Ignatius of Antioch & the Church of the Martyrs

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1. CHRISTIANITY & CLASSICAL CULTURE

Robert Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003). We are so used to hearing how Christians viewed Christ and how Christians viewed themselves that we are liable not to understand why Christians were persecuted or disliked or simply ignored. This book is good in the way it shows how outsiders viewed Christ, the Church, and Christian doctrines.


Bibliographies for Theology, compiled by William Harmless, S.J.


Kevin Corrigan, *Reading Plotinus: A Practical Introduction to Neoplatonism* (Purdue University Press, 2005).


2. PERSECUTION & MARTYRDOM

Texts & Translations

Herbert Musurillo, ed., *Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (reprint: New York: Oxford University Press). This is most comprehensive compilation of the accounts of the early martyrs. It has the Greek and Latin texts, with translations on facing pages.

Studies


R. Selinger, *The Mid-Third Century Persecutions of Decius and Valerian* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2002).


### 3. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (d. ca. 110), dictated a set of seven letters while under arrest and on route to his martyrdom in Rome. His letters offer fascinating glimpses of the 2nd-century church and its emerging leadership structures of bishop, presbyter, and deacon. They also illustrate emerging disputes on christology, on eucharist, and the status of the martyr.

**Texts & Translations**


**Studies**


4. **JUSTIN MARTYR**

Justin (d.165), a native of Samaria, was a pioneer of early Christian apologetics and emblematic of the effort of early Christian intellectuals to bring the Christian message to the wider Roman world in a way that was intellectually coherent and that addressed an array of philosophical concerns and issues. Justin portrayed Christianity as a "philosophy," both a wise way of thinking and a wise way of living. In so doing, he carried on intriguing and hospitable dialogues with both Jews and pagans. He would be martyred in Rome in the mid-2nd cent.

**Texts**


**Translations**


Studies


Sara Parvis and Paul Foster, eds., *Justin Martyr and His Worlds* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007).

5. GNOSTICISM & MANICHAEISM

Texts


Translations

Bentley Layton, ed., *The Gnostic Scriptures: A New Translation with Annotations and Introductions*, Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1995). In 1945, there was an extraordinary chance discovery of an ancient gnostic library at Nag Hammadi, at the bend of the Nile River. For the first time, scholars could read the gnostics in their own words—as opposed to those of their opponents. This discovery has helped transform our understanding of 2nd-century Christianity. This fine volume by Layton contains good translations not only of key Nag Hammadi texts, but also of other gnostic texts. His valuable introduction puts forth his distinctive views on Valentinus and his disciples and their contribution to shaping gnostic theology and disseminating gnostic views.


Studies

David Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2011). This is a major study that brings together findings of the last 50 years that have revolutionized our understanding of the so-called "Gnostics", their diversity and their challenge to the 2nd-century Christian movement. Brakke, the current editor of the *Journal of Early Christian Studies* is an unusually gifted, lucid writer and brings his considerable skills to sorting through contemporary scholarship on the Gnostics.


Bibliographies for Theology, compiled by William Harmless, S.J.


6. IRENAEUS OF LYONS

Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 130-200) formulated the classic Christian defense against the gnostics: that to be orthodox one must accept the tradition of teaching that has come to us from the apostles via public channels (the bishops, the books we now call the New Testament, and the "rule of faith" or Creed).

**Texts**


**Translations**


D.J. Unger, trans., *St. Irenaeus of Lyons Against the Heresies*, revised by J.J. Dillon, Ancient Christian Writers 55 (New York: Paulist, 1992) [Book1 only].

### Studies


M.C. Steenberg, *Of God and Man: Theology As Anthropology from Irenaeus to Athanasius* (New York: T&T Clark / Continuum, 2009).


### 7. OTHER APOSTOLIC FATHERS & APOLOGISTS: TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

*Oxford Apostolic Fathers* series, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011- ). This new series offers critical editions of the Greek texts of the Apostolic Fathers, with a facing English translation, together with detailed introductions and commentary. These should serve as the starting point for any study. There are three volumes to date:

• Clayton N. Jefford, ed., *The Epistle to Diognetus (with the Fragment of Quadratus): Introduction, Text and Commentary* (2013) hardcover, $185. NEW.


8. OTHER APOSTOLIC FATHERS & APOLOGISTS: STUDIES


K. Berding, Polycarp and Paul: An Analysis of Their Literary and Theological Relationship in Light of Polycarp’s Use of Biblical and Extra-biblical Literature, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 62 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2002).

Allen Brent, Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension Before the Emergence of a Monarch Bishop, Supplements to the Vigiliae Christianae 31 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995).


P. Henne, La christologie chez Clément de Rome et dans le Pasteur d’Hermas, Par. 33 (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1992).


