

# Part 1 of a passage on Church history

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The Church of Rome in the days of Pope Victor began to place religion in ceremonies & to err in the faith & grow uncharitable towards other Churches. For this Pope excommunicated the Churches of Asia for keeping Easter upon the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the Lunisolar year (a thing in its own nature indifferent) & wrote communicatory letters to the Montanists in Asia & Phrygia & then turned Patripassian recalling those letters by the perswasion of Praxeas, as Tertullian a Montanist in his book against Praxeas written about the year 198 or 200 thus mentions. Idem [Praxeas] tunc Episcopum Romanum agnoscentem jam prophetias Montani Priscæ et Maxamillæ et ex ea agnitione pacem ecclesijs Asiæ et Phrygiæ inferentem, falsa de ipsis prophetijs et ecclesijs adseverando, & præcessorum ejus auctoritates defendendo, coegit et literas pacis revocare jam emissas et a proposito recipiendorum charismatum concessare. Ita duo negotia diaboli Praxeas Romæ procuravit, prophetiam expulit et Patrem crucifixit. All this Tertullian seems to have learnt when he was at Rome & by consequence before he turned Montanist. And therefor this bishop of Rome was Victor. For Tertullian turned Montanist before he wrote his book de Corona militis & wrote that book A.C. 201, after the death of the Pope who did these things. For he wants scarce have charged a living Pope in express words with doing the work of the devil & crucifying God the father almighty. The predecessors of Victor who had opposed the Montanists were Soter & Eleutherus. For Soter wrote against them at their first rise & Irenæus was sent to Rome by the Church of Lyons to confer with Eleutherus against them. And therefore Victor was the first bishop of Rome who turned Montanist. I take him to be the Victorinus mentioned in the appendix to Tertullians book de Præscriptione hæreticorum, in these words. Sed post hos omnes etiam Praxeas quidam hæresim introduxit quam Victorinus corroborare curavit. He seems to have written letters of peace to the Montanists of Asia & Phrygia for strengthening himself against the true Churches of those parts whom he had newly excommunicated in order to subvert them. And henceforward there remained a perpetual misunderstanding between the Churches of Asia instructed by Iohn & represented in the Apocalyps by the seven Churches & the Church of Rome instructed by Clemens & represented (after separation from the seven Churches) by the woman seated upon seven hills in the wilderness. Now while the bishop of Rome became first a Cataphrygian & then a Praxean or Patripassian, he was certainly of opinion that the Word of God was <2r> the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος the internal inherent & essential power reason & wisdom of the father from all eternity & at length was emitted outwardly as a ray of light from the sun & as the first word which God spake when he began to exert his power for creating the world. For this was the common opinion of both those hereticks.

By these instances it is manifest that the metaphysical Theology of Orpheus Plato & other heathen Philosophers began to spread manifestly in the churches before the end of the second century, & infected not only those who separated from her & became hereticks of note, but also many others who did not separate, & particularly that it insinuated it self into the Churches of Antioch & Rome & the school at Alexandria. And therefore we need not wonder if it still got grownd in the third century & prevailed in the fourth.

Antony the common father of the Moncks taught the people (as Athanasius tells us,)<sup>[1]</sup> that the Son of God was αἰδιος τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς οὐσίας λόγος καὶ σοφία, the Word & wisdom of the fathers substance &

therefore eternal. And from Antony this doctrine came to his disciples the Moncks.

Athanasius was educated a monck under Antony pouring water upon his hands as Elisha did upon Elijah's, & imbibed the same doctrine. For in many places of his works, he takes the λόγος for the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος without which the father would be ἄσοφος & ἄλογος & thence argues his eternity & represents that the λόγος arose from the father not as an empty vanid voice but with a substance as light from the Sun, a river from the fountain a tree from the root & so was consubstantial to him: which was the language & doctrine of the Montanists (κατὰ Proclum) as you have heard above. And this doctrine Athanasius imbibed in his youth as may be gathered from his Orations contra Gentes & de incarnatione Verbi Dei which he wrote before the controversy with Arius began. < insertion from f 1v >

< text from f 2r resumes >

Alexander bishop of Alexandria in his general Epistle directed to all the bishops of the Church catholick in the very beginning of the controversy with Arius & subscribed by all the bishops of his party, writes thus. Quod si Filius ratio Patris est ac sapientia quomodo fuit tempus cum non esset? Perinde enim est ac si dicerent ἄλογον καὶ ἄσοφον ποτὲ τὸν θεόν, Deum aliquando rationis et sapientiæ expertem fuisse. And this being subscribed by all the bishops of his party may be taken for their common opinion.

Constantine the great who was influenced by Hosius published the same opinion even before he convened the council of Nice. For in an Epistle which he sent to Alexandria & caused to be published in all the cities of the Roman Empire for influencing that Council, he spake thus to Arius. Vnum dicis Deum. Habes ejusdem me sententiæ. Sic igitur sentias. Ejus essentiae Verbum principij et finis expers Verbum esse dicis: eo contentus sum; Ita crede. Siquid præterea adjunges, id tollo. Siquid ad impiam fraudulentiam consuis, id nec videre nec intelligere me confiteor. Si hospitium corporis assumis ad divinorum operum dispensationem, non improbo. And this inward eternal essential onlyword Constantine supposed to come out of the father in the beginning of the creation by a certain act called generation, the generation which we are to beleive. For in another

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[1] In vita Antonij.