Julian of Halicarnassus Encyclopedia Article

Julian of Halicarnassus

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JULIAN OF HALICARNASSUS (d. after 518), Christian bishop and theologian. The place and date of birth of this prominent fifth- and early sixth-century churchman are unknown. Of his early life we know that as bishop of Halicarnassus in Asia Minor he had sojourned in Constantinople around 510, perhaps between 508 and 511. There he participated in the discussions as to whether the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon (451) ought to be abrogated in order to achieve church unity.

As bishop of Halicarnassus, Julian had been a protagonist of the monophysites, who maintained that Christ had only a divine nature, denying the reality of his humanity. At first Julian followed the moderate views of his friend Severus of Antioch, one of the leading critics of the Chalcedonian formula, according to which Christ is "one hypostasis [essence, entity] in two natures."

Julian's significance lies in the fact that he parted with the moderate monophysites. Deposed from his see in 518, he fled to Egypt, where he promulgated his theory known as aphthartodocetism (incorruptibility). Julian taught that, from the moment of its conception, the human nature of Christ was incorruptible, impassible, immortal, and free from all physical burdens such as hunger, thirst, and pain. Thus Christ's human sufferings were apparent rather than real, a theory similar to docetism. His followers in Alexandria established their own community and became known as Aphthartodocitae and Phantasiastai.

Not only the Orthodox Chalcedonians but also Julian's former friend Severus of Antioch attacked his teachings. Julian wrote a treatise entitled *Peri aphtharsias* (About incorruptibility), directed against Severus, and an *Apologia* defending his own teachings. Of his writings only two letters and fragments of his theological works, in the original Greek and in Syriac translation, have survived.

Bibliography

The sources for Julian's writings are *Spicilegium Romanum*, vol. 10, *Synodus cpolitana*, edited by Angelo Mai (Rome, 1844), pp. 206–211, and *Anecdota Syriaca*, vol. 3, edited by J. P. N. Land (Leiden, 1870), pp. 263–271. Studies of Julian include René Draguet's *Julien d'Halicarnasse et sa controverse avec Sévère d'Antioche sur l'incorruptibilité du corps du Christ* (Louvain, 1924) and "Pièces de polémique antijulianiste," *Le Muséon* 44 (1931): 255–317; Martin Jugie's "Julien d'Halicarnasse et Sévère d'Antioche," *Échos d'Orient* 24 (1925): 129–162, 257–285; and Robert P. Casey's "Julian of Alicarnassus," *Harvard Theological Review* 19 (1926): 206–213.