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The Impact of the Arius and Athanasius Controversy on the Doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, and Salvation in Christianity

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Abstract

The relationship between God the Father and the Son has long been a point of contention among Christians. Arius is a significant figure in this regard; he believed in the created nature of Jesus Christ and denied that his essence was the same as the Father's. In contrast, Athanasius believed in the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son. The purpose of examining the controversy between the ideas of Arius and Athanasius is to identify the consequences it left on Christianity. Therefore, the main question of this research is 'What results did Arius's thought have and what theological effects did it leave on Christianity?' The present study, by a descriptive and analytical method, aims to answer the main question. The most important results obtained are that Arius's ideas provoked opposition, such as the reaction of Athanasius, and created controversy, which damaged the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, and Salvation. In the field of conflict between unity and trinity, it somehow led to the development of the official Christian theology, namely the Trinity.

Keywords: Arius, Athanasius, Arianism, Semi-Arianism, Trinity, Incarnation, Salvation.

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Introduction

The growth of Christianity in the context of Jewish monotheism, influenced by Greek polytheism, the existence of passages indicating the divinity of Jesus in the Bible (John 14:9; 1:1-15), and passages indicating the oneness of God (Deuteronomy 6:4) and (Matthew 4:10; 11:27), created a duality of monotheism on the one hand and the sanctity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit on the other. The best evidence that the divinity of Jesus was not evident at the beginning of Christian faith is history itself (Mulenga, 2017: 7). From the second century onwards, conflicting interpretations increased, creating the ground for the controversies of the fourth century AD (Grady, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 143).

Some theologians, in order to resolve this duality, resorted to diluting monotheism to the point of compatibility with Greek polytheism. In contrast, Monarchism, which included two theories, "Adoptionism" and "Modalism," insisted on monotheism. Monarchians who supported Adoptionism believed that Christ was a human being in whom the Spirit of God dwelt, and Monarchians who supported Modalism believed that the divine spirit took on a human body, and that God the Father, Logos, and Holy Spirit are aspects of one God (Wolfson, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 598 and 599).

This personification later became known as Sabellianism¹. Influenced by this view, in 318 AD, Alexander, the Bishop of Alexandria, professed the unity of the Trinity and the eternal nature of Jesus Christ. This issue marked

1. Sabellianism was a heresy that did not distinguish between the persons of the Trinity, presenting all three as aspects of one God.

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/philosophy-and-religion/roman-catholic-and-orthodox-churches-general-biographies/arius>.

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the beginning of disagreements and the reaction of Arius, leading to his expulsion and that of two of his sympathizers from the church (Miller, 1981: 239-245).

The spread of this dispute to society, the strong influence of religious discussions on the people, and the detrimental effects of religious differences on the government prompted Constantine to convene the first ecumenical council of Christianity in the city of Nicaea in 325 AD to resolve the conflict. However, it seems that Constantine was not committed to theology and that his religious concerns had political objectives, because on the one hand, he counted on Christianity as a unifying force, and on the other hand, he considered the clear monotheistic language harmful for attracting the many pagans who had not yet converted. In any case, Arius's opponents, such as Athanasius, and his supporters at the Council of Nicaea were unwilling to accept another viewpoint. Eventually, with Constantine's warning about the possibility of the destruction of the very essence of Christianity, Arius and his followers were forced to adopt a passive stance towards the council's discussions, and ultimately the Trinity was accepted as the official doctrine of the church. But what were the claims of Arius and Athanasius? Some say that Arius believed in a similar substance between the Father and the Son, but he did not tolerate the homoiousios of the two. However, this was not the case, and Arius opposed not only identity but also similar substance. Apparently, Arius had no problem with obeying the Trinity, meaning that he considered the three persons of the Trinity to be divine, respected, and holy; however, he denied the identity and fundamental and radical similarity between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Eliade, 1987: 1, 405) He did not consider Jesus to be eternal

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and described him as a creature of God, but not a creature equal to other creatures. He also did not accept his eternity. (Eliade, 1987: 1, 405)

He considered Christ to be the Logos, or Word, the first and foremost of all creations. Therefore, his followers believed that during the incarnation, the Word entered the body of Jesus and took the place of the spirit. He considered the Word to be the intermediary in the creation of the Holy Spirit from nothing. Thus, in his view, the essence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were completely different from one another (Wolfson, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 604). Several motives can be imagined for Arius: Gaining fame; proving the oneness and simplicity of God (Grady, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 150); and the danger of forgetting the humanity of Jesus. In contrast, one of the principles of Athanasius' theology was the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son (Davis, 2017: 93). The motive that drew Athanasius into this controversy was the idea of avoiding polytheism, because he believed that if Christ and the Holy Spirit were not consubstantial with the Father, the Trinity would lead to polytheism, and believers in gods would be the ultimate victors in this dispute. Therefore, he believed that three distinct persons in God were problematic and that the Trinity must be accepted. He likened the relationship between the Father and the Son to the relationship between the sun's rays and the sun, and concluded that the essence of the Son is the same as the essence of the Father (Van Voorst, 2013 AD/1393 SH: 175).

In his view, God was not separate from the world at all, and Jesus is the Son of God and consubstantial with Him, who put on human form to reconcile humanity with God (Miller, 1981: 239-245).

1. Theological Effects of Arius' Thought

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Given that a range of results and effects are created following any event, the thought of Arius and the controversy that followed also had effects and results in Christianity. After the Council of Nicaea and the establishment of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, Arius was condemned and exiled, and his doctrine was considered heresy. But this was not the end of the matter; rather, events and currents had been set in motion by his movement, the scope of which extended beyond the churches and into the general population, influencing them as well. In 325 AD, more than one million Christians lost their lives due to their failure to endorse the Church of Rome.

During this period, the Pauline Church, with the support of the Roman Empire, established the Offices of the Inquisition and ruthlessly eliminated its opponents. Therefore, it cannot be claimed that because debates are raised in the arena of beliefs, they are merely theological in nature and only have theological effects, not social, political, etc. Rather, theological developments may go further and have political, cultural, social, and even economic effects. Perhaps division and discord can be cited as the most important socio-political effect, because Constantine hoped that his newfound faith, Christianity, would unite the vast empire. However, in practice, Arius thought caused division among the people and the empire. This also led to his order to form a global council in Nicaea and to decide on Arius's claim (F. Kelly, 2009: 21).

Among the theological effects, one can mention the Arianist monotheistic movement, Semi-Arianism or quasi-monotheism, and the heresy of Macedonius. Macedonius has been introduced as a Semi-Arius. This very issue is evidence of Macedonius's influence from Arius. This group lived

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before 380 AD; however, after 380 AD, the term "Macedonian" was applied to those who were not Arius but also did not accept the divinity of the Holy Spirit (Augustine, 1995: 18, 71).

Naturally, one of the results of theological debates in any religion is the removal of ambiguities, the clarification of the approved viewpoint, and its distinction from other unapproved viewpoints. This means the growth and progress of the theology of that religion and the strengthening of its orthodoxy. Accordingly, the positions taken against Arius ultimately led to the formation of orthodox belief. The most important position against Arius was the affirmation and strengthening of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, which, after final approval at the Council of Constantinople (381 AD), has since been the sole criterion of Christological orthodoxy in all Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant churches. Perhaps, in the absence of Arius thought and the disputes that followed, and political, social, and other factors, the examination and proof of the doctrines in the orthodox system would have been delayed for many years, at least.

Therefore, one of the significant effects and outcomes of this dispute was the growth of Christian theology, and indeed, the developments that follow can be considered examples of these theological transformations and growth (McGrath, 2012 AD/1392 SH: 2, 547).

2. The Trinity

The intellectual background of the Trinity has roots in the teachings of ancient Greek philosophy. Although the word "Trinity" never appears in the Bible, its first use in Greek, namely "Thias," in the history of Christianity is attributed to Theophilus of Antioch in 180 AD, and in Latin, "Thinitas," to

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Tertullian in the third century AD (Michel, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 73). Therefore, discussions about the Trinity predate the activities of Arius and his dispute with Athanasius and the Council of Nicaea. However, sometimes to better understand the formation of a current, we need to closely observe and examine the opposing currents as well. To better understand the Trinitarian current, we must recognize the opposing monotheistic current.

One of the most important effects of Arius's thought was the monotheistic current that had not occurred in such a widespread manner before. This current, due to its association with Arius, was named Arianism. Arianism, in its essence, was a theological and monotheistic current within the history of Christianity that encompassed a specific doctrine.

Some have considered Arianism a heretical doctrine that placed special emphasis on the fundamental superiority of the Father over the Son (Eliade, 1987: 1, 405). As it became clear, it considered the Son a created being, not consubstantial, and even lacking the same essence as the Father. Consequently, the Holy Spirit could not have a divine status either. Therefore, according to the official beliefs of the Church and Christianity, this monotheistic current is condemned and is considered one of the earliest and most important heresies in books written about heresies. However, if the criterion is monotheism and the Abrahamic religion, it must be said that this current expresses monotheism more clearly and explicitly than the dominant current and official discourse of Christianity, and confronting it is, in a way, confronting Abrahamic monotheism.

It is not possible to point to one individual as the main founder of this current, because this current has gradually formed over many years, inspired by the sayings of numerous theologians from Origen to Arius.

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Therefore, it cannot be definitively stated that Arius was the sole founder of the Arianism monotheism movement. Rather, it can be said that Arius benefited from the years of effort put forth by theologians and priests before him. Considering the background and roots of Arius's beliefs, he himself could not have made such a claim. However, it should be noted that although councils had been formed before the Council of Nicaea regarding other matters (F. Kelly, 2009: 14), in the area of resolving the issue of monotheism and the Trinity, there had only been discussions and debates, none of which reached a level of impact and importance that would warrant the formation of a global council to resolve it, and subsequently, a special theological movement such as the Arianism monotheism movement would be formed. Perhaps due to the lack of necessary political and governmental conditions for forming a council, such a council had not been formed before the presentation of Arius's ideas. But after the Council of Nicaea, what events occurred that strengthened this movement and made its doctrine enduring in the history of Christianity? Some have written that after some time had passed since the burning of Arius's writings and the exile of him and several of his supporters by order of Constantine, he returned to Alexandria by presenting a statement of faith that was accepted by the emperor. However, his return was met with opposition from Athanasius (Lyman, 2020: 46). Athanasius opposed Arius's return despite the emperor's order for his return. But others have stated that three years after the Council of Nicaea, it was Constantine who changed his mind and brought Arius back from exile, and until the end of his life, he supported the opponents of the Council of Nicaea (Gredy, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 151-152). Thus, what is

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certain is Constantine's change of heart. He ultimately died a monotheist (Ata ur-Rahim, 1995: 4).

It is obvious that a movement cannot be formed through the efforts of one individual or even a limited group. Therefore, in this movement, we see three sides: The first side is Arius, who is in fact the ideological supporter and spiritual father of this movement; the second side is the supporters and friends of Arius, who are themselves prominent figures, including Eusebius; and the third side is the people who had become acquainted with the doctrine of this movement through various means and had joined the ranks of its supporters.

Therefore, if Arius's beliefs had been limited to him and a few others, they could not have emerged as a strong movement. Arius, in his actions, enjoyed the support of his friend and classmate Eusebius, the Bishop of Nicomedia. Eusebius was an important ecclesiastical advisor to Constantia, Constantine's sister, and her sons, especially Constantius, and he tried to spread Arius beliefs throughout the empire (Ignat, 2012: 108). In this vein, Eusebius and other supporters of Arius in the Eastern Empire tried to replace the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son with Arianism (Scholasticus, 2001: 83); he imagined that a favorable opportunity for this replacement had arisen after Constantine's death. However, he was ultimately disappointed in the success of this endeavor. Of course, there are serious debates about Eusebius's character and whether or not he was an Arius, which require a separate discussion (Pamphilius, 1890: 14-20).

After Arius's sudden and suspicious death in Constantinople around 336 AD, the conflict between the Arians and the supporters of Nicaea and the Trinitarians was still ongoing, with the Arians and their opponents gaining

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power at different times. As one indication of the conflict, Athanasius, who had triumphed at Nicaea, was removed from his position as Bishop of Alexandria at a council in Antioch (339) and an Arius was chosen in his place. Consequently, he was first exiled, and then fled to Rome after his return, and then was able to regain his position.

Thus, power shifted back and forth between the two factions, and the Council of Nicaea had not, in practice, been able to end the controversy, and this dispute did not end even with the death of Arius and Constantine (lyman, 2020: 46; Ignat, 2012: 113-114).

After Constantine's death (337 AD), the empire was divided into two parts: the Eastern part, under the rule of Constantius, and the Western part, under the rule of Constans. The Latin West accepted the issue of the Council of Nicaea, but the Greek East formed various schools of thought while being severely wary of Sabellianism. Interestingly, after Constantine, most of the subsequent emperors were Arius or semi-Arius.

Constantius, Constantine's son, was one of them. He was the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire and, because he was influenced by Eusebius, opposed the decree of the Council of Nicaea. After a few years, he became the ruler of the entire Roman Empire.

However, the situation did not remain the same, and after the death of Constantius, the circumstances turned against the Arians. Ultimately, the First Council of Constantinople (381 AD) confirmed the decrees of the Council of Nicaea, and Arianism was declared forbidden. It is said that Arianism lasted until the eighth century AD (Grady, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 150-152), but it seems the story did not end in the eighth century. Monotheisms in England and America in the 18th and 19th centuries still

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did not consider the Son's divine nature to be the same as the Father's, meaning they not only rejected consubstantiality between the Father and the Son, but also, just like the Arius movement, denied the similarity between these two natures.

Regarding Arianism in recent times, despite the clear emergence and continuation of Arius currents after the Council of Nicaea and the First Council of Constantinople, many modern scholars do not recognize Arianism as a coherent belief system. Rather, they see them as different spectrums who opposed the decisions of Nicaea, and thus do not necessarily present all those spectrums as sharing the same beliefs as Arius. Similarly, G. Rebecca Lyman states that scholars, after examining the theological links between Arius and the Arians, have concluded that we no longer have a cohesive movement called "Arianism," and those who were referred to as Arians in the following decades of the fourth century may not necessarily and completely hold the beliefs of Arius, and may only have opposed the idea of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, and may even believe in the divinity of the Son (Davis, 2017: 109-110).

Perhaps today there is seemingly no movement called Arianism; however, the doctrine of Arianism, that the Father and the Son are not consubstantial, and that they are not even similar in essence, and that Jesus is merely a creature superior to other creatures, exists among Christians, even if it does not bear the name of Arianism. As evidence, one can point to the formation of Unitarian churches. The author of the book "Christianity and Heresies" writes: "It seems that the formation of Unitarian churches, which opposed the Trinity, is a result of the Arius controversy, because they consider Jesus a divine human, not God." (Grady, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 156)

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The common ground of the opponents of Nicaea was the rejection of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son.

Considering this point, the opponents of Nicaea can generally be divided into three categories, all of which have apparently been labeled as Arianism. The first category includes those who rejected the teachings of Arius and believed in equal status for the persons of the Trinity, but did not accept consubstantiality (homoiousia). This group was called "Semi-Arius" by their opponents, and we will learn more about the Semi-Arius later. This group did not accept the consubstantiality between the Father and the Son, but accepted similarity (homoiousia), so they opposed Arius regarding likeness. The second group consisted of those who largely adhered to the teachings of Arius but avoided being known by his name. The third groups were the official supporters of Arius and did not hide this fact. (The Institute for Metaphysical Studies, 2010: 204) Continuing with what has been presented so far, we will now turn to the quasi-monotheistic movement of the Semi-Arius.

Semi-Arianism is a movement that developed in continuation of Arianism and, in our opinion, deviated from and diminished the path of Arianism. For this reason, it cannot be considered a completely monotheistic movement, because the similarity of the Father and the Son in terms of essence is also incompatible with monotheism. While the followers of this movement did not accept the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, they also did not accept the dissimilarity and distinction of the Father and the Son in substance and essence, which was the view of Arius. Rather, they were content with the Father and the Son being similar in essence, and this belief in the essential similarity of the Father and the Son became their point of

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separation from Arianism. Therefore, the Semi-Arius believed that the Father and the Son have a similar essence but are not consubstantial. Thus, on the one hand, because they deny consubstantiality, they can be considered close to monotheism, and on the other hand, because they have accepted similarity in essence between the Father and the Son, they cannot be considered monotheistic. It seemed that the best title to use to refer to the nature of this movement is the term "Quasi-monotheistic." Naturally, this view was also condemned by the Council of Nicaea, because the Council of Nicaea had ruled in favor of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son. Nevertheless, years later, Emperor Constantius (son of Constantine and Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire), who was a Semi-Arius, declared the Semi-Arius belief as the official faith of Christianity in 360 AD, five years after he had become Emperor of the entire Roman Empire.

As mentioned, the fate of this belief is similar to that of Arianism itself. Despite the affirmation of the Nicene Creed at the First Council of Constantinople, this belief seemingly came to an end. However, its traces can still be seen until recent times. A testament to this is the Jehovah's Witnesses, whose Christology is based on non-adherence to consubstantiality, favoring unity, and belief in the supremacy of God the Father (www.britannica.com/topic/Ariusism). They are considered semi-Arius due to their opposition to many of Arius's teachings, such as their belief, contrary to Arius, that the Son can truly know the Father, etc. (The Institute for Metaphysical Studies, 2010: 110)

Based on what has been stated, the criterion for a semi-Arius, quasi-monotheistic movement is the non-acceptance of consubstantiality. Therefore, any group or spectrum that does not accept consubstantiality is

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semi-Arius, even if it opposes other doctrines of the Arius monotheistic movement. In this way, two rival currents to the Trinitarian current are identified. The affirmation or rejection of the ideas of either Athanasius or Arius leads to the affirmation or rejection of the Trinity, and this is an effect that cannot be ignored. The root of the Trinity, as mentioned, is the consubstantiality or essential similarity between the three hypostases, which establishes each in the position of divinity. For this reason, this idea is fundamentally impacted by the influence of Arius thought, because according to Arius thought, not only is there no consubstantiality between God the Father and the Son, but there is also no similarity. Fundamentally, the Son is created, and is neither eternal nor everlasting. Clearly, such an idea destroys the foundation of the Trinity and leads to its overthrow, because Jesus and the Holy Spirit can no longer be God. Therefore, it can be argued that if Arius's view had been accepted and continued to be popular, the foundations of current Christian theology would have been shaken, and there would be no trace of the Trinity in its current sense. For this reason, it seems that before the formation and spread of Arius thought and the endangering of the Trinity, and as a result, the formation of the Nicene controversy and council, the Trinity had not emerged as a complete, active, and dynamic current. After this controversy and the affirmation of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, and subsequently with the affirmation of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, the Trinity was established and formalized as a complete current.

Some believe that a form of Trinitarian belief existed beforehand, based on baptismal formulas in the Bible¹ and John's description of the Logos¹.

1. Matthew 28:19.

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Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that "The struggles surrounding Arius' claim in the fourth to sixth centuries significantly helped to precisely define the centrality of the Trinity in Christian theology." (The Institute for Metaphysical Studies, 2010: 109)

This is because Athanasius, through his defenses at the Council of Nicaea, advanced and established Trinitarian theology, and the refutation of the son being created laid a central foundation for the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit (Del Colle, 1997: 129). Therefore, the development and formalization of Trinitarian theology stem from the works and consequences of Arius' thought and its repercussions.

Another point that can be made is that if we disregard Arius' view and do not accept it, and instead affirm the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, and in fact consider Jesus to be fully God, and consider the image that the Bible presents to us of Jesus and his suffering, we encounter a contradiction. This is because the suffering of God is impossible, and Jesus, according to the Gospels, suffered. In response to this contradiction, it has been justified by arguing that the human aspect of Jesus suffered, not his divine aspect. However, this answer itself is problematic, because the act of salvation is brought about by his suffering and sacrifice, and consequently, the cleansing of believers from original sin. Now, since this suffering was carried out by his human aspect, it indicates that this human aspect alone was sufficient for the act of salvation, and there was no need to consider him the Son of God or to attribute divinity to him. Thus, whether we accept the createdness of Jesus according to Arius' claim or not, and even if we consider Jesus to be fully God and even possessing two natures, divine and

1. John 1:1-18.

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human, the divinity of Jesus, and consequently the Trinity, will still not be acceptable. Perhaps it can be said that Arius insisted on the createdness of Jesus with this in mind, because accepting the divinity of Jesus, and even his two natures, is problematic. In fact, by considering the path of accepting the divinity of Jesus to be a dead end, he established the created nature for him, and thus blocked the way for Trinitarianism.

3. The Doctrines of Incarnation and Salvation

Regarding the doctrines of Incarnation and Salvation, it can be said that accepting or rejecting Arius leads to the rejection or confirmation of these two doctrines. If we consider Jesus to be a creation of God, according to Arius's view, the discussion of Incarnation becomes meaningless. This is because, in this view, Jesus is created, not incarnated. He was not a divine being who needed incarnation and a physical body to become earthly and fulfill a sacrificial mission. Rather, he was an earthly being and a creation. Thus, by accepting Arius's view, the doctrine of Incarnation will be completely eliminated, and this seems to be one of the clearest and most obvious effects of Arius's thought.

The situation is similar regarding the doctrine of Salvation. To explain this, it can be said that, as revealed by Christian teachings, the salvation of humanity by humans themselves is impossible. This is due to the doctrine of original sin, which affects all of Adam's descendants. Because of this sin, the possibility of growth, salvation, and redemption is taken away from each individual, independently of divine grace, to the extent that they can neither save themselves nor lead other humans to salvation. This is because, based on original sin, man is created with sin, although he is not completely

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corrupted, the inclination to sin is always present in him (Molland, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 96).

Athanasius is also a representative of the official Christian view, and since he based his argument on the impossibility of human salvation by a creature, he believed that by accepting Arius's view, the discussion of Incarnation would effectively disappear, and Jesus, who is then considered a creature, would not be able to save humanity, and the doctrine of Salvation would also be undermined in this respect.

Regarding how Arius's teachings damage the doctrine of Salvation, there is another view. In the view of opponents, the son's being a creature in Arius's view, and the lack of consubstantiality and lack of similar essence between the Father and the Son, also had a negative impact on the very important doctrine of Salvation in Christianity. Opponents believe that Arius's belief changed the aspect of redemption in that it required God to sacrifice himself for sins. (Davis, 2017: 12)

To explain this view, one can say that, as it is said in the discussion of salvation and redemption, humanity's sin was cleansed solely through the sacrifice of God. Therefore, God sacrificed himself to cleanse humanity's sins, and he did this through his son, who is of his own essence and united with him. This explanation of salvation is accepted by all Christians. However, according to the belief of Arius, who denied the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, as well as the Son's eternity, everlastingness, and divinity, the sacrifice of the Son is practically meaningless and impossible, and did not occur, because God the Father did not have a son through whose sacrifice he could save humanity. On the other hand, the sacrifice of God the Father himself is also impossible and meaningless; moreover, no one in

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Christianity believes in it. Based on what has been said, salvation and redemption, in the sense that is common in Christianity, will not be achieved, and the issue of salvation is seriously damaged in this way. With the explanations given, the critique of the doctrines of incarnation and salvation, explained with the language and literature of official Christianity, is correct and truthful according to the teachings of Arius.

But did Arius, with his specific beliefs, deny the very principle of salvation through Jesus? Apparently, there was no denial on the part of Arius, and he accepted salvation through Jesus; however, he had another plan for salvation, namely the possibility of salvation without the need for Jesus' divinity and God's sacrifice. So, perhaps one can argue in defense of Arius that, firstly, he denied original sin, or secondly, because he did not consider Jesus to be an ordinary creature, the possibility of salvation through a Jesus who is an extraordinary and chosen creature was obvious in his view.

Whether he denied original sin or not requires independent investigation. But regarding the second case, it can be said that it is true that he did not consider Jesus to be God; however, he introduced him as a divine being that was sent to save humanity. So, he fundamentally did not deny salvation (The Institute for Metaphysical Studies, 2010: 109), but rather he did not consider the realization of the act of salvation to be dependent on the divinity of Jesus; because if he considered salvation to be dependent on the divinity of Jesus, logically he should not have denied his divinity.

While one of his views was the denial of the divinity of Jesus, implying he did not consider salvation dependent on the divinity of Jesus, this view of Arius is supported in the context of the act of salvation. Considering the justification within Christianity of reconciling the divinity of Jesus with the

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image of his suffering in the Bible, and attributing suffering to his human aspect, and the primary role of suffering, sacrifice, and consequently the purification of Christians in their salvation – which is now achieved through the suffering of his human aspect – there remains no need for his divinity. Clearly, the act of salvation is not dependent on the divinity of Jesus, but only on his human aspect, because it is this aspect of his being that endures suffering and causes the act of salvation. Therefore, logically, Arius does not accept the doctrine of Incarnation. However, he damages the doctrine of salvation as it is commonly understood in Christianity, while not denying Jesus as savior, and considering him a savior of humanity from among humanity itself. Nevertheless, Christian theologians, in opposition to Arius, have challenged his teachings because of their soteriological effects and consequences (Witchger, 2007: 5).

Conclusion

Naturally, every event has a source and origin on one hand, and effects and consequences on the other. There is always a direct connection between the roots and the consequences, and the event in question mediates the connection and influence of the roots and the creation of the consequences. However, the role of the mediator itself cannot be ignored. Sometimes events lead to flourishing and new effects that would not have occurred, or would have been delayed or incomplete, in the absence of that event. Similarly, Arius's thought has roots and consequences that, in the absence of these ideas, would either not have occurred at all or would have been realized only to a negligible extent. Accordingly, the present study aims, in addition to a brief reference to the ideas of Arius and its historical and

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theological developments, to address the consequences and effects of his view. Although it seems that talk of the non-identity of the Father and the Son, the dissimilarity of the two in essence, the created nature of the Son, and so on, in the field of Christology, were not words that Arius himself invented, but rather he had acquired these teachings under the tutelage of his predecessor.

However, these teachings could never have spread among the people and become a monotheistic movement, whose path and customs, more or less, remain to this day, without the effort and movement he initiated. On the one hand, during the conflicts that arose between him and his opponents, the first global council of Christianity was formed, and the official theology of Christianity, especially Trinitarian theology, also underwent significant development (Witchger, 2007: 5). The Trinity, as the deepest and most complex doctrine of Christianity, was also consolidated like Arius's monotheism. Especially in the crucible of Arius's dispute with Athanasius, the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son became more firmly established for its adherents and ultimately prevailed. Therefore, Arius's ideas and efforts brought the Trinity and monotheism into confrontation, and this was a very important and significant consequence that had not occurred before.

Other important teachings that were influenced by his ideas were the Incarnation and Salvation, both of which are important Christian doctrines. It is clear that accepting Arius's statement that Jesus is a creature and was sent to save humanity, but because he is a creature and human and not consubstantial with God, he does not need to be incarnated in a human body to save humanity, invalidates the doctrines of Incarnation and Salvation. Of

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course, he does not deny the salvation of humanity through Jesus; rather, the way he offers for salvation is different from what is common in Christianity. In his view, the salvation of humanity is possible through a human being who is superior to other creatures. Based on what has been said, Arius's idea and the resulting conflict with Athanasius seriously affected the most important doctrines of Christianity, the Trinity, Incarnation, and Salvation, and challenged them.

Upon closer inspection, it can be seen that the agreements and disagreements with Arius's view also had a political dimension and did not all stem from belief and faith. At least in some governments, sometimes to preserve the government and avoid discord and division, doctrinal issues that have become a cause of schism are sacrificed. It seems that the actions of Constantine, the most important Christian emperor, can be considered of this kind. Based on what has been stated, Arius's ideas and his conflict with Athanasius left important and effective consequences in Christianity, and an attempt was made to extract and scrutinize the effects that seemed traceable, examinable, and investigable.

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