

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY. MAJOR FIGURES

Clement of Rome 95 AD to Corinthians: earliest non-NT text?

Tells of death of Peter and Paul. Corinth had dismissed its presbyters.
Presbyter/episcopos

Ignatius 100AD To the Trallians

Threefold hierarchical ministry.

Marcion

Strict logic of dualism, OT evil creator of matter, Jesus was a God of Love.

Justin 150 Apology :

Always the Syrian philosopher. Plato largely right but not Grk myths. Nothing secret about Liturgy. Father is God transcendent, Son is God immanent.
Moulded the thought of Irenaeus.

But concern that Justin had said that Son was not the Father – a variety of Modalist (same God in different modes) groups arose. Sabellius.
Monarchians,

Pliny the Younger to Trajan: 'Nothing but a perverse superstition'
Celsus 170; Porphyry 250: objections to faith.

Clement of Alexandria 190AD

Poetic language necessary for theology. God of good creation. Gentle layman who used philosophy *against* misguided Gnostics. Implicit ascetic theology.

Origen 200AD

Follows Clement's line of thinking but with a Puritanical style (father was martyred) Bible was only authority (not philosophers) but its spiritual sense and moral sense rather than literal – even resurrection. (worried some) Much exegesis. Asked to dispute many heresies. Believed even Devil could be saved. Library at Ceasarea. Eusebius of Caesarea (historian) thought him supreme.

Irenaeus of Lyons 190AD Against the Heresies

Stabilised Xn theology. 'Recapitulation' of Adam in Christ.
Vs Marcion that Jesus was also human.

Vs Valentinus who proposed secret unwritten traditions Irenaeus said apostolic Bishops prove the authoritative link – I heard Polycarp talk of John. Greatly influenced Tertullian & Hippolytus apart from his Millennial hopes.

Tertullian 200 AD Apology:

N Africa. We must remain unspotted: Christian cannot be soldier

On repentance - possibility of penance once in a lifetime.

'See how they love one another, they say' 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christians.'

Against Modalism (Monarchian Praxeas) he follows Irenaeus' line that in history we discover the threeness of the 'Trinity' of one substance as three 'Persons' – *substantia & persona* - his phrases.

Hippolytus 230AD *Apostolic Succession*:

Roman priest vs Pope. Liturgical descriptions (*Sursum Corda*)

Fought Modalism – Jesus had two distinct *prosopa* 'persons'

Mani 240 dualism & Iranian mysticism. Syncretism to unite E & W.

Cyprian of Carthage

Tried to unify church after Decian 250 persecution. *On the Lapsed* said that we have no authority to forgive apostasy – early Ch view of Ch of Saints – so must be left to God at final judgement. Later adopted compromise view, but remained the darling of the **Donatists** later.

285 Diocletian Persecution.

Because army loyalty compromised.

Afterwards, again schism in relation to lapsee.

312 Carthage Bishop's consecrators had been apostate, so **Donatus** anointed in stead.

300 Anthony of Egypt

Made famous by Athanasius' biography.

312 Milvian Bridge vs Maxentius.

313 Edict of Milan.

Establishment of Constantinople as New Rome, uninterested in West.

Athanasius 300AD *On the Incarnation*

That Man may become God.

Succeeded Alexander to Alexandria and after Nicaea was still hounded, but no doctrinal accusations.

318 Arius excommunicated

Alexander of Alexandria maintains Son coexisted with Father.

325 Council of Nicaea

adopted (rather Arian) Eusebius of Caesarea's creed plus Constantine's *homoousios*

Three bishop rule & Bishops could not move to another see.

(after this Eusebius' place as historian is taken by Socrates)

But the Arian controversy was still fuelled by East/West politics

335 dedication of Ch of Holy Sepulchre Emperor required all to attend and Arian reconciliation. Many refused to come – exiled.

Pentecost 337 Constantine baptized and died.

357-60 confused intrigues – Arian victory?

Therefore clear that Athanasius needed good theological minds since force would not succeed.

361 Julian reintroduces Paganism

363 Valentinian Emperor redivided E & W Empire.

373 Athanasius dies – mantle goes to Cappadocians in the train of Origen.

370 Basil (the Great) of Caesarea – Cappadocian

Monastic Rule against eccentricity and isolationism. Founder of Charities.

Treatise on the Holy Spirit using Origen's terms *3hypostases* + *1 ousia*.

Spirit is worshipped and glorified in liturgy but proceeds from Father whilst Son is begotten of Father.

Builds Nicaean band of Asia Minor bishops, but gentle with it.

Brother of **Gregory of Nyssa** mystical theology

378 Emperor Theodosius

380 AD Theodosius makes Christianity State Religion

381 AD Council of Constantinople

appoints **Gregory of Nazianzus** to Constantinople then recants.

Basil's Distinction btwn same *ousia* and different *hypostases* (persons)

Adds to Nicaea a Basilian statement on HS. Homoousios affirmed

(*filioque* not till Latins added it in C8th)

Constantinople second after Rome (but Rome wanted to stand alone!)

Arianism slowly disappears.

John Chrysostom 400

Constantinople but not politically easy.

Augustine The only Latin to be really innovative. Had been prof at Carthage, baptized (w. his son) by **Ambrose**. Monica died same yr 387. Platonic influence. *Confessions*,

396 AD A becomes Bishop of Hippo

Now turns to biblical exegesis. Worn down by violence of Donatists, agreed 'compel them to come in'.

Medievalists said: depends on the Minister = *ex opere operantis*;

depends on the Action = *ex opere operato*

City of God: not outward events but sin and redemption that matter.

and 430 died just before city was broken by Vandals

us Pelagius Race fell in Adam, transmitted sexually. All due for damnation exc those foreordained for salvation – grace is irresistible. Free will?

On the Trinity: nearer to Cappadocians, included *filioque* to maintain equality

384 Egeria (or Etheria)

her pilgrimages to Holy Land

Jerome 400AD brings culture of biblical scholarship to monasticism. One of the Latin Fathers – versatile but difficult.

428 Nestorius of Constantinople attacked Theotokos since Jesus had two natures and Mary was mother of the human nature only. (Apollinarius had in 380 said Jesus did not have human soul but Word – again, stressing the two natures.)

431AD Council of Ephesus

Cyril of Alexandria countered Nestorius with help from John of Jerusalem
But controversy blundered on incl additional Ephesus Robber Synod.449

451AD Council of Chalcedon

Leo (his *Tome* on two natures united in one person) was to chair but ill.
No duality but Christ is perfect God and perfect Man made known in two natures without separation and both natures come together to form one Person *prosopon*, and one *hypostasis*. (a mosaic from various sources)

Also saw Constantinople as New Rome with local authority (Rome wanted to remain the only Rome!)

Still Monophysite (one nature) and Nestorian Churches were about and tussle continued.

540 Rule of Benedict

Iconostasis is sixth century, first in Sancta Sophia in Constantinople; barley sugar columns supporting canopy in West came from Constantine's St P Rome.