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Justin Martyr

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JUSTIN MARTYR. Born ca. A.D. 100, Justin was brought up as a Greek, taught at Rome in the reign of Antoninus Pius, and was martyred under Marcus Aurelius, probably between 163 and 167. Of the many works formerly attributed to him, only three are now regarded as genuine; all of them are found in MS Paris 450, dated A.D. 1363. The Paris MS was published in Greek by Stephanus in 1551; a Latin translation appeared three years later. Milton seems to have used the 1615 Paris edition, in Greek and Latin.

The *First Apology*, addressed to Antoninus Pius, refutes various anti-Christian slanders and shows the positive values of Christianity. The *Second Apology* (sometimes referred to as "Pro Christianis"), which is much shorter, contains references to the first. The *Dialogue with Trypho*, written a few years after the *Apologies*, is a real or purported

record of a debate between Justin and a Jew named Trypho, in which Justin relates his conversion and upholds Christianity as the true philosophy.

Although Milton links Justin once with some other Fathers as containing errors and heresies* (*Ref* 3:21), he cites him with respect in the divorce* tracts: Justin's apparent approval of a woman who was divorced from an ungodly husband gives "the judgment of the Church in those pure and next to Apostolic times" (*Tetra* 4:207-8; see also 4:171 and 249). In the antiprelatical tracts Justin's description of liturgical practices is invoked in support of spontaneous prayer (*Animad* 3:125), and Milton contends that the "Presbyter" described by Justin as leading the worship is not necessarily a bishop (*PrelE* 3:86). Justin's distinction that we worship God but give service to a ruler is cited from the *Second Apology* (now known as the *First*) in *CB* (18:173), and in the same place there is a reference to a statement in *Trypho* about polygamy* (*ibid.*, p. 149).

Milton's familiarity with Justin's works is evident from these direct citations, which, except in one instance, are used to support Milton's own views and which are in keeping with his usual cautiously respectful, though independent, attitude toward the early Church Fathers. It is possible that he derived some other ideas from Justin (e.g., the metaphor of the sun and its beams as an analogy of the Trinity), but since these appear in other Fathers also, no further definite influence can be demonstrated. ([MCP])