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One God, the Father: The Neglected Doctrine of the Monarchy of the Father, and Its Implications for the Analytic Debate about the Trinity

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Abstract: Whether Trinitarianism is coherent depends not only on whether some account of the Trinity is coherent, but on which accounts of the Trinity count as "Trinitarian." After all, Arianism and Modalism are both accounts of the Trinity, but neither counts as Trinitarian (which is why defenses of Arianism or Modalism don't count as defenses of Trinitarianism). This raises the question, if not just any account of the Trinity counts as Trinitarian, which do? Dale Tuggy is one of very few philosophers to give explicit definitions of Trinitarian (versus Unitarian) theology. But they are no mere formalities. They are essential to his central criticisms of both historical and contemporary forms of Trinitarianism. In this paper, I offer my own definitions of Trinitarian and Unitarian theology, contrast them with Tuggy's, and argue for the superiority of my definitions to Tuggy's. If Trinitarianism and Unitarianism are what Tuggy says they are, the outlook for Trinitarianism is bleak indeed. If they are what I say they are, Tuggy's central objection to Trinitarianism fails. To show what is at stake in these pairs of definitions, I examine a doctrine much neglected in Analytic Theology, but central to Nicene Trinitarianism—the Monarchy of the Father.

Keywords: Trinity, Monarchy of the Father, Analytic theology, Dale Tuggy, Eastern Orthodoxy

1. Introduction

Whether or not Trinitarianism is defensible (logically, metaphysically, biblically, or what have you) depends not only on whether some particular account of the Trinity is defensible in that sense, but also on which particular accounts of the Trinity *count*

as Trinitarian. After all, Arianism and Modalism are both accounts of the Trinity, but neither counts as Trinitarian. This is why defenses of Arianism or Modalism would not count as defenses of Trinitarianism, and conversely why one way to criticize accounts of the Trinity is to say that they are forms of Arianism or Modalism. But this raises the question, if not just *any* account of the Trinity (however defensible) would count as Trinitarian, which accounts *do* count as Trinitarian, so that a defense of one of them would count as a defense of Trinitarianism?

Much recent analytic theology has been concerned with devising (hopefully defensible) accounts of the Trinity. But comparatively little attention has been given to this question of what it takes for an account of the Trinity *to count as Trinitarian*. Indeed, to my knowledge, only Dale Tuggy has given an explicit definition of Trinitarian (versus Unitarian) theology. But Tuggy's definitions are not given as a mere formality. They play a substantive role in his evaluations of both contemporary and historical sources, and they turn out to be essential to what is probably his most important criticism of Trinitarian theology.[1]

In this paper, I will offer my own definitions of Trinitarian and Unitarian theology, contrast them with Tuggy's, and (of course) argue for the superiority of my own definitions over Tuggy's. We will see that if Trinitarianism and Unitarianism are what Tuggy says they are, then the outlook for Trinitarianism is bleak indeed, whereas Unitarianism faces comparatively few difficulties. On the other hand, if Trinitarianism and Unitarianism are what I say they are, Tuggy's central objection to Trinitarianism is without force.

Our competing pairs of definitions might seem at first glance to be roughly equivalent. What will show how they come apart is the doctrine of the Monarchy of the Father. This is a doctrine that was accepted by all of the fourth century church fathers who lie at the source of the "official" formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine which later became one of the chief causes of the Great Schism, and a doctrine which continues to be a source of division between the Catholic and Orthodox churches to this day. It is also a doctrine which has received *almost* no attention in analytic theology.[2] More precisely, however, I should say I will be

[1] Hence, if, like most logicians, you expect a good definition to be both conservative and eliminable, you're in for a disappointment. Tuggy's definitions play an *ineliminable* role in the arguments in which he puts them to use.

[2] In describing the doctrine of the Monarchy of the Father as a "neglected" doctrine, then, I by no means intend to say that it was neglected by theologians during the patristic or medieval periods, or even within contemporary theology. I do think it's fair to say that it has not received much attention from *analytic philosophers*. And it has been especially ignored by Tuggy, who, I will argue below, has essentially built a case against Trinitarianism around definitions that force this traditional view about the Trinity into the category of "Unitarian" rather than "Trinitarian."

looking at a certain use or interpretation of the doctrine of the Monarchy of the Father, one which suggests in some ways a fresh alternative to the standard approaches of Social Trinitarianism (ST) and Relative Identity Trinitarianism (RI), an approach I will label "Monarchical Trinitarianism" (MT). We might briefly describe MT, by way of contrast to ST and RI (perhaps a bit simplistically, but still usefully) as follows:

> ST identifies God with *all* of the divine persons (taken together).
> RI identifies God with *each* of the divine persons (taken individually).
> MT identifies God with *one of* the divine persons (namely, the Father).

We will see that Monarchical Trinitarianism avoids Tuggy's most important criticism of Trinitarianism, but Tuggy does not consider it in his arguments, because his definitions count it as a form of Unitarianism instead of Trinitarianism. The definitions I suggest, on the other hand, count it as a form of Trinitarianism. Thus, whether Trinitarianism can be defended from Tuggy's criticisms depends in part on which definition of "Trinitarianism" is correct.

I want to stress in no uncertain terms that it is *not* my purpose at the moment to convince anybody that MT *is true*. Nor even that it's in some sense a good idea (although I will devote some space to clearing up some possible misconceptions about it). My argument does not require MT to be: true, promising, useful, traditional, popular, an interesting alternative, or anything else other than simply *a form of Trinitarianism*. For if MT merely counts as a form of Trinitarianism, then Tuggy's definitions incorrectly categorize views as Unitarian that are in fact Trinitarian, and his argument against Trinitarianism can be shown to be unsound.

2. Two "Logical" Problems for Trinitarianism: The Three Gods Problem and The "Who Is God?" Problem

So, what is the argument that I take to be Tuggy's central criticism of Trinitarianism? One reads or hears about "the" Logical Problem of the Trinity (perhaps following the title of Cartwright's seminal paper),[3] or of "the" three-ness / one-ness problem.[4] This is the fairly obvious problem that it's difficult to see how God can be "both three and one", or how three things can each in some sense "be God" while there is only one God. We might call this "the Predicative Problem," since it turns on the question of how the word "God," *when used as a predicate or count-noun* (meaning something

[3] Cartwright (1987, 187–200).
[4] Plantinga (1988, 37–53).

like "divine" or "a divine thing"), can apply to three distinct individuals, while, as one assumes, there is supposed to be only a single individual to which it should apply. This is what is typically thought of as "the" Logical Problem of the Trinity, and what I'll refer to as the "Predicative Problem" or the "three gods" problem (3G) to distinguish it from the "Referential" Problem or "Who Is God?" Problem below.

ST tries to solve 3G by positing an equivocation between "is God" as applied to the three persons and whatever is meant by saying there is "one God" (typically, *the Trinity*).[5] RI tries to solve 3G by eschewing classical identity in favor of various relative identity relations. On RI, what we can predicate "is God" or "is divine" of are three counting by persons, but one counting by gods. But while most of the analytic literature on the Trinity has focused on 3G, this is not the problem that really motivates Tuggy.

The problem that I think is of much more concern to Tuggy is in fact a logically quite distinct problem. It may initially seem like a variation on 3G, and indeed I'm not sure if even Tuggy has recognized that his concern is distinct from 3G.[6] But it is. We could call his concern "the Referential Problem". More intuitively, one can think of it as the "Who Is (or Which One Is) God?" problem (WIG). This is the problem of *identifying the referent* of the term "God" *when used not as a predicate, but as a name* (or at least as a description that, presumably, applies to some particular individual). Here there are two inter-related problems that form the basis of WIG:[7]

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[5] There seems to be cases where the Bible uses the word "God" to refer to a particular subject, rather than using "God" as a predicate. Jesus is the Son *of God*, for example, where presumably "God" just refers to the Father. (It would be ungrammatical to say that Jesus is "the Son *of divine*," for example.) Conversely, there are clear cases where the Bible uses "God" (and sometimes "gods") as a predicate. Certainly as a count-noun, for example in, "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all the gods." (Psalm 95,3). So, the distinction has warrant in the biblical text. "God" is also arguably used in an essentially adjectival way in some verses as well.

[6] It was not clear to me. I used to think that Tuggy was simply working with an inadequate formulation of 3G. See Branson (2014). p. 50, footnote 24.

[7] The formulation(s) of WIG I give are my own, but summarize arguments given by Tuggy in (2019, 201).

"1. Any Trinity doctrine identifies the one true God (Yahweh) with the Trinity. (definition of "Trinity doctrine")

2. A central New Testament teaching is the identity of the one true God with the Father (only). (Premise)

3. It is not true that the Trinity is identical with the Father and vice-versa. (Premise)

4. Therefore, either any Trinity doctrine is false, or a central New Testament teaching is false. (1-3)

5. If a later catholic teaching contradicts a central New Testament teaching, Christians should reject the former and accept the latter. (Premise)

6. Therefore, Christians should agree with the New Testament teaching that the Father (alone) just

> 1) (Premise) In the New Testament, the terms "God" and "Father" seem to be used interchangeably, so that they function as names (or at least singular referring terms) for the same individual. Thus, the individual named "God" seems to be the Father, and not to the Son or Spirit. A corollary of this is . . .
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> 2) (Corollary to 1) In the New Testament, the term "God" seems to name *a single* individual (or "person"). In the New Testament and the early church, the individual named "God" is not *tri-personal*, but *unipersonal*. And finally (and here's where the definitions become important) . . .
>
> 3) ("*By definition*") All forms of Trinitarianism claim that the referent of the term "God" is tri-personal rather than unipersonal (contrary to (2)), and that the word "God" (in whatever sense it might be used) applies to each of the persons *equally* (contrary to (1)).
>
> Conclusion: No form of Trinitarianism is consistent with the New Testament.

Since both 3G and WIG can be put in terms of problems dealing with the identity of God, WIG might initially seem to be just a variant on 3G. But it isn't.

Of course it's true that we can put 3G in terms of identity. If "is God" means "is identical to an individual named 'God'", then when we say, "the Father is God" and "the Son is God" and then say the Father and Son are numerically distinct, we have a logical contradiction (at least, given classical identity). If we instead analyze "is God" as predicating a nature / kind or a quality (divinity, say) of the Father and Son, then to get a contradiction we have to add that there is only one God. But the claim there is only one God can also be analyzed in terms of (classical) identity: Something, x, is a god (is divine), and anything, y, that is a god (is divine), is identical to x.

However, WIG is *not* just a variation on 3G. 3G, if successful, would indict Trinitarianism as *internally* incoherent. *Merely* to refer to the Father, Son and Spirit as each, in whatever sense, "God", while saying there is only one God, seems to yield a contradiction—regardless of what one thinks about the Bible, the Creeds, the Councils and so forth, indeed regardless of whether one believes in any of these at all. It truly is a purely *logical* problem. But WIG points not to any *internal* incoherence,

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is God, and deny the later catholic teaching that God just is the Trinity. (4, 5)

but to an *external* conflict with the Bible (or, if you prefer, a certain interpretation of the Bible). And indeed, while Tuggy does sometimes criticize the dubious metaphysics or other theoretical problems of various models of the Trinity, by far his deeper concern seems to be how these models fit with the Bible.

Proponents of ST and RI accounts have mostly been concerned with 3G. So, it's unsurprising that their accounts do a much better job of dealing with 3G compared with WIG, a problem their creators may not have even had in view. Even if we take the standard ST equivocation between "is God" used as a predicate that applies to each of the persons and "is God" used in a way that applies to the Trinity as a whole to be an adequate solution to 3G, standard versions of ST fail to provide an adequate response to WIG, since they identify God with the Trinity, rather than the Father as WIG requires. Likewise, RI takes each of the persons to be god-identical but person-distinct, and so to count as one God (one when counting by gods) and three persons (three when counting by persons). Here again, even if we take this to be an adequate solution to 3G, it at least isn't obvious whether it solves WIG, or in what way. Since RI eschews talk of classical identity, it would seem there simply would be no answer to the question who God is (classically) identical to. Indeed, RI even eschews the use of singular terms, which "God" is taken to be within WIG (at least as I have formulated it), so it's not immediately obvious how we would even translate WIG into terms a relative identity Trinitarian would find acceptable in the first place. On the other hand, to the extent that we might translate WIG into relative identity logic, it would seem likely that the three persons should all have an equally good claim to being (god-identical to?) God. With respect to (2) above, it's not immediately obvious to me whether, on RI, God would turn out to be "tri-personal" or "uni-personal". Indeed, it may be that the answer is simply that God would be something like "Trine when counting by persons, but Une when counting by gods" (or as the RI-ist might happily put it, "tri-personal but mono-theistic"!) In any case, it does seem that RI would have a difficulty saying why the God of the New Testament seems to be unipersonal (if He does so seem), or why the God of the New Testament seems to just be the Father, but *does not* seem to be equally the Son or Spirit. The point here, however, is not to give a thorough analysis of the success or failure of RI with respect to WIG. The point is just to show that WIG *is a distinct problem from* 3G. One might take 3G to be solved by a particular version of RI or ST, while WIG is either clearly not solved, or at least not clearly solved. Conversely, one can easily solve WIG without solving 3G by simply identifying God with the Father but leaving it totally unexplained in what sense the Son and Spirit can be called "God" or "divine". Given that either problem can be solved without solving the other, they are clearly logically distinct issues.

3. The (Biblical) Unitarian Alternative

So, we can see that 3G and WIG are in fact two distinct problems. And as I've said, WIG, rather than 3G, is the larger concern for Tuggy, who favors the approach of what is called Biblical Unitarianism (BU). To just barely sketch the view, Biblical Unitarians (BU's) take the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to be a creature, not a second divine hypostasis with the same intrinsic nature as God the Father. Although some may admit to something like an Arian view of Christ's pre-existence, most would say He just came into existence sometime around 4 BC to 1 AD, and is not different from ordinary humans except in His sinlessness, extraordinary obedience to God, and so on. Finally, although here again there's some disagreement, talk about the Holy Spirit is typically read by BU's as something like talk about "God in action", rather than a third divine person.

While we put WIG as a case against Trinitarianism above, we can reformulate it as a case *for* BU as follows:

> 1) (Premise) In the New Testament, the terms "God" and "Father" seem to be used interchangeably, so that they function as names (or at least singular referring terms) for the same individual. Thus, the individual named "God" seems to be the Father, and not to the Son or Spirit. A corollary of this is . . .
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> 2) (Corollary to 1) In the New Testament, the term "God" seems to name *a single* individual (or "person"). In the New Testament and the early church, the individual named "God" is not *tri-personal*, but *unipersonal*. And finally (and here's where the definitions become important) . . .
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> 3*) ("*By definition*") Any theology that claims that God is uni-personal (in keeping with (2)) and says that the individual named "God" is the Father (in keeping with (1)), is Unitarian. (I.e., any theology that solves WIG is Unitarian.)
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> Conclusion: Any theology that is fully consistent with the New Testament (i.e., any theology that solves WIG) will be Unitarian.

If Tuggy's arguments are correct, then the prospects for Trinitarianism seem bleak indeed. Besides the well-known criticisms that Trinitarian Theologies solve 3G only by way of revisionary logic, controversial metaphysics, or in some way unacceptable equivocations on key terms, we have Tuggy's argument that, even if some account is successful in dealing with 3G, it will still fail to be Biblical. The resulting picture, then, is that Trinitarianism has little to recommend it other than the sheer weight of

popularity and tradition—considerations that surely can't outweigh problems of potential contradictions or metaphysical implausibility (3G), coupled with a poor fit with the Bible (WIG). On the other hand (if Tuggy's arguments are correct), we seem to have just the opposite picture for BU. It may not be very popular or traditional, but it seems to accord better with both reason (3G) and revelation (WIG). And if Trinitarianism has nothing to recommend it over Unitarianism but the weight of tradition and popularity—well, that's a pretty sad commentary on any doctrine.

I'll argue, however, that Tuggy's picture results from a kind of logical smoke-and-mirrors, a semantic sleight-of-hand that:

> (1) artificially excludes certain legitimate options for Trinitarians, and
> (2) re-categorizes those options as "Unitarian" instead of "Trinitarian", thereby siphoning off a degree of warrant that ought to accrue to Trinitarianism and illicitly applying it to Unitarianism instead.

This is because, whereas standard forms of RI and ST either obviously fail, or at least do not obviously succeed, at addressing WIG, Monarchical Trinitarianism succeeds at addressing it, but simply gets counted as "Unitarian" by Tuggy's definitions.

4. Why We Should Be Suspicious of Tuggy's Definitions

Before examining our competing pairs of definitions, let me note a few practical results of Tuggy's definitions when applied to the debate, results that should immediately give us pause before simply accepting them as uncontroversial formalities. In at least one (contemporary) case, it will be clear that Tuggy's definitions rule out a view that intuitively appears Trinitarian as in fact non-Trinitarian. In another (historical) case, it becomes clear that Tuggy's usage of "Trinitarian" must depart pretty radically from ordinary usage.

The first case I have in mind, which seems intuitively Trinitarian, and yet does not count as Trinitarian by Tuggy's definitions, is a contemporary example: Mike Rea's and Jeff Brower's account of the Trinity in terms of Material Constitution, dubbed "Constitution Trinitarianism" (CT) by Tuggy.[8] Tuggy does raise a number of internal criticisms against CT. But crucially, his first criticism is that it "is not Trinitarian."[9] According to Tuggy, "a trinitarian theory must affirm the existence of a triune god,"[10] while CT "posits three equally divine persons . . . but not, it seems,

[8] Tuggy (2013, 129–162).
[9] (Ibid., 135 ff).
[10] (Ibid.)

any triune deity which they compose." Now while I disagree with some of the details of Rea's and Brower's CT account, it seems like a radical move to claim that their account simply does not count as Trinitarian, even in a broad sense of the term.

Tuggy points out in a footnote that, "In correspondence Rea suggests that neither the classic creeds nor the Bible require saying that there is such a being as the Trinity."[11] Now Rea is quite right on that historical point. Tuggy, in a previous footnote, however, states, "In setting out the creedal constraints of trinitarian theorizing, Rea doesn't seem to notice that the 'Athanasian' creed, unlike the creeds of 325 and 381, clearly asserts the existence of a triune, tripersonal deity, as do the body of catholic theologians from the late fourth century on. (Rea 2009, 404-5) In other words, they identify the one God with the Trinity, and not with the Father alone, as in earlier creeds."[12] Here, however, it is Tuggy who has been less perceptive than Rea. Tuggy does not seem to have noticed (or else has simply ignored the fact) that the so-called "Athanasian" creed in fact is not and never has been an ecumenically accepted creed, was not written by St. Athanasius, but is rather a forgery, and was not only not accepted by the vast majority of Trinitarians (i.e., those who lived in the East), but indeed was unknown in the East before about the eleventh century.[13] Indeed, not only was the Athanasian creed never accepted by, or even known by, Eastern Christians, but when it finally did become known, it was for the most part either rejected outright on account of its affirming the *filioque*, or else the offending text was deleted in translations into Greek.[14] And so, however influential the so-called "Athanasian" creed may have been among Western Christians, it can hardly be appealed to as any sort of *sine qua non* of Trinitarianism *in general* (unless one wants to claim that the Christian East, in which the doctrine of the Trinity came to its mature form, somehow doesn't count as Trinitarian). As for Tuggy's claim that "the body of catholic theologians from the late fourth century on" also clearly assert "the existence of a triune, tripersonal deity", he omits any evidence, but even if the claim could be substantiated, it is not clearly relevant.[15]

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[11] (Ibid., 136).

[12] (Ibid., 135).

[13] Schaff (1919, 35–36).

[14] (Ibid).

[15] This paper was originally written in 2018, and since then Tuggy has attempted to shore up this gap in his paper "When and How in the History of Theology Did the Triune God Replace the Father as the Only True God?" (Tuggy 2020). However, all of the evidence he presents is either (1) not relevant (for example, his discussions of St. Patrick and later Roman Catholic councils), (2) actually non-existent (for example, some pronouns in Gregory Nazianzen that are simply artifacts of the English translation, but don't exist in the Greek, which Tuggy did not check), or (3) circular (for example, his interpretation of a long passage from Gregory of Nyssa's *Great Catechism*, which, when

What is normative is the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, not the ways in which later theologians may or may not have interpreted (or misinterpreted) it. (Furthermore, there is good reason to doubt that there has ever been anything like a consensus on there being a "tri-personal" God among *all* later theologians. See the discussion below in section VII on John of Damascus' *Exact Exposition* Book III, Chapter 8.)

Now I am more optimistic than most (certainly more optimistic than Tuggy himself) about the idea that the 4th century church fathers (the so-called "pro-Nicenes") had at least a rough consensus on a certain core set of views that could be called "the" doctrine of the Trinity. And I would be willing to criticize Rea's and Brower's account as not being "Trinitarian" in a certain *narrow* sense—not being "the" doctrine of the Trinity (or perhaps not being *compatible* with "the" doctrine of the Trinity in certain details). But as Tuggy does not believe there is such a thing as "the" doctrine of the Trinity, he cannot sensibly criticize a view as not being Trinitarian in this narrower sense. He can *only* sensibly talk about a view failing to be Trinitarian in a *broad* sense, as simply not being the sort of thing that standard usage or common sense might call "Trinitarian".[16] Thus, we should pause here and ask, even if we say that CT is in conflict with "the" doctrine of the Trinity, or if we say that it is false, or that it is not orthodox, or that it is in no sense at all successful as a solution to 3G (since these are not the relevant considerations here), is it really the case that Rea's and Brower's CT account of the Trinity *doesn't even count as Trinitarian*—even in a very broad sense of "Trinitarian"? It is this last claim that is the crucial question here, and what is necessary for Tuggy's overall criticism of Trinitarianism to be fully successful. But to say that CT simply does not count as Trinitarian, even in a broad sense of the term, is a fairly radical claim, one that I think most of us would intuitively reject, and so one that should give us pause before accepting any definition of "Trinitarianism" that leads to such a conclusion.

The second case I have in mind is a historical example. Tuggy relies on his definitions to make the case that the doctrine of the Trinity is not a legitimate articulation of earlier, apostolic, subapostolic, and pre-Nicene Christianity, but only makes its first appearance in the (possibly late) fourth century. In one paper, he

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Tuggy's own editorial insertions are deleted, no longer gives any obvious support to his interpretation). Also, the result of the paper is an interpretation of "homoousious" that is explicitly contradicted by the very authors of the Creed of 381 that he discusses, as well as by later ecumenical councils and church fathers, and even the *Suda* (essentially something between a dictionary and encyclopedia from Byzantine times). I hope at some point to give a fuller discussion of the paper, but for now one can read some criticisms from Andrew Radde-Gallwitz in (2020).

[16] See note 51 below.

argues that Tertullian himself (and let us remember that this was the man who coined the term "Trinity") was "a unitarian, and not at all a trinitarian."[17] Note, this is not the claim that Tertullian's theology was less than orthodox, not "fully" Trinitarian or anything of the sort, but "not at all Trinitarian." But what is truly remarkable about Tuggy's paper on Tertullian is not its sensational conclusion. Rather, it is the fact that it reaches this sensational conclusion after saying essentially nothing novel about the actual substance (pardon the pun) of Tertullian's Trinitarian theology. Rather, Tuggy simply takes a completely ordinary account of Tertullian's theology—something no Tertullian scholar would disagree with, except perhaps in details—and runs this fairly standard view of Tertullian through *his definitions* to get the result that the man who actually coined the term "Trinity" was *in no sense* a Trinitarian. And this despite the facts that Tertullian (1) distinguishes between Father, Son and Holy Spirit (much of what we know of Tertullian's theology after all is taken from his anti-modalist writings),[18] and (2) thinks of the Son as at least in some sense divine (even if not in the same way that later orthodox thinkers would want to claim) indeed thinks of the Son as being sometimes the referent of the titles "God Almighty", "the Most High", "Yahweh Sabaoth", "the King of Israel", and even "Yahweh" ("the One Who is").[19] Tuggy himself notes that Tertullian is normally taken to be, although not fully orthodox, at least Trinitarian *in some sense*: proto-Trinitarian, a Trinitarian with subordinationist leanings, etc.[20] But when we run Tertullian's views through Tuggy's definitions, we get the result that Tertullian is solidly Unitarian, and not at all Trinitarian. And Tuggy may be right that this is how Tertullian's views should be categorized *on his definitions*. The question is, given that Tertullian believes that there are three distinct divine persons, but only one God . . . *shouldn't* he count as *some* sort of Trinitarian, even if not fully orthodox? What we learn from the paper, then, is nothing novel about *Tertullian's theology*. What we learn is just how radically Tuggy's understanding of the word "Trinitarian" must differ from ordinary usage.

Thus, as I said, Tuggy's definitions are not mere formalities. His conclusions about particular cases of what appear to be Trinitarian theologies rely heavily on these definitions and depart sharply from the ordinary intuitions of most of us, whether philosopher, theologian, or historian. But the arguments he presents against Trinitarianism in general rely heavily on these definitions as well, definitions

[17] Tuggy (2016, 179).

[18] See, e.g., *Against Praxeas* 9 in (Tertullian 1885, 603–604).

[19] (Ibid. 17). One can't help but wonder why Biblical Unitarians so often balk at the idea that Jesus is Yahweh, if, as Tuggy apparently holds, such a view is consistent with Unitarianism!

[20] Tuggy (2016, 179).

which I think we should take a closer look at, given that they rule out accounts ranging from Tertullian to Rea and Brower, not on the grounds of being internally defective in some way, but simply on the grounds that, despite appearances, they don't *really* count as Trinitarian. What other accounts of the Trinity might turn out to be defensible, but simply be getting ruled out by his definitions? And how *should* we define Trinitarianism?

5. The Definitions

First, then, let me lay out my own definitions of "Trinitarian" and "Unitarian", definitions which I will admit have certain defects, but which might be remedied or at least not cause many problems, and which I think should sit fairly well with common sense. (Tuggy's definitions, I will argue, exhibit defects that do cause problems and in a way that is unavoidable, because the very defect in the definitions is what his arguments against the doctrine of the Trinity hinge on.)

Trinitarian Theology according to Branson (TB):

A (Broadly) Trinitarian Theology is any theology that says:

(TB1) there are exactly three divine "persons" (or individuals, etc.). Nevertheless,

(TB2) there is exactly one God.[21]

[21] Note that essentially the same definition is given by Trinitarian philosophers such as William Lane Craig and Ryan Mullins, as well as by Trinitarian theologians such as B. B. Warfield.

Craig (2020) says, "The essentials of the doctrine are taught explicitly and clearly in the Bible, namely, (1) There is only one God, and (2) There are three persons who are divine. All the formal stuff about substances, natures, begetting, and so on you can leave to the philosophers."

Mullins (2020, 88) says, "There are several desiderata that are necessary for constructing the doctrine of the Trinity. The basic claim of this doctrine is that the Christian God is three persons in one essence. This can be broken down into four desiderata:

T1) There are three divine persons.

T2) The divine persons are not numerically identical to each other.

T3) Homoousios: The divine persons share the same divine essence.

T4) Monotheism: The divine persons are related in such a way that there is only one God, and not three Gods.

I take these 4 desiderata to be common among Trinitarians of various stripes in the contemporary analytic discussions."

Warfield (1915) says, "Through out the whole course of the many efforts to formulate the doctrine exactly, which have followed one another during the entire history of the church, indeed, the principle which has ever determined the result has always been determination to do justice in conceiving the relations of God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit, on the one hand to the unity of God, and, on the other, to the true Deity of the Son and Spirit and their distinct personalities.

Unitarian Theology according to Branson (UB):
A Unitarian Theology is any theology that says:
(UB1) there is exactly one divine "person" or individual. And,
(UB2) there is exactly one God.

Note first that my definitions are, as they should be, logical contraries. There could not be (not in the same sense and at the same time) both exactly one and exactly three divine persons.[22] Note second, that these definitions would apply to any religion whatsoever. If it turns out that certain forms of Hinduism, say, acknowledged three divine persons, but only one God, then that form of Hinduism might turn out to be Trinitarian in this broad sense. (And people do sometimes speak of non-Christian religions as "unitarian," "binitarian," "trinitarian" and so on.) If one wants a definition specifically of *Christian* Trinitarian Theology, I would simply take whatever the definition of a (broadly) "Christian Theology" turns out to be, and make a conjunction of the two definitions. Surely the set of Christian Trinitarian Theologies is just the intersection of the set of Christian Theologies and the set of Trinitarian Theologies.

Now for the admitted defect in TB. Presumably, each of the divine persons in a Trinitarian Theology should bear some important relation to God or have some claim to being called "God" in some sense. And for all my definition says, you could have three divine persons over here, and God over there, and no interesting or important relation between them at all. I certainly admit that should be corrected. But I don't want, just in the definition, to rule on precisely *what* the relation should be between The One God and the three persons. And it's difficult to spell out when a relation is "interesting", "important" and the like. So, for the time being, I leave out the relation and simply flag my definitions with the caveat that we should, of course, expect some interesting and/or important relation to hold here, and we should be on our guard to reject any claim that a theology that posits no such relation

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When we have said these three things, then—[1] that there is but one God, [2] that the Father and the Son and the Spirit is each God, [3] that the Father and the Son and the Spirit is each a distinct person—we have enunciated the doctrine of the Trinity in its completeness."

Thus, while Mullins characterizes the doctrine informally in something like the way Tuggy does, his more precisely statement is essentially the same as my own, as well as Craig's and Warfield's. This seems to suggest that, whatever the particularities of a given theologian's account of the Trinity might be, *Trinitarians themselves* want to characterize the *essentials* of the doctrine of the Trinity differently than Tuggy does.

[22] Surely the Unitarian will grant this, since the claim that there cannot be both exactly one and exactly three of something, in the same sense, and at the same time, forms one of their core complaints against Trinitarianism!

counts as Trinitarian.

Similarly for UB, presumably a Unitarian Theology should say not simply that there *is* one divine person and that there *is* one God, but that these are identical, or at least "numerically one", or something to that effect. But again, I won't rule on that point just in the definition. If a Unitarian, perhaps for independent reasons, wanted to reject the existence of classical identity, say, or simply thought there was a more complicated relation between the one divine person and God, I wouldn't want to rule out their theology as not Unitarian.[23] So again, I'll admit this is a shortcoming in the definition. But I think it should be one that we can work around, so long as we are on our guard.

Compare my definitions now to Tuggy's, which I will label "TT" and "UT", respectively. In "Tertullian the Unitarian", Tuggy States:

> A 'trinitarian' Christian theology says that
>
> [(TT1)] there is one God
>
> [(TT2)] which or who in some sense contains or consists of three 'persons', namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
>
> [(TT3)] who are equally divine, and
>
> [(TT4)] [(TT1)-(TT3)] are eternally the case.
>
> In contrast, a 'unitarian' Christian theology asserts that the [sic]
>
> [(UT1)] there is one God,
>
> [(UT2)] who is numerically identical with the one Jesus called 'Father',
>
> [(UT3)] and is not numerically identical with anyone else,
>
> [(UT4)] and [(UT1)-(UT3)] are eternally the case.

Tuggy then claims, ". . . As they are logical contraries, a theologian can't consistently hold both views, although one may have a theology which is neither". I'll return to this below, but Tuggy's definitions are *not* in fact logical contraries, and that will be the root of the problem. For now, let's consider how the competing pairs of definitions come apart.

At first glance, one might think the two are, if not exactly equivalent, close enough. First, we could couple my definitions with a definition of "Christian theology" to get definitions of "Trinitarian Christian Theology" and "Unitarian Christian

[23] Suppose that for purely philosophical reasons a Unitarian rejected the existence or intelligibility of classical, Leibnizian identity, and so held that the relation between God and the Father was one of constitution, say, or accidental numerical sameness, but that they would say the same thing about Mark Twain and Samuel Clemens, for example. It doesn't seem that should disqualify them from counting as Unitarian, though on Tuggy's definitions (just below), it would.

Theology", bringing the definienda together. Second, all the definitions agree in claiming that there is only one God, so they all already line up in that regard. Third, while I don't mention each divine person by name, surely in this context they would indeed be the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Fourth, although I *don't* build any particular relation into my definitions, I noted that there ought to be some important relation there. And while Tuggy *does* build a relation between The One God and the Three Persons into TT, his description "in some sense contains or consists of" seems deliberately designed to be vague enough that it could include just about any relation a Trinitarian might propose. Fifth, Tuggy builds the relationship of identity into his talk about God and the Father into UT, while I don't do that anywhere in UB. But one might reason that, in this context, if one were to identify God as any of the Three Persons, surely that would be the Father. And as I myself note, presumably the relation we want here is identity or something like it. Sixth and finally, it's likely not obvious why Tuggy and I would have reason to clash over his *proviso* that the propositions in his definitions are "eternally the case".[24] Thus, the definitions may initially seem to be roughly equivalent for practical purposes. Nevertheless, I'll argue they are absolutely not. Mine could be improved, but I think Tuggy's are flawed in ways that can't be fixed. And that is because it is precisely the flaws in his definitions that make his overall argumentative strategy work. To see why, let's move on to the doctrine of the Monarchy of the Father.

6. The Monarchy of the Father

In some contexts, patristic talk about the "monarchy" can mean roughly what it sounds like in English—a single rule or authority. But in the use we will be concerned with, "monarchy" is just a conventional translation (almost a transliteration) of the Greek word "*monarchia*" (μοναρχία), from the roots "monos" (μόνος) meaning "one" or "single" or "alone", and "arche" (ἀρχή) meaning "source" or "principle". So in this sense, *monarchia* means literally "a single first principle", or "a single source or beginning". (Think John 1,1 "In the ἀρχή was the Logos . . .") The idea of the *Father's* mono-archia, then, is that the Father—and the Father alone— has the status of being the "Source Without Source" or "First Principle" of all things.

That might seem obvious, uncontroversial, or unimportant at first glance—of course the Father is the source of all things. But when the church fathers discuss the *monarchia* of the Father—and particularly when they discuss it as a way to respond

[24] Though I do think this clause is problematic for Tuggy. If taken seriously, it would just entail the eternal existence, and thus uncreatedness, of the Son, which in turn plausibly entails His divinity. See below, section 7 on NSMV vs. CSMV in Gregory of Nyssa's debate with Eunomius.

to the charge of tritheism, it is not only in the context of creation that they assert that the Father is the "one source", but in the context of *the Trinity itself*. Thus, despite there being a plurality of persons with the same divine nature, as St. Basil puts it (see section 7 below), there is a single God because there is a single first principle—the Father.

With that very brief sketch in mind, we might further disambiguate the doctrine in a number of ways. The fathers tend to associate the Monarchy of the Father with the one-ness of God in many places. Indeed, Gregory Nazianzen (Oration 42.15) says: <<Ἕνωσις δὲ, ὁ Πατὴρ, ἐξ οὗ, καὶ πρὸς ὃν ἀνάγεται τὰ ἑξῆς>>,[25] "The One-ness is the Father, from whom, and to whom, those next in order [=the Son and Spirit] are lead."[26] So, considering the following propositions might help us come to a more precise understanding of the monarchy of the Father and of the one-ness of God.

(M1) the Father is the sole source, origin, or "cause" of the Son and Spirit.

This is probably the weakest and least controversial thing we can say about the monarchy. It seems to be implied by the very names of "Father" and "Son", and the claim that the Spirit "proceeds out of" the Father (John 15,26). And nearly every (non-Modalist) model of the Trinity is at least *compatible* with putting some such asymmetrical relation between some of the three persons. So I'll call this this proposition the "Weak Monarchy View."[27]

(M2) The Father is also in some sense the source of the divine nature itself.

This is a stronger and slightly more interesting idea. Discussing the views of the Greek fathers, Fr. John Meyendorff says, "The Father is the 'cause' (*aitia*) and the

[25] Migne (1857–1866, 476).

[26] Translation mine.

[27] Though it is relatively uncontroversial in a broader historical perspective, the view has recently come under fire from certain quarters (though by no means all) of Evangelical Protestantism. I will not have the space to address the arguments here fully except to say that I view it as a theological fad and I'm unaware of any arguments for the view that were not already adequately addressed in the fourth century. In particular, the extreme Arian (Eunomian) claim that having the divine essence entails being absolutely *a se*, has already been addressed by the Cappadocians in numerous works. (See section VIII below for a few examples). In any case, for the purposes of this paper, the question is not which view is *true*, but whether the more traditional view *counts as Trinitarian*. If one holds that to be Trinitarian requires asserting the more recent view that the Son and Spirit are *a se* in every sense – just as the Father is – then one would have to count the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and even the Westminster Confession of Faith, as non-Trinitarian. And such a view, as it seems to me, is its own refutation.

'principle' (*archē*) of the divine nature, which is in the Son and in the Spirit."[28] Metropolitan of Pergamum, John Zizioulas, seems to endorse this idea as well, based on his reading of the Cappadocians, in his landmark book *Being As Communion*.[29]

> (M3) The Father is "the union" or "the one-ness" or "the principle of unity" within the Trinity.

This would seem to be, at a minimum, what the Greek Fathers want to claim, and some do use exactly this language (as we saw with St. Gregory Nazianzen). This would be as opposed to saying that the principle of God's one-ness is, say, the divine nature or the "divine community" of persons, or the like. Presumably this means, at least, something like, the Father is "the end of explanation for" God's one-ness. It is somehow the Father that explains the one-ness of God, or less poetically, the Father is the explanation for the fact that there is one God, rather than three gods. If a typical Social Trinitarian says that "The One God" is the divine community or society formed by the three persons, there's a clear sense in which it's the "divine society" that ultimately explains the one-ness of God, and so a clear sense in which the divine society is the principle of the unity of God for Social Trinitarians. For example, there is a clear sense in which the divine nature is the principle of unity in much theology, since it will be what explains the fact that there is one God.

It would be nice to spell this interpretation out more fully. However, the final and strongest view we will consider would seem to entail both (M3) and (M1) at least (or at least would entail them within the scope of some reasonable assumptions) and will be the interpretation which I think suggests a fresh approach (well, a very ancient approach, but fresh for analytic theologians) to the Trinity, and which causes difficulties for Tuggy's definitions. So I'll be focusing on this last one.

> (M4) Strictly speaking, when used as a singular term,[30] the name "God" refers to the Father (precisely *because* it is the Father who is the single "source without source").

Clearly if the individual referred to by the word "God" is the Father, then it is the one-ness of the Father that explains the one-ness of God. We can call the view under discussion "the Strong Monarchy View" (SMV). But there is more to it than simply specifying the referent of a singular term. The idea is that it is *because* the Father is the one, ultimate source of everything (including the other two persons of

[28] Meyendorff (1983, 183).

[29] Zizioulas (1983, see especially pp. 40–41 and 88–89).

[30] I.e., used to refer to a single individual, as the subject of a sentence.

the Trinity)—because He is the *arche anarchos* ("source without source" or "principle without principle")—that He is referred to as "the" God, "God" in a very particular sense. It is the Father's role as *arche anarchos* and the *aitia* of ("cause" or "principle" of) the Son and Spirit that *explains why* He is even sometimes called the "God of" the Son and the Spirit (as in, e.g., Psalm 45,7; Hebrews 1,9; John 20,17 and so on), or "the God Over All" as St. Gregory of Nyssa's favorite expression for the Father has it (see below, section 7).

So, since (M4) is the idea I will be focusing on, let me give a few quick definitions:

> "Monarchical model" (of the Trinity): Any model (of the Trinity) that incorporates SMV, i.e., any model in which:
>
> (1) the Father is the *arche anarchos*, and
>
> (2) there is a use of "God" as a singular term, such that it refers particularly to the Father because He is the *arche anarchos*.[31, 32]

I'll group all Monarchical models together under the heading of "Monarchical Trinitarianism" (MT).

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[31] Note that within SMV, (1) is just WMV. Hence, the "Strong" Monarchy View is "stronger" than the "Weak" Monarchy View, not in an *ontological* sense – not in the sense that it says something *more* about the substantive theology – but only in the *logical* sense that SMV *entails* WMV, while WMV does not entail SMV. Note further that while WMV is a *substantive* metaphysical claim about the role of the Father within the Trinity, what SMV adds (2) is a *semantic* claim about the reference of a certain term. This is important to keep in mind for anyone who wants to criticize SMV, because to do so one faces a dilemma. To criticize SMV from the point of view of substantive theological or metaphysical claims one would have to criticize (1), i.e. WMV, which is a matter of dogma in traditional theologies (Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, the mainstream Reformed tradition, etc.) and indeed has only begun to be rejected, first within a minority strand of Protestantism, beginning a few centuries ago with Herman Alexander Röell, and only beginning to gain ground within the last hundred or so years, starting especially with Princeton theologians like B. B. Warfield, and only finally becoming very popular within a certain subset of evangelical Christians in the twentieth century. On the other hand, if the criticism is directed at the other conjunct of SMV (2), it has to be admitted that the criticism is merely semantic. And it seems absurd to say that the difference between orthodoxy and heresy hinges on a purely semantic claim. More on criticisms of SMV in section 8 below.

[32] Note that the definition of SMV does *not* say that there is *no sense* of the word "God" in which it applies equally to all three persons! Rather, it says only that there is *some sense* in which it applies particularly to the Father. To address Tuggy's point that the word "God" seems to function in the New Testament as a name equivalent to the Father, and is only applied to the Son comparatively infrequently, there need be only *some* use of the word "God" such that it refers to the Father (either exclusively, or even just *more frequently*). To claim that there is *no* sense of the word "God" such that it could ever refer to the Son or the Spirit would be overkill. See section 8 below for more on how the Son and Spirit can be called "God."

> "Egalitarian model" (of the Trinity) or "symmetrical model" (of the Trinity): Any model (of the Trinity) in which all three persons have an "equal claim" to being called "God", *in any and every sense*. Any model in which any quality or relation that would be relevant to whether that person can be called "God" (in any sense) is shared by the other two persons equally.

I'll group all Egalitarian models together under the heading of "Egalitarian Trinitarianism" (ET). E.g., standard forms of Social Trinitarianism (ST) and Relative Identity Trinitarianism (RI) are normally *intended* to be symmetrical (though perhaps surprisingly several would actually be compatible with SMV).

> "Non-symmetrical model" or "Non-egalitarian model" (of the Trinity): A model (of the Trinity) in which the above symmetry doesn't hold. Any model that in some sense privileges one (or two) person(s) over the other(s) in terms of the semantic claim to being the referent of the term "God" when it is used as a singular referring term.

So, all Monarchical models are non-symmetrical, but in principal there could be non-symmetrical models that aren't Monarchical. Indeed, as we'll see below, part of the *filioque* controversy essentially revolve around whether the *filioque* results in a model of the Trinity that is neither Monarchical nor fully symmetrical, having exactly *two* "first principles"—the Father and the Son (though *filioquists* of course deny they get this result).

For reasons of space, I will only note in passing that a large and representative sample of contemporary Eastern Orthodox theologians seem to explicitly affirm SMV, but for considerations of space I'll have to omit a complete discussion of them. They include, at least: Metropolitan John Zizioulas,[33, 34, 35] Christos Yannaras,[36] Boris

[33] Zizioulas (1983, 40–41), "Among the Greek Fathers the unity of God, the one God, and the ontological "principal" or "cause" of the being and life of God does not consist in the one substance of God but in the hypostasis, that is, the person of the Father. The one God is not the one substance but the Father, who is the 'cause' both of the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit."

[34] Zizioulas (1989, 40): "The one God is the Father. Substance is something common to all three persons of the Trinity, but it is not ontologically primary until Augustine makes it so."

[35] Zizioulas (2022): "The other point relates to the content that the term *monarchia* finally received in the Greek Fathers. The one arche in God came to be understood ontologically, i.e. in terms of origination of being, and was attached to the person of the Father. The one God is the Father, and not the one substance, as Augustine and medieval Scholasticism would say. This puts the person of the Father in the place of the one God."

[36] Yannaras (1984, 17): "The one God is not one divine nature or essence, but primarily one person:

Bobrinskoy,[37] Peter Bouteneff,[38] John Manousakis,[39] Philip Kariatlis,[40] Laurent

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the person of God the Father."

[37] Bobrinskoy (1999, 264–266, esp. 266). For example, "Thus, the oneness of God is placed not only on the level of the nature common to the Three, but on the basis of the personal relation or origin from the Father."

[38] Bouteneff (2008). Beginning at 19:48, "So, the lynchpin of Orthodox Trinitarian theology would be to say that the One God is the Father, who has with him, according to His very essence, from all eternity, a Son and a Spirit. And so, there is, in a certain way, a hierarchy in the Trinity. Because only the Father is ingenerate. Only the Father proceeds from no one, proceeds from nothing. The Father is not begotten. The Father is not proceeded. The Father is. The Father doesn't have anything or anyone that begets or produces him. Whereas, the Son and the Spirit are from the Father. But they are in no way less than the Father, in no way subordinate to the Father. And that's because they exist according to His very nature and being. . .

Interestingly enough, when the Cappadocian fathers read Jesus saying 'the Father is greater than I,' you would expect them to say, well, he's saying this as man. But actually, he's saying this as God, that 'the Father is greater than I.' It's not a subordination. But it's a recognition that the Father alone is ingenerate. That the Father alone comes from nothing or no one. So there is a hierarchy, but not a subordination.

So it would be taught in the Orthodox Church that the Father is the one God. The one God is the Father. In fact, the formulation goes as follows:

> The Father is God
> The Son is God, and
> The Spirit is God.
> But God is the Father.

That's not always easy to parse out in English grammar. 'The Father is God.' Meaning 'the Father is divine.' 'The Son is God.' 'The Son is divine,' is he is the divine one, as is the Father. 'The Spirit is divine,' as is the Father. But when the word 'God' is the subject, you're speaking about the Father. God is the Father, who has a Son and a Spirit."

[39] Manoussakis and Panteleimon (2013, 235): "It is well known that what safeguards the oneness of God and prevents the doctrine of the Holy Trinity from lapsing into tritheism is the person of the Father. The 'monarchy of the Father' indicates neatly that the coincidence and confirmation of unity and plurality in the Holy Trinity is exercised by a person—the Father. As the symbol of our faith, the Creed that we recite in every Eucharistic gathering attests, in its first article, the one God we believe in is a person, the Father [. . .]. The oneness of God is safeguarded not by some impersonal divine essence, but by the person of the Father."

[40] Kariatlis (2022): "For the fathers of the Church, the Holy Trinity is a unity not because there is a unity of substance, as the West has argued, but because of the *monarchia* of the Father, who is himself one of the Trinity. Accordingly, the fathers of the Church taught that there is one God because there is only one Father. Or put another way, it was the *monarchia* of the Father that was the ground of *koinonia* within the Trinity and not any abstract conception of the divine ousia. This was nothing other than the biblical affirmation that the one God was the Father almighty (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6 and 1 Tim. 2:5)."

Cleenewerck,[41] Nathan Jacobs,[42] and three former deans of St. Vladimir's seminary

[41] Cleenewerck (2007, 324): ". . . Paul Owens writes. . . 'Orthodox Christians believe that God is one eternal, personal and spiritual divine substance who exists in three modes of subsistence, or three self-distinctions. . . ' The Greek Fathers would have written quite a different summary, something along the lines of: 'Orthodox Christians believe in one God the Father, whose person is uncaused and unoriginate, who, because He is love and communion, always exists with His Word and Spirit."

[42] Jacobs, Nathan (2018, 24–25): "Are Christians really monotheists? One way of addressing this question is to look at the three uses of the word God in Christian theology.

The first and most common reference for the word God is the Father. This is common throughout the New Testament, and it echoes in the Nicene Creed: 'I believe in one God, the Father [etc.].' This use is certainly singular. For there is only one Father.

The second use is in reference to the divine nature shared by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This use appears in the prologue to the Gospel of John: 'and the Word was God' (John 1:1). John is not saying the Word was the Father, nor is he saying the Word was the Trinity. He is using God (*theos*) in the predicate nominative, identifying the type of thing the Word is—just as I would say, *Bob is human*. . .

A third use of the word God is in reference to the entire Trinity. I should warn that this third use is alien to Greek literature of the first millennium. But because this use is common in Western literature, I will include it."

Fr. John Meyendorff,[43] Fr. Thomas Hopko,[44, 45, 46] and Fr. John Behr.[47, 48, 49, 50] I mention

[43] Meyendorff (1983, 183). "The same personalistic emphasis appears in the Greek Fathers' insistence on the "monarchy" of the Father. Contrary to the concept which prevailed in the post-Augustinian West and in Latin Scholasticism, Greek theology attributes the origin of hypostatic "subsistence" to the hypostasis of the Father—not to the common essence. The Father is the "cause" (*aitia*) and the "principle" (*archē*) of the divine nature, which is in the Son and in the Spirit. What is even more striking is the fact that this "monarchy" of the Father is constantly used by the Cappadocian Fathers against those who accuse them of "tritheism": "God is one," writes Basil, "because the Father is one."

[44] Hopko (1972): "Thus, the Church teaches that while there is only One God, yet there are Three who are God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—perfectly united and never divided yet not merged into one with no proper distinction. How then does the Church defend its doctrine that God is both One and yet Three?

First of all, it is the Church's teaching and its deepest experience that there is only one God because there is only one Father. In the Bible the term "God" with very few exceptions is used primarily as a name for the Father. Thus, the Son is the "Son of God," and the Spirit is the "Spirit of God." The Son is born from the Father, and the Spirit proceeds from the Father—both in the same timeless and eternal action of the Father's own being.

In this view, the Son and the Spirit are both one with God and in no way separated from Him. Thus, the Divine Unity consists of the Father, with His Son and His Spirit distinct from Himself and yet perfectly united together in Him."

[45] Fr. Hopko goes into further details in a couple of podcasts on Ancient Faith Radio. (Hopko 2008) "Now in the Bible, in the creeds, and in the liturgy, it's very important, really critically important, to note, and to affirm, and to remember, that the one God, in Whom we believe, strictly speaking, is not the Holy Trinity. The One God is God the Father. That in the Bible, the One God is the Father of Jesus Christ. He is God Who sends His only-begotten Son into the world. And Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And then, of course, in a parallel manner, the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, is the Spirit of God." The quote occurs between 12:37 and 13:25.

[46] Another quote from the same podcast: "On the other hand, there is another terrible error, and the other terrible error, usually called 'Modalism' in technical theological terminology, is where people say there is one God Who is the Holy Trinity. There is 'He Who Is the Trinity'. And we Orthodox Christians, following scripture, and the creedal statements, and the liturgical prayers, can never say there is one God who is the Trinity. There is one God who is the Father. And this one God – Who is the Father – has with Him eternally, Whom He begets timelessly before all ages, His Only-Begotten Son – who is also His Logos, His Word, and also His Chokhmah, His Sophia, His Wisdom, also His Eikona, His Ikon, His Image – but this Wisdom and Word and Image and Ikon, is divine with the same divinity as God, the One True and Living God. . . " This quote can be found between 15:41 and 16:37. Similar statements can be found in a number of other writings and podcasts by Fr. Hopko.

[47] Behr (2008, 162): "The one God confessed by Christians in the first article of the creeds of Nicaea and Constantinople is unambiguously the Father."

[48] Behr (1999, 22–23): "So how can Christians believe in and worship the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and yet claim that there is only one God, not three? How can one reconcile monotheism with trinitarian faith? . . . The Father alone is the one true God. This keeps to the structure of the New

this just to point out that what I am calling Monarchical Trinitarianism is not merely some *ad hoc* invention of an analytic philosopher, but something that is in fact represented both in the contemporary and historical sources on the doctrine of the Trinity. (Though, of course, even if it *weren't*, it would be no worse off than any other contemporary model of the Trinity proposed by any other analytic philosopher).[51]

Testament language about God, where with only a few exceptions, the world 'God' (theos) with an article (and so being used, in Greek, as a proper noun) is only applied to the one whom Jesus calls Father, the God spoken of in the scriptures . . . This same fact is preserved in all ancient creeds, which begin: 'I believe in one God, the Father . . .'

Such, then, is how the Greek Fathers, following Scripture, maintained that there is but one God, whose Son and Spirit are equally God, in a unity of essence and of existence, without compromising the uniqueness of the one true God. . ."

[49] Behr (2004, 307–308): "For the Christian faith there is, unequivocally, but one God, and that is the Father: 'There is one God and Father.' For Basil, the one God is not the one divine substance, or a notion of 'divinity' which is ascribed to each person of the Trinity, nor is it some kind of unity or communion in which they all exist; the one God is the Father. But this 'monarchy' of the Father does not undermine the confession of the true divinity of the Son and the Spirit. Jesus Christ is certainly 'true God of true God,' as the Nicene Creed puts it, but he is such as the Son of God, the God who is thus the Father. If the term 'God' (theos) is used of Jesus Christ, not only as a predicate, but also as a proper noun with an article, this is only done on the prior confession of him as 'Son of God,' and so as other than 'the one God' of whom he is the Son; it is necessary to bear in mind this order of Christian theology, lest it collapse in confusion."

[50] Behr (2018, 320): ". . . [M]y eldest son reported to me an intriguing, and arresting, conversation he had with his religion instructor at a Jesuit High School. The instructor came in one day and told the class: 'Today we are going to explore why we say that the one God is a Trinity.' My son immediately put his hand up and said, 'I don't, sir.' Perplexed, the instructor asked, 'What do you mean?' To which he replied (so he says), 'Well, I don't know about you, sir, but I follow the Nicene Creed, which says: I believe in one God the Father.' I never found out how the discussion went after that (one can only guess). We have become so used to using the word 'God' in all sorts of ways – God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit, the one God who is three; the triune God, and so on – that the simple observation that the Creed does not speak like that, let alone the Scriptures, pulls us up short. They speak, much more simply, of one God the Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God (not God the Son), and so on. What is the grammar that lies behind the beguilingly simple confession of faith in 'One God Father Almighty,' and does the difference between that and our habitual patterns of speech make a difference for how we name God today and what we think we are doing when we do 'trinitarian theology'?"

[51] I have argued elsewhere that in order to count as Trinitarian, or at least to be known to count as Trinitarian, a model must indeed bear an important relation to the historical sources of the doctrine of the Trinity. (Branson 2018) But others may disagree. Take "narrowly Trinitarian" or "Trinitarian in a narrow sense" to indicate a view consistent with some *consensus patrum* on the Trinity, and take "broadly Trinitarian" or "Trinitarian in a broad sense" to indicate any view that counts as Trinitarian according to whatever looser standard one thinks appropriate – common usage or whatnot. If Tuggy wants to argue there is no *broadly* Trinitarian theology that is consistent with the New Testament, then it's not relevant whether MT can be found in historical sources or not. He needs to face the model

One might wonder, of course, if Monarchical Trinitarianism is affirmed by all these Orthodox theologians,[52] where are they all getting this idea? Is it some kind of theological fad? Doesn't it go against historical orthodoxy? The answer to both those questions is no. To see why, we will take a look at some of the patristic sources on the doctrine of the Trinity that seem both to affirm SMV and to affirm that there are three fully and equally divine persons. This will also serve to cast further doubt on the adequacy of Tuggy's definitions, since it will show us that those definitions count not only Tertullian as Unitarian, but the likes of Alexander of Alexandria (the bishop who first excommunicated Arius for his Arianism), St. Athanasius, all three of the Cappadocian fathers (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory Nazianzen), and John of Damascus—in others words, most of the church fathers whose views we would normally think of as being *definitive* of the Trinitarian tradition.

"head-on," so to speak. I include some historical considerations in this paper, because I think it's important to be *narrowly* Trinitarian. But I assume Tuggy does not, as he has not often argued against analytic philosophers' models of the Trinity based on their historical credentials. In that case, however, the fact that a great many modern Orthodox theologians hold to some form of MT shows that it's at least *broadly* Trinitarian. And note here that it needn't be the case that *all* Orthodox theologians hold a form of MT. The point is that if Tuggy wants to hold that MT isn't even *broadly* Trinitarian, he needs to say that nobody who holds MT is a Trinitarian, and thus that, as it would appear, the Eastern Orthodox Church (of all churches!) does not require Trinitarianism of its members (including its priests and bishops, and seminary professors!) This is, then, just one more way in which Tuggy's use of "Trinitarian" seems at odds with the standard use of the term. I think most, even of those who think the various Orthodox theologians quoted above are wrong about the Trinity, would still consider them to be broadly Trinitarian.

[52] Lest anyone imagine that I am focusing on Orthodox theologians so as to suggest that it is *only* Orthodox theologians who maintain SMV, let me point to a statement of SMV by no less a non-Orthodox theologian than John Calvin in his Institutes Book I, Chapter 13, section 20. Calvin (2008, 79-80): "When we profess to believe in one God, by the name 'God' is understood the one simple essence, comprehending three persons or hypostases; and, accordingly, whenever the name of 'God' is used indefinitely, the Son and Spirit, not less than the Father, is meant. But when the Son is joined with the Father, relation comes into view, and so we distinguish between the Persons. But as the Personal subsistence carry an order with them, the principle and origin being in the Father, whenever mention is made of the Father and Son, or of the Father and Spirit together, the name of 'God' is specially given to the Father. In this way the unity of essence is retained, and respect is had to the order, which, however derogates in no respect from the divinity of the Son and Spirit." Thus, although he begins with a characteristically "Western" focus on the divine essence, in this passage, Calvin ultimately asserts both parts of SMV: (1) that the "principle and origin" of the Son and Spirit is the Father, and (2) that there is a use of "God" as a singular term such that it refers to the Father precisely *because* He is this principle and origin. (I focus mainly on Orthodox theologians simply because I am more familiar with them, and they seem to me to be more clear on the issue than many other modern theologians.)

7. Patristic Sources on the Monarch of the Father and Monarchical Trinitarianism

The first passage I'd like to examine is from Gregory of Nyssa's *Ad Petrum*. This of course is the *locus classicus* for the distinction between "person" (*hypostasis*) and "substance" (*ousia*). Here Gregory is describing the various *gnorismata* of the divine persons—the individuating qualities by which we can recognize one as distinguished from the others. Ordinarily, one would go to this text for the distinction between *ousia* and *hypostasis*, or for the *gnorismata* (essentially the epistemological equivalent of *idiomata*) themselves. But I will point out something else that is quite striking about the text, and that is frequently overlooked:[53]

> Ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, ἀφ' οὗ πᾶσα ἐπὶ τὴν κτίσιν ἡ τῶν ἀγαθῶν χορηγία πηγάζει, τοῦ Υἱοῦ μὲν ἤρτηται ᾧ ἀδιαστάτως συγκαταλαμβάνεται, τῆς δὲ τοῦ Πατρὸς αἰτίας ἐξημμένον ἔχει τὸ εἶναι, ὅθεν καὶ ἐκπορεύεται, τοῦτο γνωριστικὸν τῆς κατὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἰδιότητος σημεῖον ἔχει, τὸ μετὰ τὸν Υἱὸν καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ γνωρίζεσθαι καὶ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ὑφεστάναι.
>
> Since, then, the Holy Spirit, from Whom all the supply of good things for creation has its source, is attached to the Son, and is inseparably apprehended with Him, and has His existence attached to the Father as cause, from Whom also He proceeds, He has this *gnoristikon* of peculiarity according to hypostasis: being known after the Son and together with the Son, and subsisting from the Father.
>
> Ὁ δὲ Υἱὸς ὁ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον Πνεῦμα δι' ἑαυτοῦ καὶ μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ γνωρίζων, μόνος μονογενῶς ἐκ τοῦ ἀγεννήτου φωτὸς ἐκλάμψας, οὐδεμίαν κατὰ τὸ ἰδιάζον τῶν γνωρισμάτων τὴν κοινωνίαν ἔχει πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα ἢ πρὸς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον, ἀλλὰ τοῖς εἰρημένοις σημείοις μόνος γνωρίζεται.
>
> The Son, who through Himself and with Himself reveals the Spirit proceeding from the Father, who alone shines forth only-begottenly from the unbegotten light, has no commonality according to the individuating *gnorismata*, either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit, but alone is known by these mentioned signs.
>
> Ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς ἐξαίρετόν τι γνώρισμα τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ὑποστάσεως τὸ Πατὴρ εἶναι καὶ ἐκ μηδεμιᾶς αἰτίας ὑποστῆναι μόνος ἔχει, καὶ διὰ τούτου πάλιν τοῦ σημείου καὶ αὐτὸς ἰδιαζόντως
>
> And the God over all has a certain *gnorisma* of His own hypostasis: that He is a Father, and that He alone subsists from no cause, and by this sign again He is also

[53] Indeed, I myself overlooked the fact in my dissertation, where I included this very passage, and simply glossed it with an explanation in brackets that essentially explained away the most striking feature of the text. See Branson (2014, 162–3).

ἐπιγινώσκεται.[54] individually recognized.[55]

The reader will no doubt notice the explicit claims that the Holy Spirit has the Father "as cause" and that *the Father alone* "subsists from no cause." But what is frequently overlooked in the above passage, and what I want to draw attention to, is *who the persons of the Trinity are* for Gregory. It appears that Gregory's Trinity consists of the Holy Spirit, the Son—and *God*.

Now, one might think that this phrase "the God over all" is just a colorful title for the Father. In a certain sense that's right: it's one of Gregory's favorite phrases for the Father throughout his *Contra Eunomium* for example. But consider what individuates "the God over all". It's *the property of being a Father*. If we read "the God over all" as just *meaning* the Father, then the individuation would be circular.

Now one might argue that people sometimes do give circular criteria of individuation, and even if we don't think that's a satisfying view, maybe Gregory did, or maybe he's just making a logical blunder. But the problem is that here he is using the term *gnorisma*. For Gregory, the *gnorismata* seem to be essentially the same properties as the *idiomata*, but of course the term "*idioma*" connotes the metaphysical issue of *individuation*, while the term *gnorismata* carries epistemological connotations. The *gnorismata* are the qualities by which one would *recognize* a given individual as the individual it is. Perhaps one might hold a metaphysics on which Socrates is individuated by the property of being Socrates. But it would be bizarre to say that the property by which you *can recognize* Socrates, what would allow you to pick him out of a crowd so to speak, is that "he will be the one who has *the property of being Socrates*." Tell me he'll be the one wearing a white toga, for example. But that he will be the one with the property of being Socrates is no help in recognizing him, and here the problem is too obvious to miss.

Notice also that he doesn't give circular individuations in the other two cases. The qualities by which the Holy Spirit is known are "being known after the Son and together with the Son, and subsisting from the Father". The qualities by which the Son is known are that he is the one "who through Himself and with Himself reveals the Spirit proceeding from the Father, who alone shines forth only-begottenly from the unbegotten light". Elsewhere, Gregory gives examples involving the individuating properties of Job, Paul, etc., and here again he does not appeal to properties like "Jobicity" or "Paulinity" in listing their *gnorismata* or *idiomata*. So it seems out of place to take it as circular when we read that the quality by which God

[54] St. Basil of Caesarea (1957).

[55] My translation.

is known is the quality of "being the Father, and subsisting from no cause".

Note also that this property, the property of being the Father, is the *gnorisma* "of His own hypostasis". In other words, as Gregory is using the term "God" here, God is not tri-hypostatic or tri-personal. Rather, God has "his own hypostasis" (person), while the Son and the Spirit each have *their* own hypostases (persons). Thus, God is not the Trinity in this passage. Rather, God is *the first person* of the Trinity. In other words, Gregory presupposes SMV.

If you still aren't convinced that he takes God to be the Father, rather than the Trinity, here's a passage from his *Refutation of the Confession of Eunomius*, where he uses SMV *as a premise* to argue against Eunomius' extreme Arianism.

Ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἐφεξῆς λόγους σκεψώμεθα·	But let us examine the words that follow [in the creed composed by Eunomius]:
πάντῃ γὰρ καὶ καθάπαξ ἐστὶν εἷς, κατὰ τὰ αὐτά τε καὶ ὡσαύτως διαμένων μόνος.[56]	He is always and absolutely one, remaining uniformly and unchangeably the only God.[57]

Now if Gregory was an Egalitarian, I think we would expect his response to be something like "No, God isn't one—God is tri-personal!" But that isn't what he says. Instead, he says:

εἰ περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς λέγει, τούτῳ καὶ ἡμεῖς συντιθέμεθα·[58]	If he is speaking about the Father, we agree with him . . . [59]

I don't know how to read that as an Egalitarian statement. He goes on:

εἷς γάρ ἐστιν ὡς ἀληθῶς ὁ πατὴρ μόνος καὶ πάντῃ καθάπαξ κατὰ τὰ αὐτά τε καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχων, καὶ οὐδέποτε, ὅπερ ἐστίν, οὔτε μὴ ὢν οὔτε μὴ ἐσόμενος. εἰ τοίνυν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα βλέπει ἡ τοιαύτη φωνή, μὴ μαχέσθω τῷ δόγματι τῆς εὐσεβείας, συμφωνῶν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ	. . . for the Father is most truly one, alone and always absolutely uniform and unchangeable, never at any time present or future ceasing to be what He is. If then such an assertion as this has regard to the Father, let him not contend with the doctrine of godliness, inasmuch as on this

[56] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1960, 312–410).

[57] English translation appears as *Contra Eunomium* II,5 in St. Gregory of Nyssa (1893, 106).

[58] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1960, 312–410).

[59] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1893, 106).

κατὰ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος.[60]

point he is in harmony with the Church.[61]

Note also that this isn't just Gregory saying, "OK, say it's the Father and I'll stop posting nasty stuff on your Facebook page". Gregory ended up having the authority, by Roman law, to decide whether a person counted as Trinitarian or not. And in at least one case he was actually called on to interrogate another bishop and make that decision. What has come down to us as "Book II" of *Contra Eunomium* was probably written after the council of 381 and after the passage of Theodosius' law of 381 proclaiming Gregory one of the legal arbiters of orthodoxy. It seems pretty clear he wasn't fond of Eunomius, so it's very telling that he makes this "offer" to Eunomius. Clearly, he doesn't think Eunomius will call his bluff here. Gregory commits to giving the game away to Eunomius, if Eunomius will only call God "Father". But Gregory knows he won't do that:

ὁ γὰρ ὁμολογῶν τὸν πατέρα πάντοτε <κατὰ τὰ αὐτά τε> καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχειν ἕνα καὶ μόνον ὄντα, τὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας κρατύνει λόγον, βλέπων ἐν τῷ πατρὶ τὸν υἱόν, οὗ χωρὶς πατὴρ οὔτε ἔστιν οὔτε λέγεται.[62]

For he who confesses that the Father *is always and unchangeably the same*, being *the one and only God*, holds fast the word of godliness, *if in the Father he sees the Son*, without Whom the Father neither exists nor is named ["Father"]. [Emphasis mine.][63]

Gregory's point (as I'll elaborate on just below) is that one cannot *define* God as "Father" without attributing to Him a Son as a necessary concomitant—something an extreme Arian like Eunomius clearly can't do.

Next comes an interesting mention by Gregory of the difference between Jews and Christians. Egalitarian Trinitarians would probably say that Jews (and Arians) worship God the Father, whereas Trinitarians worship all three of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Or they may say that Trinitarians worship a (quasi-)individual named "the Trinity" who is composed out of them. But that's almost the opposite of Gregory's way of distinguishing his views from those of Jews or Arians. Gregory continues:

[60] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1960, 312–410).
[61] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1893, 106).
[62] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1960, 312–410).
[63] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1893, 106).

εἰ δὲ ἄλλον τινὰ παρὰ τὸν πατέρα θεὸν ἀναπλάσσει, Ἰουδαίοις διαλεγέσθω ἢ τοῖς λεγομένοις Ὑψιστιανοῖς, ὧν αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ πρὸς τοὺς Χριστιανοὺς διαφορά, τὸ θεὸν μὲν αὐτοὺς ὁμολογεῖν εἶναί τινα, ὃν ὀνομάζουσιν ὕψιστον ἢ παντοκράτορα, πατέρα δὲ αὐτὸν εἶναι μὴ παραδέχεσθαι· ὁ δὲ Χριστιανός, εἰ μὴ τῷ πατρὶ πιστεύοι, Χριστιανὸς οὐκ ἔστιν.[64]

But if he is inventing some *other* God, *besides* the Father, let him argue alongside the Jews, or alongside those who are called 'Hypsistians,' ['Most-High-ists'] between whom and the Christians there is this difference: That they [Jews and Hypsistians] acknowledge that there is a God (Whom they term 'the Most High' or 'the Almighty.') But they do not admit that He is *the Father*. While a Christian—if he believe not in the Father—is no Christian at all.[65]

Gregory's point of view, then, is just the opposite of the popular view of our own day, which says Jews worship *the Father alone*, whereas Christians worship the Trinity. Rather, in his point of view, Christians and Jews both worship *God*, but Christians worship a God for whom Fatherhood is part of His very *identity*, whereas Jews worship a God for whom it is not.

So, what's the logic here? If we can't read this passage as Gregory asserting an Egalitarian view of the Trinity, then how does this argument work from a Monarchical perspective? Simply put, it's analytic that a Father must have a Son. God is a necessary being, and so exists at all times in all possible worlds. So, if Fatherhood is part of God's identity, that is, if it is what Gregory would call God's *idioma* (roughly what we in analytic philosophy would call God's *individual essence* or *Leibnizian essence*), then the Son of God exists and has always existed—indeed, *necessarily* exists. But if the Son of God is Himself a necessary being, then He *is not a creature*. And if the Son of God is not a creature, then He is divine.[66]

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[64] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1960, 312–410).

[65] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1893, 106). Emphasis mine.

[66] It's important here not to fall into a confusion regarding terms like "essential" and "necessary." There are those qualities that *individuate* God, what most metaphysicians today would call an "individual essence" or "Leibnizian essence", and then there is the "kind-essence" or "Aristotelian essence". The latter is what Gregory calls the *ousia*. And although he often uses "hypostasis" simply for the subject of qualities, strictly speaking he defines "hypostasis" as what we would call the individual or Leibnizian essence. Thus, Gregory's position is not open to the objection that the Father and Son cannot be *homoousios* because the Father and Son have different "essential" qualities, any more than one would be open to the objection that I and my father cannot be of the same species because we have different "essential" properties. We have different *individual* essences – i.e., different identity conditions across possible worlds. That hardly conflicts with our sharing the same Aristotelian or kind-essence. Thus, if it somehow turned out that there was no possible world in

So it turns out that the central point of disagreement between Gregory and Eunomius is not whether to identify God with the Trinity or the Father. Rather, what they disagree about is the sense or manner *in which* God is the Father. Specifically, is Fatherhood God's hypostatic property or *idioma* (as Gregory maintains), so that God is eternally, indeed necessarily, a Father? Or, is Fatherhood merely *accidental* to God (as Eunomius maintains), so that God is merely accidentally a Father (as Eunomius maintains)?

Let us call the view that God has the property of Fatherhood *necessarily*, the "Necessary Strong Monarchy View" (NSMV), and the view that God has the property of Fatherhood only accidentally or contingently, the "Contingent Strong Monarchy View" (CSMV). It turns out, then, that the real disagreement between Gregory and Eunomius is not about the Monarchy of the Father, nor even about the Strong Monarchy View (SMV). Both agreed about that. Rather, the disagreement is actually about, so to speak, *how strong* of a Strong Monarchy view to take. And ironically, we find it is actually Gregory, the orthodox Trinitarian, who takes the stronger view here, NSMV, and Eunomius the extreme Arian who takes the weaker view, CSMV. That is, Gregory affirms, whereas Eunomius (like Arius) denies, that God is eternally, indeed necessarily, the Father of Christ.

In fact, if we rewind back to the very beginning of the 4th-century Trinitarian controversy, we find that this dynamic (the orthodox affirming NSMV, and the Arians affirming only CSMV) traces all the way back to the beginning of the dispute. Today, we tend to think of Arianism primarily as a Christological heresy. After all, Arius is famous for his slogan, "There was a time when the Son was not". And certainly he was condemned for this. But it's telling to read the actual deposition of Arius. Surely the claim that the Son didn't always exist was indeed what was most important to Arius himself. But was that what seemed most important to Alexander of Alexandria and the council of presbyters that condemned Arius? Notice what heresy that council lists first:

ποῖα δὲ παρὰ τὰς γραφὰς ἐφευρόντες λαλοῦσιν, ἔστι ταῦτα.	And the novelties they have invented and put forth contrary to the Scriptures are these following: –
«Οὐκ ἀεὶ ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ ἦν, ἀλλ' ἦν ὅτε ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ οὐκ ἦν. [67]	[1] God was not always a Father, but there

which Roger Branson existed but failed to be my father, then fatherhood would be "essential" to him in the sense in which analytic philosophers typically use that term today. But it would not preclude our being of the same species – even if there are worlds in which I fail to be a father.

[67] St. Athanasius (1940, 1–45).

was a time when God was not a Father . . .[68]

Now obviously the negation of the claim that God *was not always* a Father is not that God is *never* strictly speaking the Father, but is really tri-personal, or that God is the Trinity Itself, or that God "contains" the Father along with the Son and Spirit equally (indeed, all of these would *entail* that God was not—and still is not—a Father). The negation of the claim that God *was not always* a Father is that God *is and has always been* a Father. So this again is not a picture on which God is the Trinity, but one on which (both sides agree) God is *the first person of* the Trinity. The debate was not about SMV, but rather between NSMV and CSMV.

Fast-forwarding now to the conventional end of the patristic era, let's look at a few passages from John of Damascus. Just as it's easy to read through Gregory's *Ad Petrum* without noticing its Monarchical presuppositions, it's easy to read past this excerpt from the *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* without noticing a similar detail.

Πιστεύομεν τοιγαροῦν εἰς ἕνα θεόν, μίαν ἀρχὴν ἄναρχον, ἄκτιστον, ἀγέννητον ἀνόλεθρόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον, αἰώνιον, ἄπειρον, ἀπερίγραπτον, ἀπεριόριστον, ἀπειροδύναμον, ἁπλῆν, ἀσύνθετον, ἀσώματον, ἄρρευστον, ἀπαθῆ, ἄτρεπτον, ἀναλλοίωτον, ἀόρατον, πηγὴν ἀγαθότητος καὶ δικαιοσύνης, φῶς νοερόν, ἀπρόσιτον, δύναμιν οὐδενὶ μέτρῳ γνωριζομένην, μόνῳ δὲ τῷ οἰκείῳ βουλήματι μετρουμένην—πάντα γάρ, ὅσα θέλει, δύναται—, πάντων κτισμάτων ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀοράτων ποιητικήν, πάντων συνεκτικὴν καὶ συντηρητικήν, πάντων προνοητικήν, πάντων κρατοῦσαν καὶ ἄρχουσαν καὶ βασιλεύουσαν ἀτελευτήτῳ καὶ ἀθανάτῳ βασιλείᾳ, μηδὲν ἐναντίον ἔχουσαν, πάντα πληροῦσαν, ὑπ' οὐδενὸς περιεχομένην, αὐτὴν δὲ μᾶλλον περιέχουσαν τὰ	We believe, then, in One God, one beginning, having no beginning, uncreate, unbegotten, imperishable and immortal, everlasting, infinite, uncircumscribed, boundless, of infinite power, simple, uncompound, incorporeal, without flux, passionless, unchangeable, unalterable, unseen, the fountain of goodness and justice, the light of the mind, inaccessible; a power known by no measure, measurable only by His own will alone (for all things that He wills He can), creator of all created things, seen or unseen, of all the maintainer and preserver, for all the provider, master and lord and king over all, with an endless and immortal kingdom: having no contrary, filling all, by nothing encompassed, but rather Himself the encompasser and maintainer and original possessor of the universe, occupying all essences intact

[68] St. Athanasius (1892, 70).

σύμπαντα καὶ συνέχουσαν καὶ προέχουσαν, ἀχράντως ταῖς ὅλαις οὐσίαις ἐπιβατεύουσαν καὶ πάντων ἐπέκεινα καὶ πάσης οὐσίας ἐξηρημένην ὡς ὑπερούσιον καὶ ὑπὲρ τὰ ὄντα οὖσαν, ὑπέρθεον, ὑπεράγαθον, ὑπερπλήρη, τὰς ὅλας ἀρχὰς καὶ τάξεις ἀφορίζουσαν καὶ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ τάξεως ὑπεριδρυμένην ὑπὲρ οὐσίαν καὶ ζωὴν καὶ λόγον καὶ ἔννοιαν, αὐτοφῶς, αὐτοαγαθότητα, αὐτοζωήν, αὐτοουσίαν ὡς μὴ παρ' ἑτέρου τὸ εἶναι ἔχουσαν ἤ τι τῶν ὅσα ἐστίν, αὐτὴν δὲ πηγὴν οὖσαν τοῦ εἶναι τοῖς οὖσι, τοῖς ζῶσι τῆς ζωῆς, τοῖς λόγου μετέχουσι τοῦ λόγου, τοῖς πᾶσι πάντων ἀγαθῶν αἰτίαν, πάντα εἰδυῖαν πρὶν γενέσεως αὐτῶν, μίαν οὐσίαν, μίαν θεότητα, μίαν δύναμιν, μίαν θέλησιν, μίαν ἐνέργειαν, μίαν ἀρχήν, μίαν ἐξουσίαν, μίαν κυριότητα, μίαν βασιλείαν, ἐν τρισὶ τελείαις ὑποστάσεσι γνωριζομένην τε καὶ προσκυνουμένην μιᾷ προσκυνήσει πιστευομένην τε καὶ λατρευομένην ὑπὸ πάσης λογικῆς κτίσεως ἀσυγχύτως ἡνωμέναις καὶ ἀδιαστάτως διαιρουμέναις, ὃ καὶ παράδοξον. Εἰς πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, εἰς ἃ καὶ βεβαπτίσμεθα· οὕτω γὰρ ὁ κύριος τοῖς ἀποστόλοις βαπτίζειν ἐνετείλατο· «Βαπτίζοντες αὐτούς», φάσκων, «εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος».[69]

and extending beyond all things, and being separate from all essence as being super-essential and above all things and absolute God, absolute goodness, and absolute fullness: determining all sovereignties and ranks, being placed above all sovereignty and rank, above essence and life and word and thought: being Himself very light and goodness and life and essence, inasmuch as He does not derive His being from another, that is to say, of those things that exist: but being Himself the fountain of being to all that is, of life to the living, of reason to those that have reason; to all the cause of all good: perceiving all things even before they have become: one essence, one divinity, one power, one will, one energy, one beginning, one authority, one dominion, one sovereignty, made known in three perfect subsistences and adored with one adoration, believed in and ministered to by all rational creation, united without confusion and divided without separation (which indeed transcends thought). (We believe) in Father and Son and Holy Spirit whereinto also we have been baptized. For so our Lord commanded the Apostles to baptize, saying, Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 18,19).[70]

It's easy, if we read this through Egalitarian eyes, to focus on the Egalitarian-sounding aspects of this statement. For example, he begins by saying "We believe, then, in One God . . ." and after this one phenomenally long sentence he seems to

[69] St. John of Damascus (1973, 3–239).

[70] St. John of Damascus (1898, 6) [page number is from the section on John of Damascus, which begins the page numbering again after the section on Hilary of Poitiers].

restate the idea, "We believe in Father and Son and Holy Spirit . . ." This might suggest that John equates "God" with the whole collection of "Father and Son and Holy Spirit". The language toward the end of the long first sentence, read a certain way, might also suggest a view on which the one God is perhaps the one essence, "one essence, one divinity, one power, one will, one energy, one beginning, one authority, one dominion, one sovereignty", and especially the immediately following claim that The One God is "made known in three perfect subsistences". This Egalitarian sounding language makes it easy to miss the fact that the very first thing Damascene says about God is that He is <<ἕνα θεόν, μίαν ἀρχὴν ἄναρχον, ἄκτιστον, ἀγέννητον>>, i.e., "One God, *a single arche anarchos . . .* " i.e., "*a single source without source*", a phrase that John only applies to the Father, followed not only by "uncreated" (a term that would describe any of the three persons), but immediately after "uncreated" as "*unbegotten*". Again, this is a term that he only applies to the Father. What's more, it cannot be that John used <<ἀγέννητον>> or "unbegotten" carelessly to mean <<ἀγένητον>> or "uncreated", because he himself devotes some space to explaining the important difference between the two terms just a few paragraphs later in the same chapter:

> Χρὴ γὰρ εἰδέναι, ὅτι τὸ ἀγένητον διὰ τοῦ ἑνὸς Νῦ γραφόμενον τὸ ἄκτιστον ἤτοι τὸ μὴ γενόμενον σημαίνει, τὸ δὲ ἀγέννητον διὰ τῶν δύο Νῦ γραφόμενον δηλοῖ τὸ μὴ γεννηθέν. Κατὰ μὲν οὖν τὸ πρῶτον σημαινόμενον διαφέρει οὐσία οὐσίας· ἄλλη γὰρ οὐσία ἡ ἄκτιστος ἤτοι ἀγένητος (διὰ τοῦ ἑνὸς Νῦ), καὶ ἄλλη ἡ γενητὴ ἤτοι κτιστή. Κατὰ δὲ τὸ δεύτερον σημαινόμενον οὐ διαφέρει οὐσία οὐσίας· παντὸς γὰρ εἴδους ζῴων ἡ πρώτη ὑπόστασις ἀγέννητός ἐστιν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀγένητος· ἐκτίσθησαν μὲν γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τῷ λόγῳ αὐτοῦ παραχθέντα εἰς γένεσιν, οὐ μὴν ἐγεννήθησαν μὴ προϋπάρχοντος ἑτέρου ὁμοειδοῦς, ἐξ οὗ γεννηθῶσι.[71]
>
> For one must recognise that the word ἀγένητον with only one 'ν' signifies uncreate or not having been made, while ἀγέννητον written with double 'ν' means unbegotten. According to the first significance [*ousia*] differs from [*ousia*]: for one [*ousia*] is uncreate, or ἀγένητον with one 'ν,' and another is create or γενητή . But in the second significance there is no difference between [*ousia*] and [*ousia*]. For the first [*hypostasis*] of all kinds of living creatures [i.e., Adam] is ἀγέννητος [unbegotten] but not ἀγένητος [uncreated]. For they were created by the Creator, being brought into being by His Word, but they were not begotten, for there was no pre-existing form like themselves from which they might have been born.[72]

[71] St. John of Damascus (1973, 3–239).

[72] St. John of Damascus (1898, 8).

It's true that there are passages In John of Damascus that could be read as identifying God with the Trinity or even with the divine nature. But I would point out that we have to take into account what John himself says about this usage in *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Book III, Chapter 4.

> Ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἕτερόν ἐστιν οὐσία καὶ ἕτερον ὑπόστασις, πλειστάκις εἰρήκαμεν, καὶ ὅτι ἡ μὲν οὐσία τὸ κοινὸν καὶ περιεκτικὸν εἶδος τῶν ὁμοειδῶν ὑποστάσεων σημαίνει οἷον θεός, ἄνθρωπος, ἡ δὲ ὑπόστασις ἄτομον δηλοῖ ἤτοι πατέρα, υἱόν, πνεῦμα ἅγιον, Πέτρον, Παῦλον. Ἰστέον τοίνυν, ὅτι τὸ μὲν τῆς θεότητος καὶ τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος ὄνομα τῶν οὐσιῶν ἤτοι φύσεών ἐστι παραστατικόν, τὸ δὲ θεὸς καὶ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς φύσεως τάττεται, ὁπόταν λέγωμεν· Θεός ἐστιν ἀκατάληπτος οὐσία, καὶ ὅτι εἷς ἐστι θεός· λαμβάνεται δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὑποστάσεων ὡς τοῦ μερικωτέρου δεχομένου τὸ τοῦ καθολικωτέρου ὄνομα, ὡς ὅταν φησὶν ἡ γραφή· «Διὰ τοῦτο ἔχρισέ σε ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεός σου» (ἰδοὺ γὰρ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἐδήλωσε), καὶ ὡς ὅταν λέγῃ· «Ἄνθρωπός τις ἦν ἐν χώρᾳ τῇ Αὐσίτιδι» (τὸν γὰρ Ἰὼβ μόνον ἐδήλωσεν).[73]
>
> Now we have often said already that essence [*ousia*] is one thing and subsistence [*hypostasis*] another and that essence signifies the common and general form of subsistences of the same kind, such as God, man, while subsistence marks the individual, that is to say, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, or Peter, Paul. Observe, then, that the names, divinity and humanity denote essences or natures while the names, God and man, are applied both in connection with natures, as when we say that God is incomprehensible essence, and that God is one, and with reference to subsistences, that which is more specific having the name of the more general applied to it, as when the Scripture says, *Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee*, or again, *There was a certain man in the land of Uz*, for it was only to Job that reference was made.[74]

In other words, "humanity" only ever refers to the human nature, and "Paul" just refers to a particular hypostasis. But "man" can do either one. In a sentence like, "The man walked down the street," it refers to a particular human hypostasis. But in sentences like "Man is a rational animal," or "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?" or "Man's days are as the grass," it refers to the nature of mankind as a whole. In *that* sense of the word "man," we could say that "Man is a multitude of hypostases." John here indicates that he uses the word "God" in both of these ways as well. In other words, for John, "divinity" only ever refers to the divine nature, and

[73] St. John of Damascus (1973, 3–239).

[74] St. John of Damascus (1898, 48).

"Father" and "Son" and "Holy Spirit" refer to particular hypostases. But "God" can do either one. In a sentence like "God, thy God hath anointed thee," it refers to two hypostases—first to the Son, then to the Father. But in sentences like "God is an incomprehensible essence" it is referring to the divine essence—not referring to the *person* named "God" and then bizarrely identifying Him with an essence! It is presumably in *this* sense of the word "God," the sense in which it refers to the essence, that we can say that "God is tri-hypostatic" or that "God is a Trinity" just as we could say that "man is a multitude of hypostases" when we use "man" to refer to the entire species.[75]

I will leave off my discussion of John of Damascus by returning to Book I, Chapter 8 for a passage that might at first glance be read as identifying God with the Trinity, but that our discussion of Book III, Chapter 4 illuminates.

Καὶ πάλιν ἐν ἀλλήλαις τὰς τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις λέγομεν, ἵνα μὴ πλῆθος καὶ δῆμον θεῶν εἰσαγάγωμεν. Διὰ μὲν τῶν τριῶν ὑποστάσεων τὸ ἀσύνθετον καὶ ἀσύγχυτον, διὰ δὲ τοῦ ὁμοουσίου καὶ ἐν ἀλλήλαις εἶναι τὰς ὑποστάσεις καὶ τῆς ταυτότητος τοῦ θελήματός τε καὶ τῆς ἐνεργείας καὶ τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας καὶ τῆς κινήσεως, ἵν' οὕτως εἴπω, τὸ ἀδιαίρετον καὶ τὸ εἶναι ἕνα θεὸν γνωρίζομεν.[76]	And again we speak of the three subsistences [hypostases] as being in each other, that we may not introduce a crowd and multitude of Gods. Owing to the three subsistences [hypostases], there is no compoundness or confusion: while, owing to their having the same essence and dwelling in one another, and being the same in will, and energy, and power, and authority, and movement, so to speak, we recognise the indivisibility and the unity of God.[77]

"God" here might seem like it must be referring to the Trinity, since all three persons are in play in the previous part of the sentence. But notice that it takes a turn at the end . . .

Εἷς γὰρ ὄντως θεὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ ὁ λόγος	For verily there is one God, and His word

[75] It's interesting to note that even such a paradigmatically "Western" figure as Thomas Aquinas makes the same point in *Summa Theologiae* Question 39, article 4. And in article 6, Thomas explains that, for him, it's true to say "God is a Trinity" or "God is three persons," precisely *because* he thinks that in that context "God" supposits for the divine nature, and not a divine person. (See St. Thomas Aquinas, n. d.)

[76] St. John of Damascus (1973, 3–239).

[77] St. John of Damascus (1898, 10).

καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ.[78] and Spirit.[79]

It seems impossible to read the final sentence as anything other than presupposing MT. So, in reading the previous part, we either have to read it in light of *Exact Exposition* III.4, or else take John to be contradicting himself in back-to-back sentences. And the latter is not simply uncharitable, but, in reference to John of Damascus, absurd.

Though there won't be time to explore it, one finds a similar kind of language in other authors who wrote just after the rise of Islam, when it again became critical to respond to the charge of tri-theism. Theodore Abu Qurrah frequently repeats the phrase, "God, and His Word, and His Spirit, are one God". So does the anonymous author of, "On the Nature of the Triune God" (which in fact never mentions anything about a triune God, but consistently expresses its theology with the formula "God, and His Word and His Spirit are one God"). Similar language can be found in the dialogue between Timothy I, Patriarch of the East Syrian ("Nestorian") Church and Caliph al-Mahdi.[80]

Consider also that in the Quran and other early Muslim writings, Christian belief in the Trinity is depicted not as a belief that God "is composed of three" or "contains three" (as we might expect an Egalitarian view to be described), but as a belief that God "is one of three" (as we would expect a Monarchical view to be described). E.g., famously, Al-Maa'idah 5,72 describes Christians (Trinitarians) as those who "associate others with God" (not those who say God "contains" three within Himself) And 5,73 describes Christians (Trinitarians) as "Those who say that Allah is one third of a Trinity" (not that God *is* a Trinity). Western scholars routinely dismiss this as Muhammed misunderstanding the Trinity. But did he? Or was it simply that the *kind* of Trinitarianism Muhammed and his companions were familiar with (living around the Eastern edge of the empire during the late 6th / early 7th century) was Monarchical?

Now it may be true that the author of the Quran, as well as many later Muslims, misunderstood the Trinity to consist of God, Jesus, and Mary (although it's not

[78] St. John of Damascus (1973, 3–239).

[79] St. John of Damascus (1898, 10).

[80] For example in Mingana (1928, 22): "As our God-loving King is one King with his word and his spirit, and not three Kings, and as no one is able to distinguish him, his word and his spirit from himself and no one calls him King independently of his word and his spirit, so also God is one God with His Word and His Spirit, and not three Gods, because the Word and the Spirit of God are inseparable from Him. And as the sun with its light and its heat is not called three suns but one sun, so also God with His Word and His Spirit is not three Gods but is and is called one God".

entirely clear whether or not there could have still been a small group of heretical Christians—the Collyridians—in that area who did indeed worship Mary).[81] But even if the early Islamic view of the Trinity mistakenly substitutes Mary for the Holy Spirit, we need not conclude that its identification of Allah (God) with the first person of the Trinity (instead of the Trinity as a whole) is a mistake, any more than we should conclude that its identification of the Son as the second person of the Trinity is a mistake! Rather, we simply have two interpretive options. The first option is that the kind of Trinitarianism known by the earliest Muslims was Monarchical, and the early Muslims got at least that part right, making only a *single* mistake about Mary (if it was a mistake). The second option is that the kind of Trinitarianism known by the earliest Muslims was actually Egalitarian, but early Muslims made *two separate mistake*s, and one of those mistakes just happens to have ended up—by a fortunate coincidence—being the understanding of the Trinity that (as even Tuggy would agree) actually was the older view of the Trinity among Christians, and was more faithful to the Ecumenical Creeds. Both the principle of charity, and simple probability theory, should lead us to prefer the former view over the latter.

Finally, fast-forwarding out of the early encounter with Islam and its eventually Arabic-speaking milieu, if we return to the Greek-speaking milieu of Byzantium at the time of the Great Schism, we see that much of Photios' reasons for rejecting the infamous *filioque* revolved around the Monarchy of the Father. Though the debate over the *filioque* is often presented as an abstruse question of metaphysics, and though Photios does indeed criticize his opponents for not understanding the Cappadocians' metaphysics, much of his argument simply boils down to a perceived incompatibility between the *filioque* and SMV. For example, in the *Mystagogy of the Holy Spirit*, after criticizing the metaphysics of the *filioque*, Photios argues:

> ια'. Χωρὶς δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων, εἰ δύο αἴτια ἐν τῇ θεαρχικῇ καὶ ὑπερουσίῳ τριάδι καθορᾶται, ποῦ τὸ τῆς μοναρχίας πολυΰμνητον καὶ θεοπρεπὲς κράτος; Πῶς οὐχὶ τὸ τῆς πολυθεΐας ἄθεοννῦν ἐπικωμάσει; Πῶς δ' οὐκ ἐν προσχήματι Χριστιανισμοῦ ἡδεισιδαιμονία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς πλάνης τοῖς ταῦτα λέγειν
>
> 11. Leaving aside the aforementioned, if one admits of two causes within the thearchic and superessential triad, where then is the much hymned and God-befitting majesty of the monarchy? Will not the godlessness of polytheism be riotously introduced? Under the guise of Christianity, will not the superstition of Greek error reassert

[81] See Epiphanius of Salamis' *Panarion*, Sect #59 / #79 in (St. Epiphanius of Salamis 2008).

τολμῶσιν οὐ συνεισελάσει;

itself among those who dare to say such things?

ιβ′. Πάλιν εἰ δύο αἴτια τῆς μοναρχικῆς τριάδος ἐπαναβέβηκε, πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ τὸ τρίτον τῆς αὐτῆς συνανακύψει γνώμης προερχόμενον; Ἅπαξ γὰρ τῆς ἀνάρχου καὶ ὑπεραρχίου ἀρχῆς τῆς οἰκείας ἕδρας τοῖς δυσσεβέσι περιτραπείσης καὶ εἰς δυάδα διατμηθείσης, νεανικώτερον καὶ πρὸςτὴν Τριάδα ἡ κατανομὴ τῆς ἀρχῆς προελεύσεται, ἐπεὶ κἂν τῇ ὑπερφυεῖ καὶ ἀμερεῖκαὶ ἑνιαίᾳ τῆς Θεότητος φύσει τὸ τριαδικὸν μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ δυαδικὸν ἀναφαίνεται, οἷα δὴ καὶ τοῖς ἰδιώμασιν ἁρμοζόμενον.

12. Again, if two causes are imposed upon the monarchic triad, then according to the same reasoning, why should not a third one emerge? For once the principle without principle and above principle [= the Father], is cast down from its throne by these impious ones and is cleaved into a duality, the division of the principle [arche] will proceed more vehemently into a triad, since in the supersubstantial, inseparable, and simple nature of the divinity, the triad is more manifest than the dyad, and indeed also harmonizes with the idiomata.[82]

In other words, Photios sees a few different options in interpreting the *filioque*. On a straight-forward, perhaps flat-footed reading, there are now two beings that are coordinately *a se* and that serve as sources for further beings. If, as Photios does, we take monotheism to be a matter of how many *a se* sources there are, then we now have straight-forward ditheism, which is what Photios accuses the Latins of. So Photios clearly opposes *monarchia* and *polytheism*. And in that case, in Photios' mind, *monarchia* is just the equivalent of *monotheism*. If in Photios' mind a denial of the Monarchy of the Father is a denial of monotheism, then Photios is still operating within the framework of Monarchical Trinitarianism, as late as the late 9th century.

What's more, as far as I'm aware, Photios' Latin opponents don't seem to challenge him on this, even at this late date. Indeed, a typical filioquist response is to say that the Son is not (or is not "absolutely" or "hypostatically") *a se*, so that we begin with the Father as the sole (absolutely) *a se* source, Who generates the Son, then the Father and Son together generate the Spirit. Regardless of who is right in this argument, the point to note is that the response does not simply accept two *a se* principles (nor three), nor does it shift aseity from the Father to the Trinity or the Divine Nature.

Thus, while there isn't time to explore these texts fully, to return to my point from Section 4, we can see that Tuggy has a lot of work to do if he wants to substantiate

[82] St. Photios (1983, 74; 156).

his point against Rea that "the body of catholic theologians from the late fourth century on" clearly assert "the existence of a triune, tripersonal deity," rather than that they are Monarchical Trinitarians.[83] On the other hand, if Tuggy simply means the body of *Western* theologians from the late fourth century on make this claim (and even this would be problematic), then he should give up the claim that he is defining, and then refuting, Trinitarianism *in general*, and make only the more modest claim that he is defining, and refuting (at best) a certain *kind* of Trinitarianism that came to be dominant much later, mainly in the West, over a very long period of time, and without ever fully achieving a consensus. That is, at best, Tuggy's argument would count as a reason to return to some form of Monarchical Trinitarianism, rather than a refutation of Trinitarianism in general.[84]

To conclude this section, there are of course many other passages from various church fathers one could point to as examples of what looks like Monarchical, rather than Egalitarian, Trinitarianism. But now that we have a clearer picture of the patristic witness to Monarchical Trinitarianism and thus the motivation for so many contemporary Eastern Orthodox theologians for holding it,[85] the reader may also have several questions and objections regarding MT from a Trinitarian perspective. This is the time to address such concerns, and while it won't be possible to do full justice to them all, addressing them (albeit briefly) will at least help us get a clearer picture of Monarchical Trinitarianism.

8. Some Worries about SMV and Monarchical Trinitarianism

The first concern a Trinitarian might have is this. If the individual named "God" is the Father, how can the Son and the Holy Spirit in any sense be called "God"? Are they really "equally" divine? Are they no longer *homoousios* with the Father? After all, if Monarchical Trinitarianism is in obvious conflict with the *homoousion*, then

[83] Tuggy has attempted something like this in "When and How. . . " But as noted above in note 15, the evidence he presents is in every case either irrelevant, non-existent, or circular.

[84] This is not to say that I necessarily agree that Western Trinitarianism underwent the transformation Tuggy imagines, in just the way and at the time he imagines. Rather, I think the entire situation is far more complex, as should be clear from texts like Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae,* Part I, Question 39, especially articles 4-6 (mentioned above, footnote 75). The point is simply that if tuggy wants to claim that *all* mainstream Christian theology took a certain turn, then he needs to show that for Trinitarians in whatever geographical region. If he can't make good on that claim, then he needs to weaken his thesis down to whatever he can make good on.

[85] Again, this isn't to say it's *only* Eastern Orthodox theologians who hold such a view, as the example of Calvin in note 52 above makes clear. But if Tuggy wants to draw conclusions about *all* Trinitarian theologies, then he needs to show that his premises are true of *all* Trinitarian theologies.

perhaps it *should* be ruled out of court as in no sense Trinitarian after all. To get a clearer view of how this objection might work, recall that SMV is a conjunction of (1) WMV (a substantive, ontological claim) and (2) a semantic claim about uses of the word "God." Let's look at how the current objection might be directed against either conjunct.

In some cases, the criticism really is leveled against the ontological component of SMV, that is, WMV. The idea is that *aseity* (in an absolute sense) is part of the divine nature, so that WMV itself is inconsistent with the claim that the persons are *homoousious*. This is just the argument that Eunomius, the extreme Arian gave against the pro-Nicene Trintiarianism of the Cappadocians. The "Eunomian Premise," as I'll call it, holds that having the divine *ousia* entails being *a se* in every sense (and so, entails being "unbegotten"). As it seems to me, this is highly confused. After all, it doesn't seem to hold in any other case. As Nazianzen points out (*Oration 31*, section XI), Adam is not begotten, Seth is begotten of Adam, and Eve proceeds from Adam, not by begetting, but in a different way. Yet, we have no problem thinking they can all be *homoousious*, i.e., members of the same species.[86] Or, as Gregory of Nyssa points out (*On the Holy Spirit, Against the Macedonians*), "It is as if a man were to see a separate flame burning on three torches (and we will suppose that the third flame is caused by that of the first being transmitted to the middle, and then kindling the end torch), and were to maintain that the heat in the first exceeded that of the others; that that next it showed a variation from it in the direction of the less; and that the third could not be called fire at all, though it burnt and shone just like fire, and did everything that fire does."[87] It may be true in the loose sense of "essential" in which we tend to use the word today that individuals' origins are "essential" to them (that is, *necessary* for them). But that's clearly a matter of their Leibnizian or individual essence (i.e., their *idiomata* or *hypostatic* properties), not their shared Aristotelian or kind-essence (their *ousia*).

On the other hand, the objection we're considering (that MT is inconsistent with the claim that the persons are *homoouious*) may be directed at the purely *semantic* conjunct. What such an objection would seem to presuppose is the (again *semantic*, not metaphysical) claim that "God" *can only* be used to mean "a thing with the divine nature" (so that there is no sense of "God" such that it would ever make sense for it to apply more or less properly to any of the three persons). This assumption seems to be so dominant today that it normally goes unquestioned. But it's explicitly denied by about half or so of the early church fathers, and almost all of the rest, while not denying it, deliberately refrain from affirming it. As I note in my dissertation,

[86] St. Gregory Nazianzen (1894, 321)
[87] St. Gregory of Nyssa (1893, 317)

although Gregory of Nyssa gives a defense of Trinitarianism as monotheistic based on this semantic assumption, both in *Ad Graecos* and *Ad Ablabium*, he explicitly and vehemently rejects its actual veracity. He only offers, in response to certain objections to the Trinity, defeater-defeaters that can operate even *granting* this assumption, since he thinks it's a commonly accepted view (especially among pagans). But he makes clear that it is not *his own* view[88]. And in this, he stands in a long line of earlier fathers who also reject it[89]. As far as I can tell, among the church fathers, Augustine seems to have been the first to actually affirm this claim (unless one counts Marius Victorinus as a "church father"), from whom it seems to have spread to Boethius and so on, until this originally highly idiosyncratic idea among Christians eventually became dominant, so that certain responses to the charge of tritheism that were prevalent in the early church became unusable.

But the idea that a god is a thing with a divine nature seems untenable, at least from a scriptural point of view, as Gregory points out[90]. God gave Moses to be "a god to Pharaoh" (Ex. 7,1). And "the gods of the gentiles are demons" (Psalm 96,5/95,5 LXX, cf. 1 Cor 1:10) (so clearly gods needn't have the divine nature!) When the witch of Endor brought up Samuel from Sheol, along with him, she "saw gods" (1 Sam. 28:13). Did she only mistakenly believe she saw gods? Well, "Yahweh executed judgment on all the gods of Egypt" (Ex. 12,12; Num. 33,4 and cf. 2 Sam. 7:23). Did Yahweh only *mistakenly believe* He was executing judgment on the gods of Egypt? How could He *actually* execute judgment on them, if they didn't exist? "God stands in the midst of the gods" (Psalm 82,1). "Let the gods who have *not* created the heavens and the earth perish" (Jer. 10,11). "Though I have said ye are gods, all of you sons of the Most High, yet shall ye die like men" (Psalm 82,6; John 10,34). "Who is like Thee among the gods, O Lord"? (Ex. 15,11) "There are many gods and many lords, yet *for us* there is One God and One Lord" (1 Cor. 8,5). That there is *no* sense in which one can speak of other gods is difficult to reconcile with the Bible. Rather, the picture that emerges from scripture is that, as St. Paul puts it, there are indeed many gods and many lords. It is only that there is *for us* but One God and One Lord. And in any case, whether one admits their literal existence or not is beside the point. The point is that it's clear that *the vast majority* of the things (whether real or imagined) that the Bible applies the term "god" to cannot have the same nature as God. So at least *the Bible* doesn't seem to use the term "god" to mean "a thing with the divine nature."

To make the view a bit more clear, let's consider two alternatives. It may be that

[88] Branson (2014, 129–151).

[89] Ibid (146–148).

[90] Ibid. (134–139).

the Greek <<ὁ Θεὸς>> functions as a name, just as in Greek we refer to Socrates and Plato as <<ὁ Σωκράτης>> and <<ὁ Πλάτων>>, literally "the" Socrates and "the" Plato. If <<ὁ Θεὸς>> functions as a name, then, at least given a certain view of names, it refers to some individual not by way of any descriptive content at all.[91] It may be that the reference of that name *was fixed* at some point via some descriptive content, but now that it is fixed, it simply refers to that entity. In that case, things are fairly simple. Suppose <<ὁ Θεὸς>> (with the article) functions, for the New Testament authors, as a name referring to the Father. Still, <<θεὸς>>, without any article, may function as a predicate, just as "*Adam*", in Hebrew, can function as a name referring to the first human, but "*adam*" can also function to simply predicate humanity of a thing (as in Ezekiel 28,2 and 28,9, "Thou art man [adam] and not God [el]"). Thus, even though it may look like a description, "God" (capital-G, <<ὁ Θεὸς>> with the article) may just be the name of an individual, in the same way that the Hebrew (capital-"A") "*Adam*" (sometimes) functions as a name for the first human, despite the fact that (little-"a") "*adam*" literally means "a human", so that, in that sense, there are many adams, or many individuals that are adam, but only one individual that is named "Adam"—and many gods, but only one individual that is named "God." Now as I've argued, <<θεὸς>> in the sense in which it applies to, say, "the gods of the gentiles," "all the gods of Egypt," and so on, won't predicate the divine nature. But what exactly the Bible does mean by <<θεὸς>> needn't be settled just to get the logic down.

On the other hand, suppose <<ὁ Θεὸς>> functions *not* as a name, but as a definite description—"the single individual that is θεὸς". If <<ὁ Θεὸς>> ("the" God) functions as a definite description, then it refers to a single individual by way of some descriptive content—descriptive content that only it fully satisfies. But in that case, even the Unitarian will have to admit that there is an equivocation going on here. Given that, as St. Paul tells us, "there are many gods and many lords", yet in some sense there is only "one God" and "one Lord" *for us* (1 Cor. 8,5), and given that God is "the God of gods," (Deut. 10,17) there has to be *some* distinction between a sense of <<θεὸς>> (god) such that there is only one (<<ὁ Θεὸς>>, "the" god) and some *other* sense of <<θεὸς>> such that there is more than one (the gods). But why must we assume that the sense of <<θεὸς>> in which there is only one must be something like "thing that has the divine nature" instead of something like "thing that is a source without a source"? The sense of <<θεὸς>> in which the gods of the gentiles are θεοὶ will also not mean "thing with the divine nature," of course. So, in

[91] Tuggy seems to take this view in (Tuggy 2013), beginning at 10:35, "the phrase 'the God' is a singular referring term, the function of which is not to describe, but simply to refer."

that case, for the Bible to call Jesus θεὸς / god wouldn't—just by itself—*prove* that Jesus has the divine nature. But it wouldn't be *inconsistent* with that claim either.[92] The important point at present is simply that it isn't such that only God the Father can have this predicate applied to Him.

Finally, one might object that, in some cases, it may be that Christ is referred to in the New Testament not simply as <<θεὸς>> without the article, but as <<ὁ Θεὸς>> with the article, or with titles that seem to function as singular referring expressions and seem most apt for the Father, like "King of Kings and Lord of Lords", or that His standard title, "Lord" (<<Κύριος>>) is just a conventional Greek translation of the Hebrew "Yahweh". But we can certainly still make sense of calling Christ "God" with a capital G, even if, in fact, the individual named "God" is the first person of the Trinity, and Christ is the second person, and so numerically distinct from God.

A fairly common strategy for showing this, in the early days of the Arian controversy, involves a sort of representational view of Christ, on which Christ is, as St. Paul had put it, "the ikon of the invisible God". (Col. 1,15) We can see this strategy at work in various passages from another Monarchical Trinitarian, St. Basil the Great, passages that seem to reveal (1) that he thinks of God as the "source without source", and (2) that he thinks we are licensed in referring to Christ as "God" because of Christ's function as the *Image* (or *Representation*) of God, and that (3) this phenomenon of reference-transfer does not increase the "count" of gods. For (1), consider this passage:

> Still you say: 'He preaches two gods! He proclaims polytheism!' There are not *two gods* because there are not *two fathers*. Whoever introduces *two first principles* preaches two gods.—Adv. Sab. 4 [emphasis mine.][93]

Here Basil (as we also saw with Photios) seems to equate mono-*theism* with mon-*archia*, and in general the number of gods with the number of "first principles." So, how is it that (2) the term "God" applies to Christ, even though Christ is not the "source without source"? Consider this passage from St. Basil:

> The Father is God; the Son is God. The Father is perfect God; the Son is also perfect God. The Father is incorporeal; the Son is incorporeal, the *representation* [Heb 1,3] of the incorporeal and the incorporeal *image* [Col 1,15].

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[92] This is, after all, what we should expect. Arians called Jesus "our god." So, if the mere appellation "god" were enough to prove one way or the other whether Jesus had the divine nature, how could there ever have been a controversy between Arians and Orthodox in the first place?

[93] St. Basil of Caesarea (2012, 295).

> —Not Three Gods, 3.[94]

Thus, Christ is the Image or the Representation of "the Invisible God." (Col. 1,15) That is what licenses the application of the term "God" to Him (more on that just below). But how is it that (3) this avoids tritheism? Consider these passages:

> [W]hoever gazes at the imperial image in the forum and calls the one on the panel "emperor" does not confess two emperors, namely, the image and the one whose image it is. Nor when he points to the depiction on the panel and says, "This is the emperor", does he deprive the exemplar of the designation "emperor".—Adv. Sab. 4.[95]

> We have never to this present day heard of a second God. We worship God from God, confessing the uniqueness of the persons, while maintaining the unity of the Monarchy . . . How does one and one not equal two Gods? Because we speak of the emperor, and the emperor's image - but not two emperors. The power is not divided, nor the glory separated. One is the dominion and authority over us; we do not send up glories to God, but glory; the honor given the image passes to the prototype. The image of the emperor is an image by imitation, but the Son is a natural image . . . (*De Spiritu Sancto* 45)[96]

Consider that, if I show you a picture of my wife, I can point to the picture and say (quite truly), "This is my wife". If my actual wife then walks into the room, and I point to her and say, "This is my wife", I don't say anything false, I don't contradict myself, and yet I'm not guilty of bigamy, having both a human wife and a merely photographic one. Rather, I have only my One True Wife (the human one), even though there is more than one thing to which I can point and say, "This is my wife". Indeed, I could even point to the photograph and say, "this is my One True Wife". And what I asserted would be true. This is not because I am equivocating on "wife", nor on the copula "is". Rather, it is because representations *transfer reference* (and other kinds of intensionality—like worship or glorification, as St. Basil mentions) to their prototypes.

To see that this phenomenon is not simply an equivocation on "wife" or "my wife", consider that I could just as easily replace "my wife" with "Svetlana" (or indeed any name or any description that picks her out)[97]. I can point to the

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[94] Ibid. (273).

[95] Ibid. (296).

[96] St. Basil of Caesarea (1980, 72).

[97] I'm indebted to Jean-Baptiste Guillon for pressing me to clarify this and related points.

photograph and say (truly), "This is Svetlana". And, although there may be more than one Svetlana, that is because there are other women with that name. If there *were* only one woman in the world named "Svetlana", there would not come to be two simply because she had been photographed, so that the name "Svetlana" could then become ambiguous and a source of equivocation. But does it really seem likely that literally all names, indeed all descriptions (or at least the names and descriptions of any things that can be photographed or otherwise represented), are ambiguous? It seems rather that the application of the sentence, "This is my wife", to a photograph is not licensed by an equivocal use of the term "wife" or "my wife" (likewise for an equivocal use of "Svetlana"). Intuitively, I am not actually speaking about *the photograph* and saying there is some strange, mysterious (and hopefully merely Platonic) sense of "wife" in which *it* is my wife, or in which I am married to *it*. Nor that there is some quality of Svetlana-tude, perhaps similar to my wife's actual quality of Svetlana-tude, that is had by the photograph. Rather, intuitively, I am simply using the photograph as a means of speaking about *my wife*, and simply affirming that *she* is (quite literally) my wife, Svetlana.

Similarly, the application of the sentence, "This is my wife", to a photograph is not licensed by an equivocal use of the copula "is". Again, intuitively, I am not actually speaking about *the photograph* and saying that, although it does not literally instantiate the property of being my wife, there is some mysterious relation that *it* bears to the property of being my wife, which is perhaps similar to instantiation. Rather, intuitively, I am simply using the photograph as a means of speaking about *my wife,* and simply affirming that *she* (literally) instantiates the property of being my wife. Nor again, if I say, "This is Svetlana" am I saying that *the photograph* bears some relation to Svetlana that is not exactly numerical identity, but something perhaps similar to identity. Rather, intuitively, I am simply using the photograph as a means of speaking about *my wife*, and affirming that *she* (literally) is identical to Svetlana.

However, one might here imagine that there is a good candidate for a relation that the photograph does bear to Svetlana, a relation which isn't identity, but which we may be expressing with "is". Namely, one might argue that in this case "is" really just means "represents". One problem with this suggestion is that the same phenomenon of reference transfer occurs with verbs other than the copula as well. For example, I may ask someone, "Where are *you* parked?" And they may reply, "*I'm* parked right outside, in spot 2A". And this could happen even when we are not outside in the parking lot at all, but inside and planning a trip. (And needless to say, a person can't be "parked" even if they were outside and, say, *standing* in spot 2A.) Does it seem plausible not only that there is an equivocal use of the word "is" which

can just mean "represents", but also an equivocal use of the verb "to park", so that "to park" can mean *to park*, but can also mean "to be *represented by* something that parks"? In the same way that analyzing my "wife" example as an equivocation on a predicate leads, when generalized, to an innumerable horde of ambiguous predicates, analyzing it as an equivocation on the copula leads, when generalized, to an innumerable horde of ambiguous verbs.

There is much more to be said about this phenomenon of reference transfer (really, transfer of intensionality generally), but we will have to move on. Suffice it to say, even though my actual, human wife is my "One, True Wife", if I were to point to her picture and say, "That's not my wife", or even "That's not my One, True Wife", I would be saying something false. By using the picture, I would be asserting that *my wife* is not my wife. In fact, even if I said, "Well, this isn't *literally* my wife", I would be saying something false. And that has nothing to do with fancy metaphysics, relative identity logic, or whatnot. It's just the point of using representations. When the real McCoy isn't in the room, we can in many ways treat a representation as though it were the prototype. As a final argument that what we have here is a transfer of reference affecting the subject term, rather than an equivocation on the copula or the predicate, consider that, instead of saying "*That*'s my wife" or "*That*'s not my wife" (as I point to the picture), I could just as easily point to the picture and say, "*She*'s my wife" or "*She*'s not my wife." But if the copula or the predicate were equivocal while the *subject* I was referring to was the photograph, I would have to say, "*It*'s my wife" or "*It*'s not my wife" (since my wife is female, whereas a photograph is not). Thus, it should at least be clear that the reference made to the photograph transfers to my wife. Thus, equivocations in other parts of the sentence would be superfluous.

Here let me return to the worry about the *homoousion*. Namely, if the individual named "God" is the Father, because only He is the "single source without source," and if Christ is referred to as God, not because He is also in some sense the single source without source, but because He is a representation of God, does this mean that the Father and Son are not in fact "homoousios" or "of the same nature/essence"?

The confusion here is to think that because the picture I have sketched out does not *require* that the Father and Son be of the same essence in order to make the logic and semantics work out, that it is therefore *incompatible with* their being of the same essence. But first, one can still hold the Father and Son to be *homoousios*, and indeed can argue (on other grounds) that they *must* be. Second, it is still critical, within what we can call the "Representationalist Strategy" we are considering, that the Father and Son actually have the divine nature in common, at least in the form seen in figures like St. Athanasius or St. Basil. Things can function as representations either

by convention (like how words represent things, or how we might stipulate that we shall use a square in a diagram to represent one person and a squiggle to represent another person) or by *having some relevant features in common* (like how an image represents something). But conventional representations don't *reveal* anything about their prototypes. If you've never seen my wife, and I simply *stipulate* that we will use a squiggle in a diagram to represent her, I can't in seriousness point to the squiggle and ask you whether you think my wife is beautiful. I would have to *also stipulate* that my wife is beautiful, or you'd have no way to know. Her image in a photograph, however, represents her by *having something in common* with her (in this case, her visible form). So you can simply read off of the photograph the fact (as I take it to be) that my wife is beautiful. Because the photograph is beautiful for just the same reason as my wife is beautiful (i.e., in virtue of having the same visible form in virtue of which she herself is beautiful).

Part of the debate between the Arians and the Orthodox was over whether Christ represented the Father merely *by convention* or by *commonality*. If Christ is a creature, and does not share some element in common with God (i.e., the divine nature), then Christ can only represent God by convention. And so, in Himself, Christ *reveals* nothing about the Father. But if Christ has the divine nature in common with the Father, then we can, so to speak, "read off of" Him the attributes of the Father. Or as Christ Himself put it to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father". (John 14,9) Similarly, anyone who has seen a photograph of my wife, has seen my wife, who is "in" the photograph. (cf. John 14,10) If I ask you whether you think my wife is beautiful, after you've seen her (i.e., her image) in a photograph, you couldn't legitimately say, "I don't know; I've never seen her". You could say, "I've never seen her *in person*. I've only seen her *'in' a photograph*". But in that case, the correct response would be, "So what? You've seen her in the only sense in which you need to see her in order to answer the question whether she's beautiful".

If Christ represented the Father merely by convention, however, it would be hard to see how an encounter with Christ would count as a revelation of the Father, who cannot be seen (Ex. 33,20). It would be hard to reconcile Isaiah's claim "I saw Yahweh sitting on a throne" (Is. 6,1) with St. Paul's claim that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (i.e., God the Father) is one "whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (1 Tim. 6,16) or St. John's repeated claim that "No man has ever yet seen God" (1 John 4,12) and "No man has ever yet seen God; the only begotten Son . . . he hath declared him." (John 1,18) However, if Christ is, *by nature*, "the ikon of the invisible God," (Col 1,15), then it is obvious how He can reveal the Father, and how "he that hath seen me [Christ] hath seen the Father." (Joh n 14,9)

Unfortunately, there is not space to go into further detail on the mechanics of

Monarchical Trinitarianism here, nor the important issue of the visible Yahweh vs. the invisible Yahweh that appears both in late second Temple Judaism and again in the Arian controversy. But hopefully one will now have a rough idea how it works, how it might avoid some of the most obvious criticisms, and where to look for it in patristic sources. In any case, again, the point for present purposes is not to show that MT is true, that it's defensible, or even that it's necessarily a very good or interesting idea. The point is simply that it can and does count as a form of Trinitarianism.

9. Conclusion

The point of this discussion of MT was to show us just how different TT and UT (Tuggy's definitions) are from TB and UB (my definitions). All Monarchical models count as Trinitarian on TB (my definition), because the number of divine persons is exactly three and the number of gods exactly one. And no Monarchical models would count as Unitarian on UB (my definition), because the number of divine persons is not exactly one. But all Monarchical models count as *Unitarian* on UT (Tuggy's definition), because the relation between The One God and the Father is the relation of identity, rather than the relation of "containment" or "consisting of".

What's more, Tuggy's definitions also have the bizarre result that although *all* Monarchical models count as Unitarian, some will *also* count as Trinitarian (while some others won't). This will happen in any model in which a thing is allowed to "contain", "consist of", or "constitute" itself. In Rea and Brower's model the Father "constitutes" Himself as well as the Son and Spirit, since (just for simplicity's sake) they set up their metaphysics up such that things automatically constitute themselves. And, at least in some of Rea's iterations of the model, the individual named "God" is in fact the Father.[98] Thus, although Rea never explicitly asserts WMV, he asserts the semantic claim that SMV adds to it, and that results in his view counting as both Unitarian and Trinitarian by Tuggy's definitions. And since there is nothing about Rea's model that *conflicts* with WMV, it could simply be added in to get a form of MT, or not, with no obvious logical inconsistency in the model either way. The existence of such models as Rea's, models that count as both Unitarian and Trinitarian on Tuggy's definitions shows that, despite his claims to the contrary, Tuggy's definitions are *not* in fact logical contraries. They come together whenever

[98] For example, in Rea (2009, 405), Rea describes the three "central tenets" of the doctrine of the Trinity as, "(T1) There is exactly one God, the Father almighty. (T2) Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not identical. (T3) Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are consubstantial."

the One God is the Father, and God the Father bears the "containment / consisting of" relation (constitution, parthood, trope-sharing, or whatever it turns out to be) to Himself and the other two persons of the Trinity.

That Tuggy's definitions of "Unitarian" and "Trinitarian" fail to be logical contraries raises two problems. First, we must ask "Should it be even *logically* possible that a view could count as both Unitarian and Trinitarian at the same time?" I think even Tuggy ought to find this to be a flaw in his definitions. Thus, we should reject the definitions in any case.

Second, we should note that WIG ineliminably relies on using these "definitions" as, in fact, substantive premises. WIG begins with the premise that the New Testament authors identify the individual named "God" as the Father. It concludes that the New Testament authors were Unitarian and not (at least not consistently) Trinitarian. The missing premises, of course, are (1) Tuggy's definition of "Unitarian," from which he concludes the New Testament authors are Unitarian just by identifying God as the Father, and (2) a presupposition that if one is "Unitarian" in Tuggy's sense, then one cannot be "Trinitarian" in his sense. Since (2) is false, at best Tuggy can conclude that the New Testament authors were "Unitarian" in his sense of the term. But even on his own assumptions, they could still have been "Trinitarian," as he defines the term, just as Rea's model is both Unitarian and Trinitarian on Tuggy's definitions. And note that *this* point is not a matter of philosophical or metaphysical debate, nor about biblical exegesis. It is simply a point of logic that Tuggy's definitions are not logical contraries. So, his central argument that the New Testament authors could not have been Trinitarian simply fails, so long as he sticks to his definitions. (And for similar reasons, so do his arguments that Rea's model fails to be Trinitarian and that Tertullian was "not at all a Trinitarian.")

In conclusion, without keeping "one eye" on history, Tuggy's definitions may initially seem reasonable. But his substantive arguments really just amount to a Biblical case for the Strong Monarchy View (or at least, the semantic component of it). Coupled with definitions that rule out Monarchical models of the Trinity from even counting as Trinitarian, and reclassifying them as Unitarian, this obviously results in a bleak picture for "Trinitarianism" so defined. But when we take a closer look at the actual history of the doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine of the Monarchy of the Father—neglected in much of the analytic debate, and certainly by Tuggy—comes back into focus. Whether we conclude that Monarchical Trinitarianism just is "the" doctrine of the Trinity (that it is Trinitarian in a "narrow" sense), or whether we merely acknowledge that it is at least one legitimate *form* of Trinitarian Theology (that it is Trinitarian in a "broad" sense), in either case, Tuggy's central objection to Trinitarianism loses its force entirely. In sum, if we look at this debate in

philosophical theology from a more historically informed perspective, the landscape of the debate changes drastically. To sum it up in two words: History matters.

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