The Athanasian corpus contains a homily entitled *Contra Sabellianos*; and among Basil of Caesarea's homilies is one entitled *Contra Sabellianos et Arium et Anomoeos*.\(^1\) At more than a dozen places the two homilies agree verbatim, or almost so, making it clear that the author of one homily had the text of the other before him as he wrote, and copied from it.

Montfaucon, the Maurist editor of Athanasius's works, recognized this relationship. In his *monitum* to the *Contra Sabellianos* (see below), he compared the *C. Sab.* with Basil's homily and concluded that the *C. Sab.* was spurious and dependent upon Basil's homily. No one since Montfaucon, at the end of the seventeenth century, has published a study of the relationship between the two homilies. Maurice Geerard, in his monumental *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, simply quotes Montfaucon's *monitum* at his entry for the *C. Sab.*

But the relationship of the two homilies is eminently worth reexamining. As H. Dörries (among others) has shown, Basil's homily is important for understanding his doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Further, fourth-century anti-Sabellian polemic is actually directed against Marcellus of Ancyra; and opposition to Marcellus was one of the forces that shaped fourth-century theology. Finally, if the *C. Sab.* should prove to be the source of Basil's *C. Sab. et Ar. et An.*, then new light may be shed on the development of Basil's thought.

There has been little analytic study of the *C. Sab.*, and no comparative study of the two homilies. Moreover, the parallel passages in the two homilies have never been identified and compared. What follows is meant to fill both gaps. After a short survey of the literature, this study will proceed in three steps: firstly, a separate analysis of each homily that will situate it within the history of doctrinal controversy and
provide a detailed outline; secondly, a listing and analysis of seventeen parallel passages; and thirdly, a comparative study of the theological vocabulary of the two homilies. Finally, some conclusions are drawn.

I. HISTORY OF THE QUESTION

In his monitum to the C. Sab., Montfaucon proposed a theory about its relationship to Basil’s C. Sab. et Ar. et An. One work, he wrote, must have the other as its source: both use the same arguments to refute their opponents, and both quote the same texts from Scripture in the same order. He reasoned further that one of the two must be unauthentic, and concluded that it is the homily attributed to Athanasius. Basil’s homily, he writes, is clearly authentic. The polemic against the Anomoeans fits Basil’s situation exactly. Moreover Basil, eloquent and learned as he was, would never have copied slavishly from someone else’s work, “adorned himself with someone else’s feathers,” as Montfaucon writes. The style of the C. Sab., on the other hand, is distinctly different from Athanasius’s. Moreover, its theme is not Athanasian: that is, Athanasius nowhere else refutes the “Sabellian” thesis that Father and Son are one person, distinguished in name only. (This, however, is not exactly the doctrine that Ps-Ath. refutes.) Montfaucon concludes that Basil’s homily is authentic, and the C. Sab. unauthentic and later than Basil’s homily; a forger, a Graeculus, reworked Basil’s homily and attributed his work to Athanasius. This forger concealed his deception by removing all references to the Anomoeans. (The difficulties of this argument are considered below.)

Theodor Zahn, in a casual remark, considered the two homilies simply two different versions of the same work.

In 1956 Hermann Dörries analyzed Basil’s homily for its doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Dörries shows a close relationship between the homily and chapter 18 of Basil’s De spiritu sancto, and concludes that either Basil preached the homily as he was writing chapter 18, or he used his own homily, preached earlier, as a source for chapter 18. The homily, Dörries writes, cannot be much later than De spiritu sancto, because the controversy with the Pneumatomachi is presented as a topic that the community is eager to hear about.

Jean Bernardi, in his book on the Cappadocians as preachers, analyzes the rhetorical elements of Basil’s homily, and dates it in the last