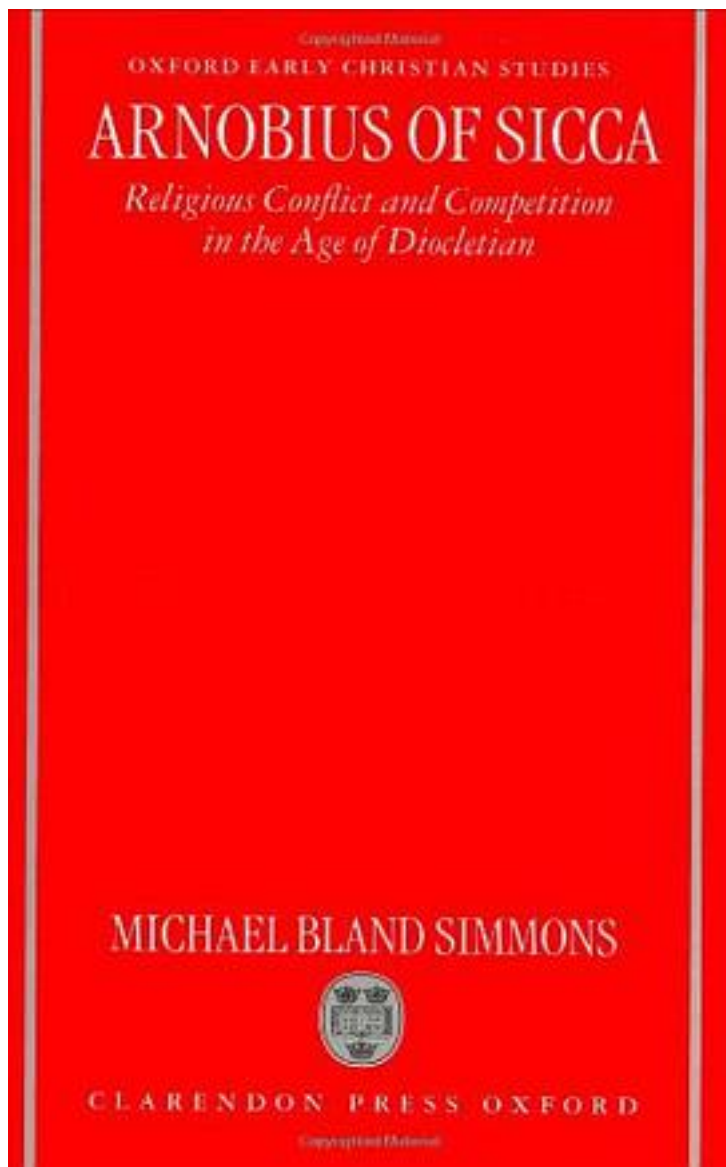


Arnobius of Sicca



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Arnobius of Sicca, in North Africa, was a Christian convert writing in the time of the Emperor Diocletian in the 3rd century AD. His most famous work, *Against the Pagans*, was written shortly after his conversion (c. AD 302), and is a brilliant defence of his new religion using arguments taken from the cream of pagan learning. It demonstrates exactly the nature and intensity of the conflict between pagans and Christians at this period. This book is the first ever major study of Arnobius. It deals fully with every important aspect of his life and writing - from the complex and controversial question of the date of *Against the Pagans*, to the biographical data provided by Jerome, to the significance of the conflict between the African supreme deity, Saturn, and the Christian God. Dr Simmons provides clear evidence to show that Arnobius' work is directly related to the anti-Christian writings of the famous Porphyry of Tyre, demonstrating how Arnobius used one work of Porphyry against another to disclose inconsistencies and contradictions in the great pagan polymath - the very method used by Porphyry in his own treatise, *Against the Christians*. Dr Simmons discusses the philosophical background of Arnobius, arguing convincingly that he belonged to the Platonic, not Epicurean, school of thought as has often been alleged. Arnobius has hitherto been one of the most misinterpreted ancient authors. This book will set Arnobius firmly on the map as a writer of considerable interest and importance, who made a significant contribution to the final triumph of Christianity over its Graeco-Roman competitors.

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