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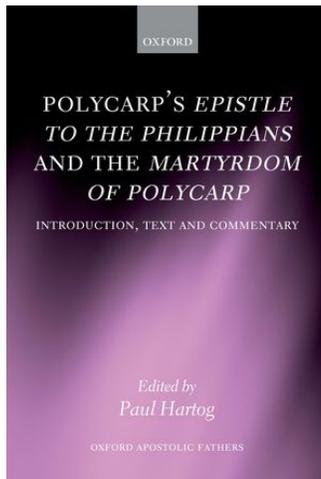
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Paul Hartog.
*Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians and the
Martyrdom of Polycarp: Introduction, Text, and
Commentary* (Oxford Apostolic Fathers)

Oxford University Press, 2013

Pp. xi + 402. ISBN: 978-0-19-922839-3. \$275.00
[Hardback]. [Purchase](#)

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With essentially two volumes in one, Paul Hartog provides the entry for Polycarp's writings in the *Oxford Apostolic Fathers* Oxford University Press series. For each of Polycarp's writings, Hartog provides substantial introductions, Greek text with English translation, and commentary. This review consists of interaction with the introductory materials of both the *Epistle to the Philippians* and the *Martyrdom*, along with brief notes on the Hartog's text and commentary.

Before the material on each writing, Hartog sets the tone with an overview of Polycarp the person, his genuine and falsely-attributed writings, and other early Christian literature about Polycarp. Much of the surviving literature about Polycarp is hagiographical in nature, and dubious in its preservation of historical fact. Yet the understanding of how the early church viewed Polycarp is within that material, so it has value for the historian and student of the early church. Other

information about Polycarp which is more likely to be valid, such as Polycarp's location—Smyrna, his status as bishop, and what can be ascertained of his relationship with the Apostle John as well as Irenaeus.

Hartog's presentation follows the traditional order of composition, with the *Epistle to the Philippians* first. The introduction is split into 14 sections spanning over 50 pages. He starts with the historical setting and quickly moves into discussions of textual tradition, authenticity, unity of the epistle, and date. The larger questions today revolve around authenticity and unity of the letter. Hartog interacts with all major theories and their development, providing a map to existing literature through discussion in the text and footnotes.

Hartog continues with shorter sections on genre and style, occasion and purpose, and themes of the epistle. Following these is an extensive section on intertextuality. As many readers of Polycarp's *Epistle to the Philippians* are quick to discover, the epistle's language is infused with the language of the New Testament. Yet discerning and tracing the influence of the Bible on Polycarp's writing is a difficult task. Hartog, well versed in this area due to his previous work on the relationship between Polycarp and the New Testament,¹ provides an expansive overview to the issue of intertextuality in Polycarp's letter.

Hartog rounds out the introduction with sections on Polycarp and Paul, theology, opponents, avarice and heresy, and influence. These sections provide necessary background to themes within the letter and

¹Paul Hartog, *Polycarp and the New Testament: The Occasion, Rhetoric, Theme, and Unity of the Epistle to the Philippians and Its Allusions to New Testament Literature*, WUNT 134. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002).

the scholarly discussion on their significance.

Hartog's edition, apparatus, and translation of Polycarp's *Epistle to the Philippians* is presented next with Greek/Latin and English on facing pages. While the sigla in the apparatus are explained in the introduction, the structure and symbols of the apparatus (e.g. parentheses, angle brackets) are not. Each chapter and verse are given in their own paragraph in both edition and translation, which leaves the reader with no insight from the editor on where discourse-level segmentation such as paragraph breaks may occur.

Hartog's introduction to the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* runs over 70 pages. He covers roughly the same sorts of introductory matters—authorship, recipients, text, authenticity, date, and historicity—as he did in the introduction to Polycarp's *Epistle to the Philippians*. As with the previous introduction, the section on intertextuality functions as a boundary between historico-critical introductory matters and issues related to content and understanding of the document. This section also highlights the lack of any direct interaction between the *Martyrdom* and canonical Christian texts.

The introduction continues with sections on theology, view of martyrdom, anti-montanism, Jewish-Christian tradition, legal issues, prayer, and influence. As with other sections, this material provides discussion on these issues among current scholarship with several citations for the motivated reader to follow.

The Greek text and apparatus of the *Martyrdom* is based on Dehandschutter's critical text; the translation is Hartog's. It, as well, has each verse (or section) as its own paragraph, leaving any higher level discourse segmentation such as paragraphing as an exercise to the reader.

Hartog's commentary on both the *Epistle to the Philippians* and the

Martyrdom lead the reader through respective texts, highlighting translation issues and text-critical issues. His interaction with the available literature is significant, providing discussion and reference to further sources through the footnotes at nearly every point possible.

The entire volume is meticulously researched. The bibliography and footnotes as well as the degree of interaction with German literature not readily accessible to most readers are the obvious strengths of this volume. These factors set Hartog's work apart. Yet at several points this reviewer felt as if Hartog was focused more on presenting what each consulted source reported about a particular fact, feature, or problem and less focused on presenting what Hartog himself concluded regarding the same issue.

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