

# Anomeans

also known as “Heterousians, Aetians, Eunomians”

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The Anomoeans was a religious group of the 4th century that represented an extreme form of Arianism. Arius and his followers, who formed the heresy of Arianism, believed that the essential difference between God and Christ was that God had always existed, while Christ was created by God. The Anomeans distorted the phraseology of the Nicene Creed the “Son of God, the only begotten of the Father” to mean that the Father as unbegotten and the Son being begotten made God the Father the source of the Son; therefore Father and Son are unlike (ἀνόμοιοι). Founder of the Anomoeans was Aëtius of Antioch, a man of lowly origins who worked as a vine-dresser, a goldsmith and a traveling doctor, until the year 350, when he was ordained a deacon by Leontius of Antioch. Aëtius held that God and Christ could not be alike. Since ingenerateness consists a crucial part of the essence of God, Christ could not be like God because he lacked this essential quality. The second leader of the Anomeans was Eunomius. This latter studied theology at Alexandria under Aëtius, and afterwards came under the influence of Eudoxius of Antioch, who ordained him deacon. He became Bishop of Cyzicus in 360. His works have been recovered from Basil of Caesarea’s and Gregory of Nyssa’s *Contra Eunomium*. Eunomius’s principal belief was the ingenerateness (ἀγεννησία) of God the Father. Being ingenerated, the Father could never come into contact or communicate His nature to generated beings. Therefore the Son is generated (γεννητός), created by the power of the Ingenerated Father. After his exposition of faith to emperor Theodosius in 383 Eunomius was sent into exile in Caesarea until his death in 394. His followers, condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 381, were called Anomoeans for they denied any substantial similarity between the Father and the Son. Since 398 several imperial edicts forbade the possession of his writings and holders of their copies were advised to burn them.



Date Range: 350 CE - 398 CE

Region: Anatolia

Region tags: Asia Minor, Anatolia, Cappadocia

The area of the expansion of the Anomeans

## Status of Participants:

✓ Elite    ✓ Religious Specialists    ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

## Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius: the extant works*, Oxford Early Christian Texts, éd. Oxford University Press, 1987
- Source 2: Gregori Nysseni Opera, Vol. I, *Contra Eunomium Libri*, (ed. W. Jaeger), Liber I&II, Leiden 1960
- Source 3: Gregori Nysseni Opera, Vol. II, *Contra Eunomium Libri*, (ed. W. Jaeger), Liber III. *Refutatio Confessionis Eunomii*, Leiden 1960.

Online sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1 URL: [https://www.tertullian.org/rpearse/manuscripts/eunomius\\_apology.htm](https://www.tertullian.org/rpearse/manuscripts/eunomius_apology.htm)
- Source 1 Description: Eunomius: the Manuscripts of the "First Apology"
- Source 2 URL: <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05605a.htm>
- Source 2 Description: Eunomianism, The Catholic Encyclopedia

Relevant online primary textual corpora (original languages and/or translations):

- Source 1 URL: <https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf205/npnf205>.
- Source 1 Description: Gregory of Nyssa: Dogmatic Treatises
- Source 2 URL: <https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf202.html>
- Source 2 Description: Socrates and Sozomenus Ecclesiastical Histories
- Source 3 URL: [https://www.tertullian.org/fathers/eunomius\\_apology00\\_intro.htm](https://www.tertullian.org/fathers/eunomius_apology00_intro.htm)
- Source 3 Description: Eunomius: The First Apology

## General Variables

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### Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

↳ Is the cultural contact competitive:

– Yes

Notes: Competitive, in the sense that every religious party claimed for itself the truth and the true faith.

↳ Is the cultural contact accommodating/pluralistic:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Is the cultural contact neutral:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– Yes

↳ Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– Yes

Notes: There have been violent conflicts throughout the region of Anatolia and throughout the crisis caused by the teachings of the Anomeans in the Church. Such clashes were instigated by both sides and included beatings, material damage, etc.

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

– No

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– Yes

Notes: One of the techniques that Anomeans -and Arians in general- used to attract/proselytize people was the fact that they highlighted the humility, suffering, and poverty of Jesus, pointing thus to the intimate bond that united the ordinary faithful and the Son of God. They also organized, which are described as poignant and dramatic, where they would have fostered feelings of fellowship and solidarity among their supporters. Furthermore, according to Church historians, the Anomeans sought the people "not only in churches, but in open meetings, assemblies, and going from house to house," visiting the faithful, linking up with them, and presumably also making arrangements to tend to the needy and the ill.

↳ Is proselytizing mandated for religious professionals:

– Yes

↳ Is proselytizing mandated for all adherents:

– Yes

↳ Is missionary work mandated for religious professionals:

– No

Notes: There is no such thing as a "mission", "missionary work" or "missionaries" as we understand it today.

↳ Is missionary work mandated for all adherents:

– No

Notes: There is no such thing as a "mission", "missionary work" or "missionaries" as we understand it today.

↳ Is proselytization coercive:

– No

Does the religion have official political support

– Yes

↳ Are the priests paid by polity:

– Yes

↳ Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:

– Yes

↳ Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:

– No

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

– No

↳ Is religious observance enforced by the polity:

– No

↳ Polity legal code is roughly coterminous with religious code:

– No

↳ Polity provides preferential economic treatment (e.g. tax, exemption)

– Yes

Notes: With a series of decrees, the emperor Constantine imposed heavy taxation to the opponents of the Orthodox Church, i.e. heretics such as the Anomeans.

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– No

## Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

## Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also “oral scriptures” (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– Yes

↳ Are they written:

– Yes

↳ Are they oral:

– No

↳ Is there a story (or a set of stories) associated with the origin of scripture:

– Yes

Notes: The Anomeans actually had the same Holy Bible (Old and New Testament) as all other Christians. The only difference was that they interpreted Bible in their own way and with their own presuppositions.

↳ Revealed by a high god:

– Yes

↳ Revealed by other supernatural being:

– Yes

Notes: By the Holy Spirit

↳ Inspired by high god:

– Yes

↳ Inspired by other supernatural being:

– Yes

Notes: By the Holy Spirit

↳ Originated from divine or semi-divine human beings:

– No

↳ Originated from non-divine human being:

– No

## Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– Yes

Notes: Since the Anomeans were considered Christians and could be elected as deacons, priests and bishops, the religious monuments they used were the Christian churches in the region of Anatolia. The only difference was the interpretation they gave to the nature of Christ. There is not, therefore, a significant difference in the performance of the sacraments or in the use of the temples in general. Nor did their belief in the unlike nature of Christ presupposed a different or special arrangement of the temples.

↳ In the average settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– I don't know

↳ Size of largest single religious monument, square meters:

– I don't know

↳ Height of largest single religious monument, meters:

– I don't know

↳ Size of average monument, square meters:

– I don't know

↳ Height of average monument, meters:

– I don't know

↳ In the largest settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– I don't know

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– No

Is iconography present:

– Field doesn't know

## Beliefs

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## Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body:

– Yes

↳ Other spirit-body relationship:

– Field doesn't know

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: Apart from the fact that Christ was unlike the Father, so he was not God in the sense that the Orthodox faith believed He was, the Anomeans did not radically differ in matters of faith from the "official" Orthodox Church. Hence, they believed in afterlife. However, a key paradox of this belief, which was used as an argument by the opponents of the Anomeans, was the fact that, since Christ was not properly God, it follows that his resurrection has absolutely no significance for the salvation and the eternal life promised to the Christians.

↳ Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– No

Reincarnation in this world:

– No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– No

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– No

Are grave goods present:

– No

Are formal burials present:

– No

## Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is anthropomorphic:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is a sky deity:

– No

↳ The supreme high god is chthonic (of the underworld):

– No

↳ The supreme high god is fused with the monarch (king=high god):

– No

↳ The monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god:

– No

↳ The supreme high god is a kin relation to elites:

– No

↳ The supreme high god has another type of loyalty-connection to elites:

– No

↳ The supreme high god is unquestionably good:



– Yes

↳ Other feature(s) of supreme high god:

– No

Notes: According to the Anomeans, the divine ingenerateness is not just one of many predicates of deity. On the contrary, it is the primary and defining predicate, superior to all others. God's being simply is unbegottenness.

↳ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ The supreme god's knowledge is restricted to particular domain of human affairs:

– No

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

– No

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is unrestricted outside of sample region:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god knows your basic character (personal essence):

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god knows what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god has other knowledge of this world:

– Field doesn't know

↳ The supreme high god has deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god can reward:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god can punish:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god has indirect causal efficacy in the world:

– Field doesn't know

↳ The supreme high god exhibits positive emotion:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god exhibits negative emotion:

– No

↳ The supreme high god possesses hunger:

– No

↳ Is it permissible to worship supernatural beings other than the high god:

– Yes

Notes: The Son, i.e. Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Although neither Jesus Christ nor the Holy Spirit share or possess the divine essence. Because both derive their origin from God, both must be creatures made by God, though enjoying the highest positions in the creaturely hierarchy. They could be worshipped therefore, but not in the same manner as the supreme God.

↳ The supreme high god possesses/exhibits some other feature:

– No

Notes: According to the Anomeans, the divine ingenerateness is not just one of many predicates of deity. On the contrary, it is the primary and defining predicate, superior to all others. God's being simply is unbegottenness.

↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– No

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

– No

↳ Mixed human-divine beings are present:

– No

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:

– No

### Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– No

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– No

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– No

### Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– No

Notes: In essence no. For Christian faith, Jesus Christ is the messiah. Since the Anomeans held that only God the Father was the true God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit were created beings, it follows that Jesus can not be the messiah. Christ frees man from death, definitively transforming him by means of a new birth in baptism, and filling him with all kinds of goods, including the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. This requires not only that Christ have the creative power capable of transforming the body from death into eternal life, but that he be God.

### Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– No

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

– No

## Practices

### Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of property/valuable items:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require physical risk taking:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require accepting ethical precepts:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require marginalization by out-group members:

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:  
i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale “ceremonies” and “festivals.”

– Yes

↳ On average, for large-scale rituals how many participants gather in one location:

– Field doesn't know

↳ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to large-scale rituals.

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there orthodoxy checks:

Orthodoxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are interpreted in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper interpretation, etc.

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there orthopraxy checks:

Orthopraxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are performed in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper procedure, etc.

– Field doesn't know

↳ Does participation entail synchronic practices:

– No

↳ Is there use of intoxicants:

– No

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:

E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.

– No

Does the group employ fictive kinship terminology:

– No

## Society and Institutions

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## Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

– An empire

Notes: Arianism and its branches, such as the Anomeans, involved most church members: from simple people, priests, and monks to bishops, emperors, and members of the imperial family. Two Roman emperors, Constantius II and Valens, became Arians or Semi-Arians, as did prominent Gothic, Vandal, and Lombard warlords. So deep was the controversy within the Church that it involved more or less the entire Empire.

## Welfare

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized famine relief:

– Yes

Notes: Most probably yes. In order to win popularity among the people, the Anomeans promoted charitable activities in great cities such as Constantinople, Antioch, Sebasteia etc. The foundation of houses for the poor (ptochotropheion or ptocheion) indicates that there the Anomeans fed and housed the ill and the needy.

Is famine relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized poverty relief:

– Yes

Notes: Most probably yes. In order to win popularity among the people, the Anomeans promoted charitable activities in great cities such as Constantinople, Antioch, Sebasteia etc. The foundation of houses for the poor (ptochotropheion or ptocheion) indicates that there the Anomeans fed and housed the ill and the needy.

Is poverty relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm:

– Yes

Notes: In order to win popularity among the people, the Anomeans promoted charitable activities in great cities such as Constantinople, Antioch, Sebasteia etc. The foundation of houses for the poor (ptochotropheion or ptocheion) indicates that there the Anomeans fed and housed the ill and the needy. It should be mentioned, furthermore, that Aetius, the founder of the Anomeans, was a trained physician. He is claimed to have practiced medicine in the poorhouses of the Christian Church in Antioch, as well as elsewhere. Practicing free medicinal aid for the poor and the needy helped Aetius

gain popularity and eventually propagate his theological views.

Is institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– No

Notes: Not exactly. The leaders of the Anomeans received the official education of the Empire. However, they received special education -so to speak- next to bishops, followers of Arianism. Aëtius, the founder of the Anomeans, studied successively under the Arian bishops Athanasius of Anazarbus and the presbyter Antonius of Tarsus. Eunomius, Aëtius's disciple and leader of the Anomeans, studied theology at Alexandria next to Aëtius and afterwards came under the influence of Eudoxius of Antioch, also an Arian and disciple of Aëtius as well.

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

– Yes



Is extra-religious education open to both males and females:

– Field doesn't know

## Bureaucracy

Do the group's adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

– Yes

Do the group's adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:

– Yes

## Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– Yes

Notes: Most probably yes. Throughout many of the major cities of Anatolia, in their attempt to win control over the local Church bureaucracy and to gain favor with the people and support from the imperial authorities, the Anomeans promoted charitable activities for the poor and the needy.



Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

– Field doesn't know

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– Field doesn't know

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

## **Taxation**

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

– No

Are taxes levied on the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

## **Enforcement**

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– No

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– I don't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– No

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– I don't know

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

– No

Are the group's adherents subject to institutionalized punishment enforced by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: As citizens of the Roman (Byzantine) Empire, the Anomeans and their followers were subject to the Roman law like everybody else.

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include execution:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include exile:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include corporal punishments:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include ostracism:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include seizure of property:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

– No

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

## Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

– No

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: The Anomeans, like every citizen of the Roman (Byzantine) Empire had the opportunity or/and the obligation to join the army of the Empire. There were no religious prohibitions or restrictions that would prevent a member from joining the army

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

### Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– No

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: The Anomeans used by and large the Greek language.

Is a non-religion-specific written language used by the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

### Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

– No

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

### Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– No

Is food provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

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