The Templars quickly intervened and ejected the knight, before explaining apologetically to Usamah that the knight was fresh off the boat from Europe and new to the ways of the Orient.

Accounts like this have spawned a growing camp of people who look to the Templars' spiritual side, and see in the Order a fascinating enigma. The idea that the Templars had an alternate spirituality, perhaps even a slightly mystical one, is, interestingly, not a New Age invention. People were saying it before the Templars were closed down. The poet-knight Wolfram von Eschenbach, writing sometime between 1200 and 1225, gave the German people their first Holy Grail epic: *Parzival*. In it, he described how the Grail was kept at the castle of Munsalvaesche, guarded by a company of chaste knights called *Templeise*. This is the earliest association between the Templars and the magical supernatural, and predates *The Holy Blood* and the Holy Grail crowd by at least seven-and-a-half centuries.

An American Gnostic version of the Knights Templar

The other ancient association of the Templars with the supernatural is perhaps better known, but sadly more garbled. It was reported by medieval chroniclers that as the flames of the funeral pyre began to lick at Jacques de Molay, he prophesied that within a year the king and pope (who had together effectively destroyed the Templars and condemned him to a heretic's death) would meet him before God's celestial tribunal, where they would be judged for their corruption. Although both men died within the year, the story of Jacques de Molay's "curse" seems to have been embellished from his actual words, which may have been a simpler threat that God would avenge his unjust death.

Nevertheless, versions of this legend are widespread, and have long added to the Templars' mystique. Although all King Philip's public statements on the Templars were steeped in a viscous piety and an endlessly-repeated desire to act as the Church's protector, the reality was the magnetic opposite. His "inquiry" was, in fact, a brutal persecution, which involved seven years of barbarous incarcerations, horrific tortures, and multiple burnings at the stake. Philip was not remotely motivated by religion, despite his sanctimonious flannel. His coffers were filled with nothing but dust and air, and he urgently needed eye-watering sums of money to fuel his appetite for European wars. At the same time, pope-baiting was high on his list of hobbies, and he clearly felt that destroying the Vatican's invincible army would be a distinct milestone in his effort to position France as the dominant power in Europe.

Unsurprisingly, it was fashionable for many years to see the Templars as the wholly innocent victims of Philip's squalid politics. Philip was indeed shameless in the way he hurled as many charges at the Templars as he thought were necessary to whip up public outrage and disgust. He was an experienced master at the all-important game of spin, having

garnered support against the previous pope using the identical charges of heresy and homosexuality. It had worked magnificently on that occasion -- his men even kidnapped the elderly pope, and when the old cleric died of shock, Philip insisted on a posthumous trial to prove the trumped-up charges against the dead pope. So there is no doubt that Philip was a gifted bully -- a spectacularly unscrupulous manipulator with no concern at how much blood needed spilling for him to get his way.

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However, there are always twists in the tail when it comes to the Templars, and it seems Philip may have found a tiny ember of genuine Templar heresy, which he deftly fanned into a fire big enough to consume the Order. A detailed reading of the complicated sequence of confessions and retractions made by both the rank-and-file knights and the leaders of the Order leaves little doubt that the Templars were up to something. King Philip's allegations of them worshipping a head that could make trees flower and the land germinate were plainly fabricated, and no evidence of anything remotely related was ever unearthed.

Likewise, his accusations of institutionalised homosexuality proved to be invented. But many knights, including Jacques de Molay and some of his most senior lieutenants, did openly admit, at times with no torture, that new members of the Order were pulled aside in private after their monastic reception ceremonies and asked to deny Christ and spit on a

crucifix. None of the knights could give an explanation why this was done. They said it had simply always been a tradition, and that the new brother usually complied *ore sed non corde*, with words but not the heart.

After so many centuries, we can only guess at the bizarre ritual's significance. It may originally have been a character test to get some idea of how the new recruit might react if captured and subjected to religious pressure. But no one can say for sure. Nevertheless, it does clearly demonstrate that the Templars were subversive when they wanted. In fact, the clearest evidence that the Templars were not all they seemed is largely unknown, even among Templar experts. But it is potentially extraordinarily important. It takes the form of an original Templar building, still standing, nestled in a quiet corner of green countryside. Inside, it contains an enigma that may yet cause experts to revisit the entire question of the Templars' religious beliefs.

It is not Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland, which has no Templar connections at all, having been built a century and a half after the Order was suppressed. Instead, it is a small mid-12th-century chapel in the village of Montsauns, set in the foothills of the French Pyrenees, on one of the principal medieval highways leading from France into Spain. It was in a critical location. The fight to wrest Spain back from Islam was in full flow, and Montsauns was on a strategic defensive line. Surviving medieval charters prove beyond doubt that the chapel was unquestionably built by the Templars, then occupied and maintained by the Order for 150 years. It was the heart of one of the Order's great European commanderies (fortified monasteries), although nothing else of it survives.

The reason for its importance to the question of Templar spirituality is

immediately apparent the moment you enter the ancient building. The whole interior is painted, as most medieval churches and cathedrals were. But the Templars' chosen decorations for this particular chapel were not saints, bible scenes, and the usual range of religious imagery. The surviving frescoes are a bizarre collection of stars and wheels, rolling around the walls and ceiling in some mysterious, unfathomable pattern. Interspersed among them are also grids and chequer-boards, painted with equal precision -- but also with no apparent sense or meaning. There is nothing remotely Christian about it. The overall effect is calendrical and astrological, with a whiff of the Qabbalistic. It is like some strange hermetic temple, whose meaning is obscured to all except initiates.

The conclusion of the few experts in medieval art who have looked at the frescoes is that they are unlike anything else they have ever seen. They are "unknown esoteric decoration". Anyone studying the startling paintings quickly realises that they transcend the small French commune where they remain unnoticed, 850 years on. They demand answers. What did they mean to the Knights Templar? Why did they paint them so meticulously? And what prompted them to put them in their chapel, the building at the heart of their spiritual life, which they entered to pray in nine times a day?

We simply do not know the answers. But the chapel at Montsauns is proof, in its own enigmatic way that the religious life of the Templars was not as straightforward as we have perhaps come to believe. As Umberto Eco's lunatics, and a growing swathe of more ordinary people, prepare to mark the anniversary of Jacques de Molay's death, there will be discussions about individual freedom and the abuse of power, about political show trials and miscarriages of justice, and about Europe's transition from theocracy to autocracy. But there will also be time to

think again about what knowledge went up in flames with Jacques de Molay, and to the grave with the other knights.

The little-known chapel at Montsauns reminds us that there is much we still do not know about the Templars, who increasingly baffle us the more we discover about them.

Dominic Selwood's new thriller *The Sword of Moses* features the Templars, Montsauns and a number of the themes discussed in this article.

CAPTION(S):

Iconography at Montsauns. What does it mean?

By Dominic Selwood

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HICKS, ELIAS

Assyrian king, who nevertheless demanded the city's unconditional surrender (2 Kings 18:19–35; 19:8–13; 2 Chronicles 32:9–19; Isaiah 36). At this point Jerusalem was unexpectedly spared, according to some traditions, by a plague that decimated the Assyrian army (according to the SCRIPTURE, an ANGEL saved Jerusalem; 2 Kings 19:35; 2 Chronicles 32:21). This event gave rise to the belief in Judah that Jerusalem was inviolable, a belief that lasted until the city fell to the Babylonians a century later.

HICKS, ELIAS \ˈhɪks\ (b. March 19, 1748, Hempstead Township, Long Island, N.Y., U.S.—d. Feb. 27, 1830, Jericho, Long Island, N.Y.), early advocate of the abolition of slavery in the United States and a liberal QUAKER preacher whose followers were one of two factions created by the schism of 1827–28 in American Quakerism.

After assisting in ridding the SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers) of slavery, Hicks worked for general abolition. He urged a boycott of the products of slave labor, advocated establishment of an area in the Southwest as a home for freed slaves, and helped secure legislation that brought an end to slavery in New York state. In 1811 the first of several editions of his *Observations on the Slavery of the Africans and Their Descendants* was published.

One of the first to preach progressive revelation, which allowed for continuing revision and renewal of doctrinal beliefs, Hicks in 1817 successfully opposed the adoption of a set creed by the Society of Friends at the Baltimore Yearly Meeting. He was subsequently called a heretic for his opposition to Evangelicalism, which stressed established beliefs, and he was held responsible by some for the Quaker schism of 1827–28. After this separation Hicks's followers called themselves the Liberal branch of the Society of Friends, but orthodox Quakers labeled them Hicksites. The Hicksites became increasingly isolated from other Quakers until the 20th century, when mutual cooperation began to prevail.

HIEI, MOUNT \ˈhē-ā\, *Japanese* Hiei-zan \ˈhē-ā-zān\, mountain [2,782 feet [845 meters] high] near Kyōto, the location of the Enryaku Temple, a Tendai Buddhist monastery complex built by the monk SAICHŌ (767–822). When Sannō (Japanese: “Mountain King”; the mountain's KAMI, or SHINTŌ deity) became identified with the Buddha Śākyamuni (Japanese: Shaka; the principal figure of Tendai BUDDHISM), the Sannō Shintō school emerged, based on the Tendai belief in Buddhist unity. Thus, Shaka was identical to Dainichi Nyorai (the Buddha VAIROCANA), and Sannō to AMATERASU (the Shintō sun goddess). Imperial patronage made the Hiei monastery one of the most powerful centers of Buddhist learning in Japan. HŌNEN and many other famous monks who later established their own schools came there for training.

HIEROPHANT \ˈhī-ə-rə-fant, hī-ˈer-ə-fənt\, *Greek* hierophantēs (“displayer of holy things”), chief of the Eleusinian cult, the best known of the MYSTERY RELIGIONS of ancient Greece. His principal job was to display the sacred objects during the celebration of the mysteries and to explain their secret symbolic meaning to the initiates. At the opening of the ceremonies he proclaimed that all unclean persons must stay away, a rule that he had the right to enforce.

Usually an old, celibate man with a forceful voice, he was selected from the Eumolpids, one of the original clans of the ancient Greek city of Eleusis, to serve for life. Upon taking office he symbolically cast his former name into the sea and was thereafter called only *hierophantēs*. During the

ceremonies he wore a headband and a long, richly embroidered purple robe.

HIEROS GAMOS \ˈhē-ə-ròs-gā-mòs\ (*Greek*: “sacred marriage”), sexual relations of fertility deities in myths and rituals, characteristic of societies based on cereal agriculture, especially in the Middle East. At least once a year humans representing the deities engaged in sexual intercourse, which guaranteed the fertility of the land, the prosperity of the community, and the continuation of the cosmos.

As ritually expressed, there were three main forms of the *hieros gamos*: between god and goddess (most usually symbolized by statues); between goddess and priest-king (who assumed the role of the god); and between god and priestess (who assumed the role of the goddess). In all three forms there was a relatively fixed form to the ritual: a PROCESSION that conveyed the divine actors to the marriage celebration; an exchange of gifts; a purification of the pair; a wedding feast; a preparation of the wedding chamber and bed; and the secret nocturnal act of intercourse. In some traditions this appears to have been an actual physical act between sacred functionaries who impersonated the deities; in other traditions it appears to have been a symbolic union. On the following day the marriage and its consequences for the community were celebrated.

Some scholars have applied the term *hieros gamos* to all myths of a divine pair (e.g., heaven–earth) whose sexual intercourse is creative. The term, however, should probably be restricted only to those agricultural cultures that ritually reenact the marriage and that relate the marriage to agriculture, as in Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, CANAAN, Israel (the Song of SOLOMON has been suggested to be a hierogamitic text), Greece, and India.

HIGH GOD, also called Sky God, a type of supreme deity found among many indigenous peoples of North and South America, Africa, northern Asia, and Australia. A High God is conceived as being utterly transcendent, living in or identified with the sky and removed from the world that he created. Among North American Indians and central and southern Africans, thunder is thought to be his voice, and in Siberia the sun and moon are considered his eyes. He is connected with food and heaven among American Indians.

The High God sometimes is conceived as masculine or sexless, although in a number of traditions, especially in Meso-America, he is a balanced combination of male and female powers and identity. He is the sole creator of heaven and earth. Although he is omnipotent and omniscient, he is thought to have withdrawn from his creation and therefore to be inaccessible to prayer or sacrifice. If he is invoked, it is only in times of extreme distress, but there is no guarantee that he will hear or respond. His name often is revealed only to initiates, and to speak it aloud is thought to invite disaster or death; his most frequent title is Father. In some traditions he is a transcendent principle of divine order; in others he is senile or impotent and is replaced by a set of more active deities.

Some scholars consider the conception of the High God to be very old, preceding the creation of particular pantheons, while some see him as a recent development stimulated by monotheistic missionaries of CHRISTIANITY. In recent times the figure of the High God has been revived among some African messianic groups.

HIGH PLACE, *Hebrew* bamah, or bama \ˈbā-mā, bā-ˈmä\, Israelite or Canaanite open-air shrine usually erected on an