THE CONSTRUCTION OF A ‘HERETICAL PARTY’ IN THE APOLOGIA CONTRA ARIANOS OF ATHANASIIUS OF ALEXANDRIA

1. INTRODUCTION

In the traditional representation of the so-called ‘Arian Controversy’, Athanasius of Alexandria (bishop 328-373) is the champion of orthodoxy. He is the hero who all but single-handedly resisted the spread of the heresy of the Alexandrian presbyter Arius, and thus secured the eventual triumph of the theology proclaimed at the Council of Nicaea, the first ecumenical council of the Christian Church, which met in 325 under the auspices of Constantine, the first Christian Roman Emperor.

Throughout his own lifetime, however, Athanasius was a figure of huge controversy. His very election as bishop in 328 faced opposition from the Melitians, an Egyptian schismatic sect that emerged during the

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1 With certain modifications, this is the text of a paper presented to the Oxford ‘After Rome’ Seminar on May 30th, 2002. I would like to express my thanks to Alan Dearn and Professor Averil Cameron, both of whom read and commented upon preliminary drafts of that paper.

2 It is not my purpose here to present in full the complexity of the theological controversies that divided the fourth century Christian Church. For the most detailed modern survey of these debates, see R.P.C. Hanson, The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381 (Edinburgh, 1988).
Great Persecution, and already in 332 we find Athanasius at the court of Constantine defending himself against charges of extortion and violence brought by those Melitians. These charges recurred again in 334, and culminated in the condemnation of Athanasius at the Council of Tyre in 335, and his exile by Constantine to ‘the ends of the world’ (Trier). He returned to Egypt on Constantine’s death in late 337, but fled again in 339, going to Rome. He was defended by a Council of Rome in 340, condemned by the ‘Dedication’ Council of Antioch in 341, defended by the Western ‘half’ of the Council of Serdica in 343, condemned by the Eastern ‘half’ at the same Council, and finally returned to Alexandria in 346 (Athanasius would subsequently be exiled three additional times later in his career, but these episodes fortunately do not concern us now).

Athanasius never ceased to proclaim his innocence of the charges upon which he was condemned in 335, and it is his presentation of the Council of Tyre, the image of himself that he creates, and above all his construction of the men whom he held responsible for his exile as a ‘heretical party’ that is the subject of this paper. For it was Athanasius who first represented his own position as that of a ‘champion of orthodoxy’, assaulted at every turn by the ‘Arian heretics’ whose sole purpose was the elimination of the ‘orthodox’ in order to establish their ‘heresy’. And just as Athanasius’ representation of himself was to become the accepted truth of later Christian tradition, so too did his vision of his foes. In every ancient or modern reconstruction of the


4 For the most recent sketch of Athanasius’ life and the much-debated chronology of this period, albeit a sketch that is often controversial in its own right, see T.D. Barnes, Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 1993).
Arian Controversy', one cannot help but be confronted by the heretical 'party' whom Athanasius blamed for his fate: hoi peri Eusebion.

Translated literally, hoi peri is an entirely neutral term, referring simply to 'the ones around' a certain individual, and such a phrase is used repeatedly in fourth century and earlier Greek writings without any necessarily polemical implications. In the writings of Athanasius, however, hoi peri Eusebion specifically designates a political and theological 'party', the 'Eusebian gang'. Named for their alleged leader, not the famous historian Eusebius of Caesarea but his more important namesake and contemporary Eusebius of Nicomedia (bishop of Berytus c.315-6; bishop of Nicomedia c.317-337; bishop of Constantinople 337-c.342), the exact identities of the alleged members of this 'party' cannot be precisely determined. Athanasius refers to different individual 'Eusebians' at different points in his various works, and he never provides a definitive list of those who he considers to be

5 In particular, Athanasius' polemic exerted great influence upon the fifth century writers Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret, whose ecclesiastical histories provide our primary narrative accounts of the fourth century controversies. This influence seriously compromises the value of these historians as independent sources against which Athanasius' own presentation might be compared.

6 Thus hoi peri terminology occurs in inscriptions to designate magistrates and their colleagues, and (perhaps most significantly) is frequently used to describe the 'followers' of a chosen philosopher and his teachings, as in Diogenes Laertius' Lives of Eminent Philosophers (e.g. 7.68; 7.76; 7.92; 7.128).

7 The title hoi peri Eusebion is first used in the Encyclical Letter written by Athanasius' predecessor Alexander before the Council of Nicaea (quoted in Socrates 1.6), and the same construction (in the form hoi amphi ton Eusebion) also appears in the fragmentary description of that Council written in c.325-330 by bishop Eustathius of Antioch (another bishop whose exile in the years after Nicaea was blamed on an 'Arian conspiracy'), quoted in Theodoret 1.8. Only in the polemic of Athanasius, however, do we see this phrase employed on a systematic basis.

8 For the most recent study of this much neglected figure, see D.M. Gwynn, 'Constantine and the other Eusebius', Prudentia 31.2 (1999) 94-124.
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hoi peri Eusebion⁹. But as a collective ‘party’, it is these ‘Eusebians’ whom Athanasius represents as the great supporters of Arius and his theology both before and after the Council of Nicaea. They are the men who sought to impose ‘Arianism’ upon the Church in the years after 325, and who persecuted and expelled all those ‘orthodox’ bishops who resisted their ‘heresy’, most notably of course Athanasius himself.

There has been much recent revisionist scholarship on the ‘Arian Controversy’, scholarship that has emphasised the degree to which our ‘orthodox’ sources have distorted our understanding of the fourth century theological debates and their participants.¹⁰ Yet, despite these revisionist advances (which have included the recognition that ‘Athanasius consistently misrepresented central facts about his ecclesiastical career’¹¹), almost no one has thus far seen fit to question Athanasius’ representation of Eusebius of Nicomedia as in some sense an ‘Arian’, and the leader of an ‘Arian party’. According to Hanson, ‘that Eusebius was the leader of a party, and that he was recognised as such by his contemporaries, there can be no doubt at all’.¹² And it was

¹⁰ Hanson (1988) xviii-xx in particular has emphasised that the traditional image of the controversy as a polarised conflict between established ‘orthodoxy’ and manifest ‘heresy’ cannot be maintained, for ‘on the subject which was primarily under discussion there was not as yet any orthodox doctrine ... [the controversy] is not the story of a defence of orthodoxy, but a search for orthodoxy, a search conducted by the method of trial and error’.


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on this same assumption that Barnes declared that ‘Ecclesiastical politics after Nicaea are party politics’.\textsuperscript{13}

In making these statements, neither Hanson nor Barnes would seem to have considered in any depth the nature of Athanasius’ description of \textit{hoi peri Eusebion}, its origins and its motivation.\textsuperscript{14} Both were aware that Athanasius’ writings are highly polemical and potentially distorted, but both nevertheless accepted his image of the ‘Eusebians’ as a party, with its implications of organisation, shared aims and policies, and of corruption and violence. In this paper, I will argue that this image is in fact a rhetorical construct, a product of Athanasius’ polemic and of his desire to justify himself against his condemnation and subsequent exile in 335. For I believe that it is possible to identify with precision the origins and initial purpose of Athanasius’ construction of his opponents as \textit{hoi peri Eusebion}, through a close analysis of the Athanasian presentation of the events surrounding the Council of Tyre in the work known today as the \textit{Apologia Contra Arianos}.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} T.D. Barnes, \textit{Constantine and Eusebius} (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, 1981) 225. In his later work Barnes (1993) 174 further expands upon this theme, and argues that the fourth century controversies ‘encouraged the formation within the church of coalitions of bishops which functioned much like modern political parties – a broad ideological (or theological) cohesiveness furthered and sometimes hindered by personal ambitions’.

\textsuperscript{14} Indeed, given the importance of Athanasius as a source for the fourth century Church and its controversies, it is surprising that the only recent scholarly analysis of the polemical nature of Athanasius’ writings is that of Christopher Stead, ‘Rhetorical Method in Athanasius’, \textit{VC} 30 (1976) 121-137, reprinted as Chapter 8 of \textit{idem, Substance and Illusion} (1985).

\textsuperscript{15} An outline of the structure of this complicated work is provided in the Appendix at the end of this paper. The \textit{Apologia Contra Arianos} has sometimes been referred to as the \textit{Apologia Secunda} due to its position in the manuscripts of Athanasian works after the \textit{Apologia de Fuga}, a title that Barnes (1993) 238 n.30 was correct to dismiss as ‘both inauthentic and seriously misleading’, but which Hanson and others have unfortunately used.
Like the vast majority of Athanasius’ surviving works, the *Apologia Contra Arianos* is difficult to place according to date or context. This is partly because of the manuscript tradition of Athanasius’ writings, which wrongly fixed the *Apologia* in 358, but far more important in this instance is the nature of the work itself. The *Apologia Contra Arianos* is not a single composition, but a collection of documents of varying dates and authorship connected by an Athanasian narrative. The critical question thus becomes the date or dates of the collection of the documents and the composition of the narrative (which need not have occurred at the same times). The documents themselves range in date from before Athanasius’ accession in 328 to after the Western Council of Serdica in 343, and are collected into two sections, the first half covering 338-347, and the second half (somewhat confusingly) covering the earlier period of 328-337. The narrative that surrounds these documents is impossible to date with precision. The last section of the text (89-90) describes the ‘lapse’ into heresy of Liberius of Rome and Osius of Cordoba, which is conventionally dated to 358. Yet while this reference has provided the traditional date for the entire work, these passages appear to be a later addition, and cannot provide a context for the text as a whole. Instead, it seems more probable that Barnes is correct in his argument that the

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16 The date of 358 derives partly from the concluding reference to Liberius and Osius - whose lapse was traditionally dated to that year, although it has now been demonstrated that these events actually occurred in late 357 (Barnes (1993) 126 - and partly from a statement in *Apologia Contra Arianos* 59 that Athanasius was writing at a time when he was suffering persecution, which led to the work being attributed to the period of Athanasius’ third exile, 356-362. However, this statement could equally refer to the years of Athanasius’ second exile, 339-346, and in any case one such individual reference can only provide a tentative date for that particular section of the Athanasian narrative, not for the composition of the work as a whole.

17 The authenticity of the documents in the *Apologia Contra Arianos* was once the subject of considerable debate, but is now almost universally accepted. For a discussion of this question, and a refutation of the arguments of Otto Seeck, who regarded Athanasius as an ‘arch-forger’ who falsified documents according to his polemical needs, see N.H. Baynes, ‘Athanassiana’, *JEA* 11 (1925) 61-65.
Apologia Contra Arianos was composed in multiple stages. At the very least, a number of the documents of the second half of the work, and quite possibly an initial narrative, were already available for and used by the Council of Alexandria in 338, whose Encyclical Letter is quoted at the beginning of the Apologia in its extant form (3-19).

For my present purposes, what is most important is not to establish a specific narrative date, but simply to emphasise that a number of the documents preserved in the Apologia Contra Arianos thus predate the Council of Tyre, while Athanasius' polemical narrative was written in the years after 335, either immediately following his return from his first exile in late 337, or during his second exile that commenced in 339. As we shall see, there are significant differences between the account provided by the narrative and the evidence of the documents that Athanasius cites, and these differences are fundamental to the analysis of Athanasius' presentation of the events of 328-335.

II. THE ATHANASIAN PRESENTATION OF 328-335

It is necessary to state at the outset that it is emphatically not my intention to return here to the much discussed subject of Athanasius' guilt or innocence. In reality, even the exact charges on which he was condemned in 335 remain uncertain. Athanasius' own account focuses upon two charges – that he murdered a Melitian bishop named Arsenius (which it seems true that Athanasius disproved, as he produced Arsenius alive), and that he was not responsible for a certain Macarius breaking a sacred chalice in a Melitian church (a

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18 See Barnes (1993) Appendix 2 (192-5). I am less convinced by Barnes' attempts to identify with precision the exact times and contexts in which these stages of composition took place, for we simply do not have the evidence to justify the elaborate hypothesis that he endeavours to create.

19 For the fullest extant ancient account of those charges, though still not complete, see Sozomen 2.25.

20 Although the famous story that Athanasius actually identified Arsenius as among those present at the Council of Tyre does not itself appear in any Athanasian work, only in Sozomen 2.25.10.
charge that is not clear even in the Apologia Contra Arianos, as Athanasius both argues that nothing happened and that, if it did happen, it did not matter). There were certainly other charges of violence that Athanasius does not mention (charges that would seem to have had a basis of truth on the evidence of Papyrus London 1914, a rare contemporary Melitian letter that refers to the imprisonment and abuse of Melitian clergy by Athanasius’ supporters21), but neither those additional charges nor the precise legal proceedings of Tyre can be reconstructed with any degree of confidence.22

In the context of this paper, no such reconstruction is necessary. For in the Athanasian presentation of these events, it is not the charges themselves that matter, as much as his construction of his foes. ‘I was the hindrance to the admittance of hoi peri Areion into the Church ... all their [hoi peri Eusebion’s] proceedings against me, and the story which they fabricated about the breaking of the chalice and the murder of Arsenius, were for the sole purpose of introducing impiety into the Church and of preventing their being condemned as heretics’ (Apologia Contra Arianos 85).

This paragraph encapsulates Athanasius’ image of his trial and of his foes as hoi peri Eusebion. Not only is he innocent of the charges that have been ‘fabricated’ against him, but those charges themselves (charges which one should note were concerned entirely with Athanasius’ behaviour, not theology) are nothing more than a ‘smoke-screen’ to hide the ‘Eusebian’ conspiracy to spread their heresy. The accusations themselves stemmed originally from the Melitians, but Athanasius’ true foes are not Egyptian schismatics but ‘Arian heretics’,


22 A difficulty that is amply reflected in the markedly disparate reconstructions of Tyre that have been proposed by Drake, ‘Athanasius’ First Exile’, GRBS 27 (1986) 193-204; by Arnold (1991) 143-163; and by Barnes (1993) 22-25.
who thus represent a threat to the Church as a whole and against whom every Christian must support Athanasius, their ‘orthodox victim’. It is the development of this image of Athanasius himself, and of the actions and motives of hoi peri Eusebion, that I now wish to trace through the narrative of the second half of the Apologia Contra Arianos.

The opening paragraph of that narrative gives an immediate indication of the framework within which Athanasius will present the charges that were levelled against him. After a very brief history of the Melitian schism down to his own election as bishop, Athanasius declares that at this time ‘the Melitians ... like dogs unable to forget their vomit, were again troubling the Churches. Upon learning this, Eusebius, who was the advocate of the Arian heresy, sent and bought the Melitians with many promises, became their secret friend (krupha philos), and arranged with them for their assistance on any occasion when he might wish for it’ (59).

Thus from the beginning Eusebius of Nicomedia is introduced as the leader of the ‘Arian heresy’, and most importantly Athanasius here establishes what we will see is a constantly recurring theme, that of a ‘secret alliance’ between the Melitians and the ‘Eusebians’ who support the ‘Arian heresy’.23 The charges may have originated from the schismatics, but their true source lies with the heretics. And so in turn in 330-331, according to Athanasius, ‘Eusebius, availing himself of the occasion which he had agreed upon with the Melitians, wrote and persuaded them to invent some pretext, so that ... they might devise and spread reports against us. Accordingly, after seeking for a long time and finding nothing, they at last agreed together, with the advice of hoi

23 This ‘Eusebian-Melitian alliance’ has been accepted almost without question in modern scholarship, as it was by L.W. Barnard (1973) 184-5, and more recently by Arnold (1991) 62-4; Barnes (1993) 24; and Drake (2000) 262. Hanson (1988) 251-5 does at least recognise the potential distortion of Athanasius’ account, but nevertheless he too ultimately accepts that polemical presentation, and concludes that the Melitians made a mistake by appealing to Eusebius of Nicomedia for aid, as by doing so they ‘gave Athanasius an opportunity of clouding the issue by ascribing all protest against his outrageous conduct to bias towards Arianism’ (255).
peri Eusebion, and fabricated their first accusation ... respecting the linen vestments’ (60).

The exact significance of these ‘linen vestments’ remains unclear, and the charge itself was soon dropped, but the framework of Athanasius’ presentation, of accusations levelled by the Melitians but inspired by *hoi peri Eusebion*, is at once apparent. When Athanasius was summoned to court in 332 to answer the complaints that had been levelled against him, this same conspiracy reared its head again. For ‘Eusebius persuaded them [the Melitians] to wait; and when I arrived, they next accused Macarius of breaking the chalice, and brought against me the most heinous accusation possible, that, being an enemy of the Emperor, I had sent a purse of gold to one Philumenus’ (60). As before, the charges are Melitian, but the motivation derives from Eusebius and his fellow ‘Arians’, for the schismatics acted only ‘with the aim of pleasing those who had hired them’ (63). And when even these charges were in turn dismissed, once more the Melitians ‘communicated with hoi peri Eusebion, and at last that calumny was invented by them that indeed Macarius broke a chalice, [and that] a certain bishop Arsenius was murdered by me’ (63).

In 334, these charges were dismissed by Constantine when he was informed that Arsenius had been found alive.24 ‘Thus the conspiracy had an end. The Melitians were repulsed and covered with shame. But notwithstanding this hoi peri Eusebion still did not remain quiet, for they did not care for the Melitians, but for hoi peri Areion, and they were afraid lest, if the proceedings of the former should be stopped, they should no longer find persons to play the parts, by whose assistance they might be able to bring in those men [the Arians]. Therefore again they incited the Melitians, and persuaded the Emperor to give orders that a Council should be held afresh at Tyre’ (71).

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24 At no point in the *Apologia Contra Arianos* or elsewhere does Athanasius openly admit that Constantine had in fact ordered a council to be held at Palestinian Caesarea in 334 to investigate Athanasius’ behaviour, a council that the emperor disbanded at the news that Arsenius still lived. The existence of this abortive council is thus only known from other sources, including Sozomen 2.25.1 and Theodoret 1.28.2.
The Council of Tyre is here presented as a direct continuation of the earlier charges, a product of the ongoing conspiracy of the ‘Eusebian gang’ who exploit the Melitians and mislead the Emperor in order to spread their ‘Arian heresy’. The same two charges concerning the broken chalice and the fate of Arsenius are thus once more the focus of Athanasius’ account of the Council itself, and when those charges apparently failed to produce a decisive result, it is again the ‘Eusebians’ who conspire to pervert justice and bring about Athanasius’ fall. For ‘hoi peri Eusebion, who were aggrieved that they had lost the prey of which they had been in pursuit, persuaded the Comes Dionysius [the secular official appointed by Constantine to supervise the council], who was one with them, to send to the Mareotis, in order to see whether they could not find out something there against the Presbyter [Macarius], or rather that at a distance they might plot as they wished when we were absent’ (72).

Moreover, not only did the ‘Eusebians’ thus arrange such a commission of enquiry, which was sent to investigate the church in which the chalice episode allegedly took place, but ‘the very persons whom we rejected on account of the Arian heresy, these were the ones carefully despatched, Diognius [Theognis], Maris, Theodore, Macedonius, Ursacius, and Valens’ (72). Athanasius repeatedly condemns the proceedings of the commission, which he asserts employed violence to intimidate witnesses and only heeded evidence hostile to himself. And so he concludes, ‘who then from these things does not behold the conspiracy? Who at the same time does not see clearly the wretchedness of hoi peri Eusebion?’ (72).

With the verdict of the Council inevitable, Athanasius fled and appealed to Constantine, who then wrote his famous letter to the bishops at Tyre (86). 25 After describing his encounter with a

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25 As has long been known, there is another, longer version of this same letter in Gelasius of Cyzicus, Historia Ecclesiastica 3.18. As the Gelasius version includes a further section in praise of Athanasius’ piety, which it is difficult to believe that Athanasius would have removed (Drake (1986) 195.n.4), it is generally argued that Athanasius’ text is the original and that of Gelasius reflects later additions, although this was rejected by Barnes (1993) 30-2.
dishevelled Athanasius at the gates of Constantinople, Constantine expresses concern that there may have been impropriety at the council, and orders the bishops to come to court and explain their judgement. However, again according to Athanasius, ‘when hoi peri Eusebion read this letter, being conscious of what they had done, they prevented the rest of the bishops from going up, and only went themselves: Eusebius, Theognis, Patrophilus, the other Eusebius, Ursacius and Valens. And they no longer said anything about the chalice and Arsenius ... but inventing another accusation which concerned the Emperor himself, they declared before him, that “Athanasius has threatened to withhold the corn being sent from Alexandria”’ (87). Losing his temper, Constantine exiled Athanasius to Trier, although Athanasius would later explain that, ‘this being the reason why I was sent away into Gaul, who, I ask again, does not plainly perceive the intention of the Emperor, and the murderous spirit of hoi peri Eusebion, and that the Emperor had done this in order to prevent their forming some more desperate scheme?’ (88).

This rapid survey provides a sufficiently clear impression of Athanasius’ depiction of the events surrounding his condemnation in the narrative of the Apologia Contra Arianos. Although the date of composition of this narrative cannot be precisely defined, as has already been explained, the essential elements of his image of hoi peri Eusebion and their role were clearly already established by 338. In that year a Council of Alexandria was held, presided over by Athanasius himself, to justify his return to his see on Constantine’s death the previous year. The Encyclical Letter of this Council is quoted in Apologia Contra Arianos 3-19, and provides important confirmation that the interpretation of the events of 328-335 described above (and indeed many of the documents around which this interpretation is presented) was already being put forward in Athanasius’ defence within barely three years of the Council of Tyre.26

26 I am not as convinced as Barnes (1993) 39 that this Encyclical Letter was actually composed by Athanasius himself, but it seems beyond doubt that the letter reflects Athanasius’ own representation of his position at the time that this Council of Alexandria was held.
The purpose of the Alexandrian Encyclical, the letter immediately declares, is to explain to every Christian bishop ‘the things that hoi peri Eusebion have fabricated against him [Athanasius]’ (3). Even now that Athanasius has returned, ‘they do not cease to disturb the imperial ear with fresh reports against us; they do not cease to write letters of deadly import, for the destruction of the Bishop who is the enemy of their impiety’ (3). Like a political party, the ‘Eusebians’ write letters to spread their conspiracies and mislead the emperors (now the sons of Constantine) to achieve their ends, and their accusations against Athanasius must be false, for their only motive is the destruction of the ‘orthodox’ and the promotion of their heresy. Everything they say ‘is nothing but calumny and a plot of our enemies ... an impiety on behalf of the Ariomaniacs, which is frantic against piety and desires to root out the orthodox, so that henceforth the advocates of impiety may preach without fear’ (5).

In its account of the charges against Athanasius, the Encyclical Letter follows an identical pattern to that of the Apologia Contra Arianos narrative above. Only the accusations regarding the chalice and Arsenius are admitted, and the letter concentrates above all on the ‘secret alliance’ of the Melitians and ‘Eusebians’, within which the schismatics once again played merely a subordinate role. ‘When he [John Arcaph, the Melitian leader] saw hoi peri Eusebion zealously supporting the Ariomaniacs, though they had not the daring to cooperate with them openly, but were attempting to employ others as their masks, he undertook a character, like an actor in the pagan theatres. The subject of the drama was a contest of Arians, the real design being their success, but John and those with him were put on stage and played the parts, in order that under cover of these, the Arians in the guise of judges might drive away the enemies of their impiety, firmly establishing their impious doctrines, and bring the Arians into the Church’ (17).

Just as in the Apologia Contra Arianos itself, the Melitians are nothing more than ‘actors’, for it is the ‘Eusebians’ who are the true source of the accusations against Athanasius. And so the judgement of Tyre is itself dismissed, for it is merely the product of an ‘Arian conspiracy’. ‘What weight can be attached to that Council or trial of which they make their boast? ... What kind of a Council of bishops was
held? ... Did not the attack of hoi peri Eusebion upon us proceed from their zeal for the Arian madness? ... How can they have the boldness to call that a Council, at which a Comes presided, which an executioner attended, and where an usher instead of the Deacons of the Church led us in; and where the Comes only spoke, and all present held their peace, or rather were obedient to him? The removal of those bishops who seemed to deserve it was presented at his desire; and when he gave the order we were dragged about by soldiers; or rather hoi peri Eusebion gave the order, and he was subservient to their wishes’ (8).

The verdict of such a trial cannot be valid, nor can such a heretical gathering represent a true council of the Christian Church. Every action at Tyre and every charge against Athanasius is the consequence of the conspiracy of a heretical party. And because he is the victim of such a conspiracy, Athanasius is not merely innocent of the charges that have been fabricated against him, but the very fact that he is attacked in this manner is itself proof that he is the ‘representative of orthodoxy’, ‘who will not give way to their impious heresy’ (17). Thus the Encyclical concludes with an appeal to every bishop, ‘to welcome this our declaration and share in the suffering of our brother Athanasius, and to show your indignation against hoi peri Eusebion’ (19). For it is the duty of every Christian to uphold Athanasius’ stand in defence of the true faith against the Arian madness.

III. ANALYSIS

In his presentation of the events surrounding the Council of Tyre, Athanasius goes far beyond merely declaring his own innocence. The alleged charges levelled against him are denied, but in a sense even those charges have become irrelevant. In Athanasius’ account, the true issue at stake is not his own behaviour, correct or otherwise, but the greater theological controversy against which he has set his trial. And he has achieved this presentation, and with it his image of himself as the ‘champion’ of the Church, through his construction of his opponents not as a local schismatic sect but as hoi peri Eusebion, a heretical, political faction, who represent a threat to the Church as a whole.
This is not to suggest that Athanasius’ construction of his foes is necessarily entirely false. Certain elements of his description of *hoi peri Eusebion* are indeed manifestly true. The men whom he named as ‘Eusebian’ did write letters to each other, they could and did manipulate episcopal appointments to their own advantage, and the bishops who attended the Council of Tyre did claim that their verdict received imperial support. The accusation that they employed violence cannot be proven outside the works of Athanasius, but it is not *a priori* impossible, nor does it seem that the hostility that many of these Eastern bishops felt towards Athanasius is purely a product of his imagination.

Nevertheless, Athanasius’ polemical representation of *hoi peri Eusebion* needs to be handled with considerable caution. As I have argued in an earlier article in this journal, Athanasius’ condemnation of the ‘Eusebians’ as ‘Arians’, which lies at the very heart of his polemic, represents a gross distortion of the true theological position at least of Eusebius of Nicomedia himself. The ‘party activities’ that Athanasius

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27 The best surviving example of such correspondence is the letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre, quoted in Theodoret 1.6.

28 Most famously, Eusebius himself was translated before the Council of Nicaca from his original see of Berytus to become bishop of Nicomedia, the then eastern capital, and shortly after Constantine’s death he moved again to the new imperial city of Constantinople. This double translation is condemned in the *Encyclical Letter* of the Council of Alexandria of 338 (*Apologia Contra Arianos* 6).

29 This statement is made in the synodal letter of the Council of Jerusalem (quoted by Athanasius, *Apologia Contra Arianos* 84), to which most or all of the bishops gathered at Tyre adjourned in 335 for the dedication of Constantine’s Church of the Holy Sepulchre (see below n.39).

30 Gwynn (1999) 102-107; cf. Colm Luibheid, ‘The Arianism of Eusebius of Nicomedia’, *Irish Theological Quarterly* 43 (1976) 3-23. One might note in passing that there is in fact no significant theological content within the *Apologia Contra Arianos* at all, merely the recurring assertion that Athanasius’ foes are ‘Arian’. Athanasius’ detailed presentation and refutation of the alleged
attributes to *hoi peri Eusebion*, on the other hand, which include the writing of letters, the exploitation of ecclesiastical and imperial patronage, and the instigation of violence, could be (and quite possibly were) all equally attributed to Athanasius himself. Most importantly, at least for the purposes of the present paper, it is possible to define precisely when, and why, Athanasius first began to construct himself and his foes in the manner that he does. As we shall see, that construction differs significantly from the presentation of the events preceding the Council of Tyre provided by the contemporary evidence that is preserved in Athanasius’ own writings.

Here we must return to the *Apologia Contra Arianos* and its documentary dossier, and also consider the Easter *Festal Letters* of Athanasius. For while the narrative of the former work must postdate Athanasius’ condemnation at Tyre, as does the Egyptian *Encyclical Letter* of 338, many of the documents in the second half of the *Apologia Contra Arianos*, and Athanasius’ earliest extant *Festal Letters*, provide a glimpse of how Athanasius and others represented those same events in the years before Tyre itself. In stark contrast to the later Athanasian narrative, what we find in these texts is a complete silence regarding *hoi peri Eusebion*.

Before we begin the analysis of these documents, certain explanatory remarks concerning the *Festal Letters* of Athanasius would

beliefs of his foes occurs elsewhere in his works, most notably in the three great *Orationes Contra Arianos*.

31 Thus Athanasius complains of the letters that his foes write against him in the *Encyclical Letter* circulated by his own council, and again in the *Epistula Encyclica* that he composed directly after his second exile in 339. He condemns their readiness to turn to imperial support, when he of course appealed to Constantine direct from Tyre; and he criticises the ‘Eusebians’ for their manipulation of episcopal offices, when he secured his own position in Egypt through the removal of his opponents and the installation of his own ‘pious and orthodox’ nominees (Sozomen 3.21). And despite his constantly repeated allegation that his foes employed violence against true Christians, Athanasius’ statement that ‘it is the part of true godliness not to compel but to persuade’ (*Historia Arianorum* 67) would have come as a considerable surprise to the Melitians who were being persecuted in *Papyrus London 1914*.
seem to be necessary, for like all Athanasian texts they pose their own unique problems. They survive only in fragments, the majority of which are in Syriac and Coptic rather than Greek, and although they each carry a date, that date only records the day and month of the Easter for which each letter was written, not the year. Thus the different Letters can only be assigned with certainty to a given year if Easter fell on the recorded day only once during Athanasius’ episcopate. This is not always true, but fortunately for my present purposes, the dates of the early Letters that will be discussed below are largely uncontroversial. In addition, as they were written for the Easter celebration of the Egyptian Church, the Festal Letters are largely non-polemical, and thus their silence concerning the ‘Eusebians’ could be interpreted as a consequence of their genre and audience. However, Athanasius did not hesitate to incorporate polemical material in the

32 For a more detailed discussion of the Festal Letters and the problems that they raise, see Barnes (1993) Appendix I (183-191).

33 In the pages that follow, the extracts I quote are from the Syriac collection of fragments (in which the early letters of Athanasius’ episcopate are preserved), as translated in the Athanasius volume of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. However, the traditional numbering and dating of the Festal Letters that the NPNF followed (derived from a Syriac Festal Index that accompanied one of the collections of letter fragments) has been demonstrated to be false, and thus the dating of each individual Letter has to be determined on the basis of its own content and Easter date (see n.34 below).

34 Aside from the date of Easter, the other crucial factor in determining the date of the early Festal Letters is the length of the Lenten fast that each letter prescribes. At some point between 334 and 338, the Egyptian practice shifted from a fast of only a single week to one of forty days. Therefore, all Festal Letters that refer to the shorter fast must pre-date that shift, and thus it can be proven that the letters recorded in the Festal Index as II and III must in fact date to 352 and 342 respectively, while Letter XXIV (assigned to the year 352) should in fact be dated to 330, and Letter XIV (assigned to 342) to 331. Letters I (329), IV (332) and V (333) retain their transmitted dates. Whether Letters VI and VII should be assigned to 334 and 335 depends upon if we date the shift to a forty-day fast to the year 334, which remains a much debated question, but for the present essay this is not of fundamental importance, and certainly neither of these letters contains any content of polemical significance.
Letters when he desired to do so, including at least one explicit reference to hoi peri Eusebion, and thus the Festal Letters represent a priceless opportunity to trace the development of Athanasius’ polemic year by year in the period surrounding the Council of Tyre.

The first three Festal Letters of Athanasius’ episcopate include no relevant polemical material, but in 332 (Letter IV) Athanasius apologises for the lateness of his fourth epistle, for ‘we have sent this letter from the Court ... having been summoned by the emperor Constantine to see him’ (4.5). No mention is made of what the charges were that provoked this summons, but Athanasius writes in a tone of triumph, ‘since our enemies have been put to shame and reproved by the Church, because they persecuted us without cause’ (4.1). Critically, Athanasius explicitly identifies those ‘enemies’. ‘The Melitians ... sought our ruin before the Emperor. But they were put to shame and driven away thence as calumniators’ (4.5). Whereas in the Apologia Contra Arianos narrative Athanasius specifically asserts that Eusebius of Nicomedia was the ‘secret friend’ who inspired the Melitians to bring forward these charges, in the Festal Letter actually written in 332, and written indeed from court where Eusebius is usually presumed to have been a significant figure, Athanasius’ sole concern is the Melitians. And the same is true of the documents cited in the Apologia Contra Arianos in relation to the events of this year. Neither Constantine’s Letter to Alexandria in 332 nor the documents relating to the Ischyras and Arsenius charges that Athanasius then quotes leave any trace of ‘Eusebian’ involvement.

This silence continues in the Festal Letter that can be assigned with confidence to 333 (V), and in the Letters that have been placed, although without the same certainty, in 334 and 335 (VI and VII). There are no known Letters for 336 or 337, and in the Easter communications the full polemic of Athanasius thus only appears after his return from his first exile. The first explicit reference to the ‘Arians’ occurs in 338 (X), with the Melitians now described merely as the allies of the heretics and the sharers of their impiety, and the only Festal invocation of hoi peri Eusebion then appears in 339 (XI), by which time the Melitians have entirely disappeared. At this stage, however, it is to the documents preserved in the Apologia Contra Arianos that we must turn. For a number of the texts that Athanasius cites there can be
dated with absolute certainty to 334 and 335. And it is in these documents that the precise origins of the *hoi peri Eusebion* polemic may finally be found.

After his description of the charges of 334 and their failure, Athanasius cites a letter that he received from Bishop Alexander of Thessalonica (66), a letter that Athanasius declares will *'show that they [hoi peri Eusebion] accused me of having destroyed Arsenius'* (66). Yet Alexander says nothing of *hoi peri Eusebion*, or indeed of 'Arians' at all. His sole focus is upon John Arcaph and the Melitians, and this is all the more significant for Alexander states that he received his information from an envoy of Athanasius named Macarius (presumably the same man involved in the chalice charge), and so it is at least possible that Alexander reflects Athanasius' own representation of these charges at that time.

In addition, Athanasius then proceeds to quote a letter from Constantine (68) written in the same year (334), in which the Emperor states that he has read the letters he received from Athanasius, and then condemns once more those who bring false accusations against the bishop, namely *'the most perverse and lawless Melitians'* (66). Despite the claims of Athanasius' narrative, the documents that he cites thus do not support his image of *hoi peri Eusebion* and their actions, and moreover there is reason to believe that in the years before the Council of Tyre, Athanasius himself did not present the charges against him in terms of a 'Eusebian conspiracy'. His concern was with the Melitians, the men who actually brought the charges forward, and while it is possible that Athanasius' silence concerning *hoi peri Eusebion* indicates that he had not yet recognised their 'secret alliance' with the Melitians, I believe that at this time Athanasius had simply not begun to represent his situation in the manner he would later construct.

So when did Athanasius' polemic against *hoi peri Eusebion* begin? The answer is at the Council of Tyre itself. Athanasius presents an entire series of documents in relation to the Council. The first two are

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35 An argument put forward by Arnold (1991) 64.
written by clergy in Alexandria (73) and in the Mareotis (74-5), and only speak vaguely of a ‘conspiracy against Athanasius’, without reference to the ‘Arian Eusebian party’. But far more important are three letters written at Tyre by the bishops who had accompanied Athanasius to the Council, \(^{36}\) letters which I believe it is safe to assume must reflect Athanasius’ own presentation of the proceedings against him. The first and longest of those letters was written as an ‘Encyclical’ to ‘the bishops assembled at Tyre’, and represents the earliest extant reference to hoi peri Eusebion as the source of the charges against Athanasius, and as a ‘heretical party’.

‘We suppose that the conspiracy is no longer secret which has been formed against us by hoi peri Eusebion and Theognis and Maris and Narcissus and Theodore and Patrophilus ... you yourselves know the enmity which they entertain, not only towards us, but towards all the orthodox, how that for the sake of the madness of Arius, and his impious doctrine, they direct their assaults, they form conspiracies against all’ (77). For the first time the charges against Athanasius are thus denounced as the product of a heretical conspiracy, which represents a threat not merely to Athanasius himself but to the Church as a whole. This was the image that the Egyptians appealed to the other bishops at Tyre to endorse, to recognise those who accused Athanasius as an ‘Arian party’ and so to condemn them and reject the charges that they brought against the bishop of Alexandria.

Of the other two letters from the Egyptian bishops at Tyre that are cited by Athanasius in the Apologia Contra Arianos, both are addressed to Dionysius, the Comes appointed by Constantine to oversee the Council and whom as we saw above Athanasius in his later narrative accused of being ‘one’ with the ‘Eusebians’. The first of these letters (78) is nearly identical to that to the bishops of Tyre and appeals to Dionysius to recognise that Athanasius is the victim of a ‘Eusebian conspiracy’, although the reference to the ‘Eusebians’ as ‘Arian’ is omitted, possibly as the theological argument was seen as inappropriate in a letter to a secular official. The other letter to Dionysius (79),

\(^{36}\) According to Sozomen, 2.25.16-19, the violent conduct of these Egyptian bishops at Tyre became one of the final charges levelled against Athanasius.
written when the verdict of Tyre was apparently inevitable, again
repeats that 'many conspiracies and plots are being formed against us
through the machinations of hoi peri Eusebios and Narcissus and
Flacillus and Theognis and Maris and Theodore and Patrophilus' (79).
The Egyptian bishops then request that Dionysius 'reserve the hearing
of the affairs which concern us for the most religious Emperor himself'
(79). This letter may have been written to prepare the ground for
Athanasius’ flight to Constantine from Tyre, although as we have seen,
this did not enable the bishop of Alexandria to avoid exile.37

In the letters of the Egyptian bishops at Tyre, it has thus become
possible to isolate with precision the date, context and intended
audience which first led Athanasius and his supporters to present the
accusations against him as the product of an ‘Arian Eusebian party’.
Why? What was the intended purpose of this polemic, which goes so
much further than the mere assertion of Athanasius’ innocence? It was
the other eastern bishops who were gathered at Tyre to whom the first
and most important Egyptian letter was sent; these are the men whom
Athanasius and his supporters most wished to convince. And I believe
that one passage in that letter to the bishops reveals both the
circumstances that led to the Egyptian appeal and the effect that they
hoped the polemic would have.

'When we heard that, after they [hoi peri Eusebion] had made
what preparations they pleased against us, and had sent these
suspected persons [to the Mareotis], they were going about to each of
you, and requiring a subscription, in order that it might appear as if
this had been done under the auspices of you all; for this reason we
were obliged to write to you, and to present this our testimony,
declaring that we are the objects of a conspiracy under which we are
suffering by and through them, and demanding that ... you would

37 Like the earlier pair of letters written by Athanasius’ supporters at Tyre, this
second letter to Dionysius would seem to have been part of a systematic
polemical campaign addressed both to the Comes and to the bishops of the
council. Although in this instance Athanasius does not quote the parallel letter,
the second epistle to Dionysius ends with a statement that 'we have likewise
made the same representations to my Lords the orthodox Bishops' (79).
refuse your subscriptions, lest they should pretend that those things are done by you, which they are contriving only among themselves ... As you will have to give an account on the Day of Judgement, receive this testimony, and recognising the conspiracy which has been framed against us, beware, if you are requested by them, of doing anything against us, and of taking part in the designs of hoi peri Eusebion’ (77).

If the ‘Eusebians’ are ‘Arians’, and their every action against Athanasius is motivated purely by their desire to spread their heresy, then it is the duty of every Christian bishop, not merely to recognise the innocence of Athanasius, but to actively condemn these heretics and to denounce their conspiracy. More importantly, however, in this appeal to all ‘Christian’ bishops to defend Athanasius against hoi peri Eusebion we see the imposition upon the Council of Tyre of the polarisation between ‘Arian’ and ‘orthodox’ ‘parties’ upon which this polemic is based. In this polarised vision, the Council of Tyre has been divided into three distinct blocs. There are the Egyptian bishops themselves, there are the men who have been branded as hoi peri Eusebion, and there are ‘the rest’. It is this last bloc, the ‘neutral majority’ of the bishops at Tyre to whom the letter has been addressed, who must now join with the Egyptians in support of Athanasius, and reject the ‘Arian Eusebians’, who are a heretical and minority faction who therefore cannot represent the Council or the Church. Hence in the paragraph quoted above there is the repeated emphasis that the bishops at Tyre must not sign the alleged ‘subscriptions’ of the ‘Eusebians’, nor act in any way as if in support of the ‘Eusebian’ conspiracy. To do so would suggest that they too were part of that heretical faction, and imply that they stood with the ‘Arians’ in opposition to the ‘true Church’.

Thus the Council of Tyre is divided into parties, and ecclesiastical politics after Nicaea are indeed ‘party politics’. But the very polarisation of Tyre into the distinct ‘factions’ of hoi peri Eusebion and ‘the Catholic Church’ (i.e. hoi peri Athanasian), between which the bishops to whom the Egyptian letter is addressed must choose, is itself a product of the polemic, not the reflection of reality that it is all too often taken to be. For in addressing the eastern bishops gathered at Tyre as in some sense distinct from the ‘Eusebian party’, the Egyptian bishops have imposed their own polarisation upon the Council itself,
creating the division between ‘Eusebians’ and ‘others’ upon which their polemic is based.

Only once this imposition has been recognised can the purpose of that polemic be understood. For in appealing to those ‘other’ bishops to reject *hoi peri Eusebion*, the Egyptians have attempted to turn their polarised construction into reality. In asking the bishops at Tyre to separate themselves from the ‘Eusebian faction’, the Egyptian bishops were asking their audience to accept the existence of *hoi peri Eusebion* as it was described in the letter they had just received, and so in turn to define themselves as ‘other’ than that heretical party, which, according to the polarised model of the polemic, must dictate that they support Athanasius. The letter of the Egyptian Bishops is therefore not a description of the Council of Tyre as it was, but an image of the Council that Athanasius and the authors of that letter wished their audience, who were themselves the members of that Council, to accept. And the clearest indication that this image of the Council of Tyre, and of the so-called ‘Eusebians’, is one that the majority of the bishops who gathered in that city did not share, is that in 335 at least, the polemic failed to avert Athanasius’ condemnation.

Athanasius brought some 48 bishops with him from Egypt when he came to face his accusers at Tyre, and yet throughout the proceedings of the Council his supporters would seem to have been very much a minority.\(^3^8\) The condemnation of Athanasius, upheld by some 60 or more eastern bishops, was therefore not the product of the manipulation of a minority faction, but the verdict of a considerable bloc of the eastern Church.\(^3^9\) In the words of Hanson, ‘[Athanasius] represents the

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\(^{38}\) The exact number of bishops who attended the Council in 335 cannot be precisely determined. Hanson (1988) 259 speaks of ‘about 60 bishops present’, citing Socrates 1.28, but Socrates’ estimate cannot include the Egyptian contingent of 48 bishops (whose names are attached to the letters that they wrote at Tyre quoted in the *Apologia Contra Arianos*). As the Egyptians were clearly unable to sway the verdict of the assembly, the overall number of bishops present must have been greater than this, and the estimate of 110-150 bishops proposed by Arnold (1991) 153 is probably closer to the truth.
Council of Tyre, which was a properly constituted and entirely respectable gathering of churchmen, some of whom had been confessors ... as a gang of disreputable conspirators, and brands all his opponents as favourers of heresy’.  

The bishops who rejected the pleas of Athanasius’ Egyptian supporters evidently did not accept the polemical image of the ‘Eusebians’ that the Egyptian bishops attempted to impose upon them. The condemnation of Athanasius is thus evidence both of the degree of hostility to the bishop of Alexandria that existed within the eastern Church in 335, and that some 60 bishops at least saw no reason to believe the Athanasian vision of hoi peri Eusebion as a manipulative and heretical party. It is therefore all the more striking that this

39 The bishops who attended the Council of Tyre then travelled onwards to Jerusalem to attend the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Athanasius again condemns that Council of Jerusalem as the vehicle of a ‘heretical faction’, for the synod ordered the restoration of Arius to communion (Apologia Contra Arianos 84-85; Historia Arianorum 1; De Synodis 21-22). But the description of the Jerusalem celebrations by Eusebius of Caesarea (Vita Constantini 4.43.4), although probably exaggerated in turn, suggests a large episcopal gathering, including bishops from almost all the eastern provinces of the empire.

40 Hanson (1988) 262. By contrast, Arnold (1991) declares that Tyre was ‘filled with those who sought [Athanasius’] destruction’ (77), and indeed asserts that ‘the Eusebians persuaded Constantine to approve their own list of delegates to the synod’ (144). Arnold derives this conclusion from the statement of Constantine quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea that ‘I have written to the bishops you [those assembled at Tyre] wished me to, that they should come and take part in your deliberations’ (Vita Constantini 4.42.3), but even Athanasius does not accuse his foes of manipulating the membership of the Council, and this charge hardly explains the presence of Athanasius’ own Egyptian bishops or of Alexander of Thessalonica.

41 This is not to suggest that Athanasius’ polemic in 335 had no success at all, for the appeals of the Egyptian bishops did convince at least one individual, Alexander of Thessalonica (whose support for Athanasius was already visible in the letter referred to above that he wrote in 334). Alexander attended the Council of Tyre, and he wrote his own letter to Comes Dionysius (recorded in Apologia Contra Arianos 80), in which he states that he has heard the appeals
polemical image of Athanasius’ foes, although rejected by the Council of Tyre that it was first intended to persuade, would nevertheless ultimately gain acceptance, first in the west and then eventually in the east, until it came to dominate our understanding of the opening decades of the ‘Arian Controversy’.

IV. CONCLUSION

It has not been the purpose of this paper to deny the possibility that the individuals whom Athanasius describes as ‘Eusebian’ may have been associated with each other through friendship or shared theological concerns, nor to imply that the potential distortion of Athanasius’ polemic either proves his guilt or justifies his condemnation. What I have sought to demonstrate is that *hoi peri Eusebion*, in the terms that this ‘party’ is presented in the writings of Athanasius, is a construct, first expressed in the letters of Athanasius’ Egyptian bishops at the Council of Tyre itself. The ‘Arian conspiracy’ of the ‘Eusebians’ that dominates the narrative of the *Apologia Contra Arianos* thus represents Athanasius’ later reinterpretation of the past, imposing upon his earlier career the image of his foes that he and his supporters only constructed in 335. This reinterpretation stands in sharp contrast to the earlier evidence, both of the documents that Athanasius quotes and of his own *Festal Letters* before the Council of Tyre, where all the polemic is directed solely against the Melitian schismatics, and there is no mention of *hoi peri Eusebion* or of an ‘Arian-Melitian alliance’.

In 335 Athanasius’ polemic failed, and it was only gradually over the following four decades that his presentation of himself, and in turn of his foes, came to emerge as the accepted interpretation of the Egyptian bishops and directly echoes their condemnation of a ‘conspiracy’ against Athanasius.

The other two most important documents of the first half of the *Apologia Contra Arianos*, which I have not considered here, are the letter of Julius of Rome to the eastern bishops at Antioch in 341 (21-35) and the *Encyclical Letter* of the Western Council of Serdica in 343 (44-50). Both draw directly upon the narrative and documents of the second half of the *Apologia Contra Arianos*, and Western Serdica in particular accepts without question Athanasius’ presentation of *hoi peri Eusebion.*
Council of Tyre and his subsequent exile. It is thus all the more ironic that both Hanson and Barnes, neither of whom accept the proclamation of innocence that was Athanasius' original intention, nevertheless continue to accept Athanasius' image of his foes. For the ultimate purpose of Athanasius' construction of *hoi peri Eusebion* from the Council of Tyre onwards was to create a polarisation between the 'Arian Eusebians', whose 'proceedings against me ... were for the sole purpose of introducing impiety into the Church', and the majority of the eastern bishops, who must therefore reject this heretical party and join with Athanasius and the 'true Church'. Only when this polarisation has been removed, and the very existence of *hoi peri Eusebion* been recognised as a polemical construct, can we fully free ourselves from this vision of a fourth century Church divided between 'Arian' and 'orthodox' 'parties', and so better understand both the career of Athanasius himself and the true nature and complexity of this controversial period.

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43 Hanson (1988) describes the Council of Tyre as possessing 'an air of nemesis' (262), while Barnes (1981) famously said of Athanasius that 'like a modern gangster, he evoked widespread mistrust, proclaimed total innocence – and usually succeeded in evading conviction on specific charges' (230).
APPENDIX: The Structure of Athanasius' *Apologia Contra Arianos*

(The following list of documents is not complete, but records only those documents cited in this paper. The documents are connected and interpreted throughout by an Athanasian narrative)

3-19: The *Encyclical Letter* of the Council of Alexandria (338)

21-35: Letter of Julius of Rome to the Eastern bishops (340/1)

37-50: Letters of the Western Council of Serdica (343)

51-58: Documents from Athanasius’ second return from exile (346-7)

59-62: Constantine’s Letters to Athanasius and the Alexandrian Church (328-332)

66: *Letter* of Alexander of Thessalonica to Athanasius (334)

68: *Letter* of Constantine to Athanasius (334)

73-6: Letters of the Clergy of Alexandria and of the Clergy of the Mareotis concerning the Mareotis Commission (335)

77: *Letter* of the Egyptian Bishops at Tyre to ‘the Bishops assembled at Tyre’ (335)

78-9: Two *Letters* of the Egyptian Bishops at Tyre to *Comes* Dionysius (335)

80: Letter of Alexander of Thessalonica to *Comes* Dionysius (335)

86: *Letter* of Constantine to the Bishops at Tyre (335)

87: Letter of Constantine II to the Church of Alexandria (337)

89-90: Narrative account of the ‘fall’ of Liberius of Rome and Ossius of Cordoba (357)