

The following is an excerpt from *Ignatius Of Antioch And The Arian Controversy* ~by Paul Gilliam ~from <https://brill.com/>

Edit: The nine numbered footnotes are consolidated at the end of excerpt.

Begin Excerpt:

We come now to the end of our study devoted to Ignatius of Antioch and the Arian controversy. The primary gain to scholarship this study provides is the demonstration of a fourth-century controversy surrounding the second century martyr Ignatius of Antioch. I have argued that Ignatius of Antioch was one battleground upon which the Arian controversy was waged. In the process of this demonstration, I have offered an alternative historical reconstruction of the role of Ignatius of Antioch in the fourth century to that of James D. Smith III. In contrast with my interpretation of the evidence that Ignatius of Antioch was a battleground figure during the fourth century, Smith contends that Ignatius was an obscure figure until the rediscovery of his relics in the cemetery just outside the Daphnetic gate sometime during the period 364–373.¹

The details of my argument are found in the preceding chapters. Here I offer a summary of the major points made in this study that illuminate the battle-ground that Ignatius of Antioch became in the fourth century. I am persuaded that Smith's thesis that Ignatius of Antioch was an obscure figure until the last thirty-six years, or possibly even the last twenty-seven years, of the fourth century is impossible.

Eusebius of Caesarea

We saw that Eusebius of Caesarea gives considerable attention to Ignatius of Antioch. He mentions Ignatius briefly in his *Chronicon*. Eusebius also makes a brief mention of Ignatius on three different occasions in his *Historia ecclesiastica* (3.22, 3.38, and 5.8). In yet a fourth reference, Eusebius quotes at length from Ignatius' letter to the Roman church (3.36). Eusebius also quotes *Ephesians* 19.1 in his *Questions and Answers on the Genealogy of our Savior Addressed to Stephanus*. We heard Timothy Barnes date the first edition of Eusebius' *Chronicon* and his *Historia ecclesiastica* to the years just before 300.² Barnes dates Eusebius' *Questions and Answers on the Genealogy of our Savior Addressed to Stephanus* to around 320.³ With this much attention given to Ignatius in the writings of one who was such a key figure in the early stages of the fourth century Christological debates, it is difficult to see how Ignatius could have been obscure anywhere in the eastern half of the Roman empire. This is especially so given the popularity of his theological works and in particular his *Historia ecclesiastica*. Furthermore, due to the lamentable relationship Eusebius shared with Eustathius of Antioch (bishop 324–331 or 324–327)⁴ and the laudable relationship he shared with Paulinus of Tyre (predecessor or successor to Eustathius as bishop of Antioch),⁵ it is hard to believe that the churches in Antioch would not have been acquainted with Ignatius of Antioch via Eusebius' *Historia ecclesiastica* alone.

Fourth-Century Ignatian Quotations and Allusions

Besides Eusebius of Caesarea, we observed that there are numerous additional fourth century personalities who either mention Ignatius by name, or, at least arguably include allusions to Ignatius' works in their own. For example, Athanasius of Alexander calls Ignatius by name and quotes from Ignatius' letter to the Ephesian church in his *De synodis*. We saw that it is significant that Athanasius does so in the context of an argument from authority which implies that Athanasius' opponents also grant to Ignatius a place of great importance.

The most interesting figure, in light of the historical reconstruction found in this study, which may allude to Ignatius is Cyril of Jerusalem. If indeed Cyril alludes to Ignatius' writings there is no twenty-year period in the fourth century where Ignatius is not considered a figure of interest and authority. In relation to Cyril's use of Ignatius we concluded that it is possible, though not definite, that he refers to the long recension of Ignatius' works. Cyril's own Christology would have been compatible with that found in the Ignatian long recension. Therefore, Cyril may serve as additional evidence for an earlier dating of the long recension than Smith allows.

Ignatius of Antioch: A Battleground

However, the major focus of the argument found in this study is not that Ignatius of Antioch was a well-known personality throughout the fourth century. The major contribution of this study is that Ignatius of Antioch represents one battleground upon which fourth-century theologians fought for their understanding of correct belief concerning the relationship of the Son to the Father.

In the opening chapter of this study I drew attention to fourteen places, within the textual tradition of the middle recension of Ignatius of Antioch's letters, where Ignatius is said to have referred to Jesus as "God." Of these fourteen places, we observed that three of them contain no variants (*Eph* 18.2, *Rom.* Inscription (1), and *Poly* 8.1). The remaining eleven do contain significant variants (*Eph* 1.1; *Rom* 6.3; *Eph.* Inscription; *Rom.* Inscription (2), 3.3, and 7.3; *Trall* 7.1; *Smyrn* 10.1, 6.1, 1.1 and *Rom* 9.1). The point of this discussion was to lay out the evidence for what I conclude represents a scribal intensification of Ignatius' God language due to Christological concerns of the fourth century.

I then turned attention to four places within the textual tradition of the Ignatian middle recension where Christological variants related to specific texts can be traced to the fourth-century Arian controversy with a high degree of certainty (*Magn* 8.2; *Eph* 7.2; *Magn* 7.1; *Magn* 13.2). I referred to these as "Free Standing Arian Controversy Variants." I employed this rubric in order to indicate that the variants corresponding to these texts can be traced back to the Arian controversy in and of themselves. This is in contrast with the "God Language Variants," which can only be traced to fourth-century with confidence when placed alongside the "Free Standing Arian Controversy Variants."

The primary goal of this chapter was to demonstrate that the Ignatian middle recension comes to us with battle wounds that can be traced back to the Arian controversy. In contrast with the Ignatian long recension, however, it is the pro-Nicene party that is responsible for these remarkable variants. Furthermore, because some of these variants can be traced to concerns over Marcellus of Ancyra, I concluded that these variants began to enter into the manuscript tradition sometime during the first half of the fourth century.

In my efforts to bring to light the battle for Ignatius in the fourth century, I then dedicated two chapters to the Ignatian long recension. I argued that the Ignatian long recension represents a response to the work of the pro-Nicene party on the seven 'authentic' letters of Ignatius. The non-Nicene person or persons responsible for the interpolations and the forgeries found in the Ignatian long recension went about their work due to their perception of textual corruptions (unintentional) and textual alterations (intentional) to the authentic letters of Ignatius. I referred to the efforts of the interpolator/forgery with the rubrics "Christological Demarcation" and "Basic Clarification." In addition, I concluded that the Ignatian long recension was composed in the following manner: the person responsible for the interpolations

and the forgeries went about his work by first cleaning up and clarifying the text of the middle recension. He then added the interpolations and the forgeries.

In contrast with the consensus view that the Ignatian long recension emerged sometime during the last quarter of the fourth century, I argued that it is likely, though not definite, that the Ignatian long recension emerged shortly after the *Macrosthichos* Creed of Antioch 344. The reason I think this likely is because of the Christological match between the *Macrosthichos* and the Ignatian long recension. After detailing the Christological similarities between these two documents, I then embraced the view of Arnold Amelungk that the *Macrosthichos* was a source for the interpolator/forger of the Ignatian long recension.⁶ If this is the case, there is no reason why the Ignatian long recension could not have been in circulation by 350, perhaps a year or two sooner.

My interpretation of the Ignatian long recension parted company with that of James D. Smith III on two fronts. The first, of course, is the date. He dates it to sometime between 364–373. While a date this late is still a possibility within the historical reconstruction of this study, a date of approximately fifteen to twenty-five years earlier is made possible and seems plausible. In light of the historical reconstruction found in this study, it is significant that Smith makes no mention of Arnold Amelungk's work anywhere in his thesis. Second Smith labels the Christology of the Ignatian long recension with an established fourth-century category. Smith calls the Christology of the Ignatian long recension *homoian*.⁷ As such he embraces the opinion of Lightfoot that the Ignatian long recension represents an "eirenicon."⁸ In contrast with Smith and Lightfoot, I have argued that the Christology of the Ignatian long recension (and the *Macrosthichos*) comes from the time before the clear differentiation of the Christology of the non-Nicenes from 357 onwards. The authors of the *Macrosthichos* and, I have argued, the Ignatian long recension, are both trying to recover what they see as an earlier manner of Christological thinking still, before the Nicene crisis erupted. This manner of thinking enabled the paradox of the Son's equality to the Father and the Son's subordination to the Father to remain in place. In chapter two, I demonstrated this pattern of the Son's equality and subordination found within the Ignatian long recension via a Christological profile. In chapter three, I pointed to the same pattern in the *Macrosthichos*.

Not only does Eusebius of Caesarea engage with Ignatius of Antioch in the early fourth century but so does Athanasius of Alexandria engage with Ignatius of Antioch towards the close of the 350s in his *De synodis*. While Eusebius gives us more information about Ignatius of Antioch in his writings, Athanasius explicitly draws Ignatius into his corner as he battles for the accuracy of the Nicene *homoousios* even though *homoousios* had been declared out of bounds during the third-century debates over Paul of Samosota. Thus we were given more exposure to the battle over Ignatius in the fourth century via the embrace of Ignatius by the Nicene Athanasius of Alexandria and the non-Nicene Eusebius of Caesarea.

According to my reading of the evidence, all of the above fourth-century turmoil over Ignatius occurred many years before James D. Smith III suggests Ignatius became a popular figure. Smith suggests that Ignatius was obscure before the period 364–373. Yet I have argued that pro-Nicene proponents had intentionally altered the middle recension of Ignatius' letters sometime during the debates surrounding Marcellus of Ancyra, which were at their most intense from 336–345. Furthermore I see no reason why the Ignatian long recension could not date to a similar time period due to its close affinity with the *Macrosthichos* of Antioch 344. Thus, the Ignatian long recension was in circulation soon after the pro-Nicene tampering with the Ignatian middle recension. And all of this could have occurred as early as the 350s, or even a couple of years sooner, but certainly before 364.

As we moved into the evidence found in the time period that Smith assigns to the reemergence of Ignatius' popularity—the last quarter of the fourth century—alarms continued to sound in relation to Smith's thesis that Ignatius was an obscure figure for most of the fourth century. To the contrary, I argued that Ignatius was still such a battleground figure during the last quarter of the fourth century that John Chrysostom, presbyter in Antioch 386–397, found it necessary to defend Ignatius' character before he could put him forward as a model Christian in his *In sanctum Ignatium martyrem*.

We heard Smith date Chrysostom's *In sanctum Ignatium* to sometime after Jerome's *De viris illustribus*. It is here that Jerome mentions Ignatius' remains lying in Antioch outside the Daphnetic gate in the cemetery. Smith dates *De viris illustribus* to 392. Therefore Chrysostom's sermon could be as late as the last year of John Chrysostom's service as presbyter in Antioch—397. Yet, Smith makes no mention of Eduard Schwartz's *Christliche und Jüdische Ostertafeln*.⁹ In this work, Schwartz persuasively argues that Chrysostom preached his *In sanctum Ignatium* on 17 October 386—the first year of Chrysostom's service as presbyter in Antioch. A date of post 392 for Chrysostom's *In sanctum Ignatium* is friendlier towards Smith's theory of Ignatius' obscurity until 364–373 because by the time of *In sanctum Ignatium* there is clearly a cult of Ignatius. A date of 386 does not necessarily negate Smith's theory but it does raise a question that threatens Smith's theory: how many years before 386 was a cult of Ignatius in existence?

While a date of 386 may not prove Smith's theory wrong, the existence of *British Museum Add. 12,150* a well-known Syriac manuscript dated to 411, with the dates for the church's remembrance of Pelagia's martyrdom on 8 October and Ignatius' martyrdom on 17 October does. This manuscript, discussed in detail in the concluding chapter, serves as evidence that Ignatius' martyrdom was a fixture on the ecclesiastical calendar by the mid fourth century. I note that this date of the mid-fourth century coincides nicely with my proposal that the Ignatian long recension could have been in circulation by then. It appears that there was much interest in Ignatius of Antioch by the middle of the fourth century.

There has been no dearth of scholarly interest in Ignatius of Antioch or in the Arian controversy because both represent captivating areas of inquiry. However, until now, there has been no detailed investigation into the role Ignatius played in the Arian controversy over the course of the entire fourth century. I do not mean to suggest that my work is comprehensive. It is not. There are numerous leads that other scholars could pursue in relation to Ignatius' fourth-century life. I will be grateful if my work inspires such pursuits. Nonetheless, until now the work that has been done on the Ignatius of the fourth century has been mostly limited to the Ignatian long recension. And even here there has not been an abundance of research carried out. As stated in the introduction, I suspect this is due to current scholarly interest in the historical Ignatius that has been maintained since Lightfoot.

The goal of this study has been to demonstrate that there is much more to say about the fourth-century Ignatius than his manifestation in the Ignatian long recension. Indeed, the Ignatian long recension represents just one manner in which Ignatius was used during the fourth century. Some of the debates remain hidden and we have to rely for a glimpse of them on surmise and allusion. But I trust this study has clearly demonstrated that we can now say that Ignatius of Antioch was one battleground upon which proponents of pro-Nicene and non-Nicene Christologies faced off.

Footnotes:

1. James David Smith III, "The Ignatian Long Recension and Christian Communities in Fourth Century Syrian Antioch" (Th.D. diss., Harvard University, 1986). I note a similar type of scholarly disagreement pointed to by Aideen M. Hartney. After a careful

consideration of the evidence, Hartney can not agree with Peter Brown's assessment that "Chrysostom's preaching sounded the death knell of the ancient city." Rather, according to Hartney "Chrysostom does not speak of an entirely new city where everyone will be poor and humble, but rather a more ordered version of what currently exists, and where there will always be a more well-off group of people who will bestow the alms needed by their poorer counterparts." She goes on to list numerous other places where she reads the evidence in the entirely opposite direction than Brown. See Aideen M. Hartney, *John Chrysostom and the Transformation of the City* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 2004), 190–191. In a similar manner I have offered an entirely alternative historical reconstruction of Ignatius' place in the fourth century to that of James D. Smith III.

2. Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1981), 111 and 277.
3. *Ibid.*, 122.
4. For the debate over the date of Eustathius' deposition as bishop of Antioch see Henry Chadwick, "The Fall of Eustathius of Antioch," *Journal of Theological Studies* 49 (1948): 27–35 and R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318–381* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988; repr. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 209–210. For a more recent discussion see Sara Parvis, *Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325–345* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 101–107. She favors a date of October 327 for the deposition of Eustathius.
5. For a detailed discussion over the issue of whether Paulinus of Tyre preceded or succeeded Eustathius as bishop of Antioch see Richard Burgess, *Studies in Eusebian and post-Eusebian Chronology* (Historia—Einzelschriften Series 135; Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999), 184–191. Burgess concludes that Paulinus preceded Eustathius. Whatever the case, Eusebius dedicated book ten of his *Historia ecclesiastica* to Paulinus as well as his *Onomasticon*.
6. Arnold Amelung, *Untersuchungen Über Pseudo-Ignatius* (Marburg: G. Otto's Hofbuchdruckerei In Darmstadt, 1899; repr., Kessinger Publishing's Legacy Reprints), 71.
7. See Smith, "The Ignatian Long Recension," 94–129.
8. J.B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers* (Part 2, 3 vols.; *Ignatius, St. Polycarp*; 2nd ed.; London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1889), 2.1.273.
9. Eduard Schwartz, *Christliche und Jüdische Ostertafeln* (Der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften Zur Göttingen Philologisch-Historische Klasse; Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1905).

End Excerpt.