

The major anti-Nicene parties and a brief word of identification follows:

--Eunomians: they held the Son was in all points unlike the Father...

--Eudoxians: they taught the Son was like the Father but only in the sense of moral likeness...

--Macedonians: they argued against the deity of the Spirit and sometimes are called pneumatomachians...!

--Sabellians: they asserted the Son and the Spirit to be manifestations or modes of the Father...ways in which He disguised Himself for our good.

--Marcellians: They regarded the Kingdom of Christ to be temporal, not eternal, among other things.

--Photinians: they asserted Christ was a man possessed of the Logos in exceptional fulness, having a larger share of the wisdom of God but still not "God" as "god."

These all shared an anti-Nicene posture and would probably have been ineffectual if there had been no interference from the emperor and no state support of the church. But with the imperial variance and the lack of solid direction on the part of the bishops, cultic leaders with ideal groups could multiply and that is what caused this situation. You may find some interesting comparisons in that age and this!

b. The Apollinarian error

Apollinaris ( I spell his name in several variations--just one of those things I haven't mastered,) (d. 390), was a presbyter from Laodicea. He was orthodox on the Nicene question but was interested in further probing into the character of Christ. He concluded, in a rough sense, that the initiating factor of the Lord was the Logos, and that the body was merely an impersonal, non-responding vehicle for the Logos. Christ's body had no independent existence and had no corporeal responsibility. In this way Christ was not really human as are we. The teaching of Apollinarius ended to make Christ really God but not really man....and this of course was disruptive of the God/man image.

The teaching proved a great point of agitation and it still comes to the fore at times. It was close to docetism, the idea that Christ simply seemed to be a man...that the body was unreal. Apollinaris is really not docetic to that point. He admits of a body that is physical and in that sense human, but somehow only a transporting vehicle for the Divine Being. In the sense of humanity, Christ is utterly unlike us...not in the sense that He did not sin (which he did not) but in the sense that His physical form is of different mechanism and substance than is ours. The eastern church's greatest fathers of the time