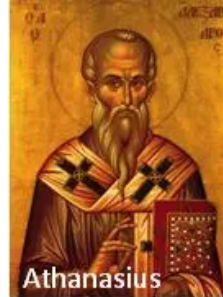


## The Arian Controversy with Alex Hall

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Alex Hall of London tells the story of how the church vacillated between Arius and Athanasius during the fourth century. By focusing on the dueling councils during that period (a.d. 318-381) Alex paints a picture, which, although disturbing to those of us who would like to think that such



matters as the deity of Christ were always clear, accurately describes how politics heavily influenced the development of theology during that time. A good deal of Alex's work was influenced by [When Jesus Became God](#) by Richard Rubenstein. If this conversation has piqued your interest in this subject I highly recommend reading Rubenstein's book as it fills out the details in a readable manner. Alex's conclusion is that we should not trust either side since both used ungodly means to achieve their goal of winning the debate, rather, we should practice the Berean exercise of searching the Scriptures to see whether these things are so (Acts 17.11).

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### 4 Responses to *The Arian Controversy with Alex Hall*

#### **Xavier** says:

June 7, 2009 at 10:11 am



Constantine convened the council with his new eastern ally and brother-in-law, Licinius who was seen as both a liberator of the eastern provinces [from persecutions by Maximinus Daia in 313], to arch enemy of the great hero Constantine in 324. What is known about the Council is based on fragmentary comments by a few bishops who attended the meetings. Description of it are to be found, inter alia, in Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3d ed., pp 205-262; Hanson, *Search*, pp 152-207; Barnes, *Constantine & Eusebius*, pp 208-223.

The historical accounts pertaining to Licinius are bias towards a man who patronized pagan philosophers and exercised toleration towards his Christians subjects. His influence, if any, is thwarted by the shadow of his partner's vastly superior and more ambitious goals.

The character of Constantine is difficult to assess and so are his motivations. Much is veiled behind partisan eulogies like Eusebius'. There is no reason to doubt his sincere religious conviction but he was first and foremost a propagandist, gifted military commander and unscrupulous, determined manipulator:

"[His] chief concern was that a divided church would offend the Christian God [bringing] divine vengeance upon [Rome and himself]...Schism [he believed], was inspired by Satan". The New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 16, Macropaedia: Knowledge in Depth, 1991, pp. 688-689.

The crisis of the later Roman Empire and move towards the east brought a "new realism" which may have inclined Christians to accept the new theological doctrine espoused by the 'Cappadocian Fathers'.

**Reply**

**Frank says:**

June 28, 2009 at 8:31 am



Alex & Sean, Any other books you can recommend on early church history?

**Reply**

**Rick says:**

July 4, 2009 at 10:53 pm



When Jesus Became God by Richard E Rubenstein is pretty good.

**Reply**

**Frank D says:**

July 9, 2009 at 8:11 am



Just order it. Thanks, Rick.

**Reply**