



Theophilus of Alexandria (The Early Church Fathers)

Norman Russell

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If Theophilus of Alexandria seems a minor figure today, it is because we persist in seeing him through the eyes of hostile contemporary witnesses, each of whom had his own reasons for diminishing Theophilus' stature. In fact, he was one of the greatest bishops of the Theodosian era, who played an important role in a crucial phase of the Roman Empire's transformation into a Christian society.

Norman Russell's new assessment of Theophilus shows him as an able theologian, an expert ecclesiastical lawyer, a highly skilled orator and, surprisingly, a spiritual teacher. The introductory section examines his efforts to Christianize an Egypt still denominated by its great temples and his battles to maintain the pre-eminence of the Alexandrian Church in an age of rapid change. The texts, most of them translated into a modern language for the first time, reveal the full power and range of his thinking.

Theophilus of Alexandria brings back into focus a figure who has long been neglected in the study of early Christianity and will provide students and lecturers with a fresh perspective, not least through the translation of texts, for the first time, into English.

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