Fides et Historia 42:1 (Winter/Spring 2010): 64-66

Shelton argues that Hippolytus treats Susanna as an "allegorical heroine" (82-4; cf. 131-3). Her example instructs the members of Hippolytus's congregation who are facing suffering and martyrdom. The chapter also offers detailed analysis of Daniel and the three youths as "models for suffering" and provides some theological discussion of the eschatology of Hippolytus's interpretation of Daniel 10-12.

The fourth chapter presents a discussion of Hippolytus's exegetical method. Shelton believes that understanding "Hippolytus' novel exegetical task" (114) through the martyrdom motif establishes the motivation for his paraenetic exegesis. The concluding chapter seeks to show Hippolytus's pastoral purpose in his exhortation of local congregations as they suffered the Severan persecutions. Hippolytus interprets Daniel to "encourage martyrdom" (158) among his persecuted congregations.

Martyrdom from Exegesis could have been significantly improved by greater attention to recent studies of the history of interpretation of Daniel. For example, Klaus Koch's 2005 commentary on Daniel in the BKAT (*Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament*) series contains the kind of detailed study of the history of interpretation of specific passages that would deepen Shelton's research.

Shelton's pedestrian writing style frequently reveals the marks of a researcher new to scholarly writing. The book begins with the bland assertion: "Hippolytus is one of the most significant figures of the ancient church" (1). The reader is informed that "Scholars often use categories like 'certainly,' 'probably,' and 'probably not' to describe the originality of works attributed to Hippolytus" (15) and "martyrdom's success in church history is immortal" (18). The numerous errors in copyediting (more than twenty in my reading) also are distracting.

Despite these concerns, Shelton's research offers some useful detailed exegesis and exposition of martyrdom themes in Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel.* This study may encourage greater attention to an often ignored early exegetical work.

Francis X. Gumerlock, *Fulgentius of Ruspe on the Saving Will of God: The Development of a Sixth-Century African Bishop's Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:4 During the Semi-Pelagian Controversy*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009. Pp. vii + 220. $109.95.

Reviewed by Daniel G. Van Slyke, Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, Missouri

In this vigorous and tightly argued study, Francis X. Gumerlock puts to rest the confusion and controversy that has hitherto surrounded discussions of how Fulgentius of Ruspe (468-533) viewed the saving will of God. Gumerlock's thesis is that Fulgentius changed his position. Earlier in his literary career, Fulgentius stressed universality, arguing that

Fides et Historia 42:1 (Winter/Spring 2010): 64-66

God's saving will encompassed all people without exception. After exposure to the Faustus of Riez's *De gratia* and the arguments of his supporters in Constantinople, however, Fulgentius began to restrict his interpretation of the extent of God's saving will.

The study proceeds as a series of careful readings of Fulgentius's key writings on the topic in chronological order. Gumerlock draws rather extensively from pseudo-Ferrandus's *Vita Fulgentii*, which he reads with a balanced consideration of its historical reliability. The careful attention he pays to the precise dating, order, and historical context of several writings by Fulgentius constitutes one of his main scholarly contributions. For example, he convincingly demonstrates that Fulgentius wrote *De remissione peccatorum* in 518 or 519 (54-5). This source is significant insofar as it contains the "first signs of a shift in Fulgentius's views concerning the extent of God's saving will" (53). In works written before *De remissione peccatorum*, particularly *Ad Monimum* and *De Trinitate*, Fulgentius insisted, on the principle of God's kindness, that the saving will of God is universal. In works written after *De remissione peccatorum*, particularly *Epistula 17* and *De veritate praedestinationis et gratiae* (here dated to autumn, 523), he considered God's saving will to be limited to the elect.

The catalyst for Fulgentius's shift in opinion, and another key insight of this study, concerns the African bishop's engagement with Faustus's *De gratia.* Despite the fact that Faustus wrote his treatise on grace decades earlier (in 474/475), it enjoyed renewed interest owing in part to the praise that Gennadius of Marseilles lavished upon it in *Liber de viris inlustribus*. Gumerlock argues that Fulgentius first acquired *De gratia* in 518/519, and implicitly refuted Faustus's scriptural arguments in *De remissione peccatorum* (69-76). Shortly thereafter, the Scythian monks specifically asked Fulgentius to respond to the bishop Possessor and others dwelling in Constantinople who promoted Faustus's teaching on grace and will. Since Possessor employed 1 Timothy 2:4 in support of his semi-Pelagian doctrine, Fulgentius was forced to interpret the passage in his *Epistula 17* of 520 (95-100). In this polemical context, which Gumerlock brilliantly illuminates, Fulgentius's "view of the extent of the saving will of God gradually diminished" (104).

Fulgentius of Ruspe focuses on the patristic exegesis of several key texts regarding the will of God and the salvation of men. Most significant are 2 Peter 3:9 and 1 Timothy 2:4, although several other passages prove important, including Romans 9. According to 1 Timothy 2:4, God "wills all [*omnes*] men to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth." Possessor insisted that this passage demonstrates the universal extent of God's saving will. Reacting against Possessor's opinions as they were conveyed to him by the Scythian monks led by John Maxentius, Fulgentius followed an Augustinian reading of "all" as meaning "all kinds"—that is, men and women from every nation, age, language group, social condition, location, etc. Possessor and his party appeared to make God's will for salvation dependent upon the human will, a position that Fulgentius considered a denial of God's omnipotence and ability to execute his will, which in fact no one can resist. In his final significant work on the topic, *De veritate*, Fulgentius extensively argues that the "all" in 1 Timothy 2:4 cannot teach that the divine saving will universally

Fides et Historia 42:1 (Winter/Spring 2010): 64-66

applies to all men. That is, the "all" is a synecdoche, by which the whole stands for a part; the "all" indicates only those whom God calls to salvation (115-25). Gumerlock also discusses the reception of Fulgentius's interpretation of "all" (134-8), which was "perfectly within the limits of acceptable exegesis in later antiquity and the early medieval West" (138).

This book originated as a doctoral dissertation, Throughout, it displays the author's careful reading and analysis of the ancient Christian sources. Gumerlock's facility with Latin is especially highlighted in the final chapter, which provides the first English translations of passages from several relevant primary sources: *De viris illustribus* (*On Illustrious Men*) by Isidore of Seville; *Fragments to Eugippius* by Fulgentius; *De gratia* (*On Grace*) by Faustus of Riez; the *Chapters* of John Maxentius as well as selections from his *Libellus fidei* (*Booklet on the Faith*); and *De gratia* (*On Grace*) by Caesarius of Arles. Nonetheless, it would have been helpful to see at least a few of the central passages in Latin. Another minor criticism pertains to the awkward infelicity occasioned by concerns for gender inclusive language. Gumerlock uses terms such humans, human beings, humankind, or persons, rather than "men." These terms imply subtly different concepts with connotations that would have been foreign to Fulgentius and his interlocutors. This results in an occasional lack of clarity that is generally uncharacteristic of Gumerlock's writing.

Fulgentius of Ruspe is overall a compelling study that clearly and definitively answers the question regarding how Fulgentius interpreted the extent of God's saving will. It will be of great interest to students of Fulgentius himself, the semi-Pelagian controversy (now more frequently referred to as the controversy over grace or some other title), the activities of African Catholic bishops under the Vandal occupation, ancient biblical exegesis, and Latin theological developments during the sixth century. As a final note, this study has obvious applications of immediate relevance to the debates over divine will, human freedom, and predestination that continue among Christians to this day. Gumerlock's study is especially refreshing in its openness to theological inquiry and its serious and dispassionate approach to the teachings of Fulgentius of Ruspe on the saving will of God.

Fides et Historia 42:1 (Winter/Spring 2010): 64-66

William Chester Jordan, *A Tale of Two Monasteries: Westminster and Saint-Denis in the Thirteenth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009. Pp. xviii + 245. $35.00.

Reviewed by Frank Frankfort, Washington, D.C.

The new study by the renowned medieval historian William Jordan is at once readable and complex. At its core it is a study of two royal monasteries viewed though the lives of two abbots whose careers commenced in the same year and ended within three years of each other. But to understand the stories of Richard of Ware, Abbot of Westminster (1258-1283), and Mathieu de Vendôme, Abbot of Saint-Denis (1258-1286), Jordan must unravel the complexities of two lives, two monastic communities, two kingdoms, two dynasties, and two monarchs, set in an age of crusades, the dissolution of the Angevin empire, the flowering of Gothic architecture, and the emergence of Parliament and Parlement.

The bulk of Jordan's previous work has focused on medieval France, particularly the thirteenth century. This book represents a new aspect of his work and a new way of looking at his earlier studies of Louis IX and Phillip III. Comparative history on any topic is always a difficult task since the historian must carefully tread the boundary between telling the individual stories and comparing the stories for new and debatable meanings. This tale of two monasteries is based on an exhaustive study of primary source manuscripts, printed primary sources, and secondary studies. Although the book is divided into nine chapters, it is easier to think of it as divided into four parts—England and France in the early thirteenth century, Mathieu and Richard's relations with Louis IX and Henry III, the transition to the reigns of Edward I and Phillip III, and final thoughts on the interwoven stories of Abbots Richard and Mathieu.

At times the story line follows the lives of Richard and Mathieu, but more often the focus is on dynastic struggles between England and France, the baronial revolts in England, the reforms of Louis IX, the constant building and rebuilding of Westminster and Saint-Denis, or the enhancements of their respective shrines. If the story of these two royal monasteries has a central theme, it is not the role their respective leaders played in royal politics but the unending defense and expansion of their holdings and rights as economic institutions. Abbot Mathieu served as co-regent for Louis IX and Phillip III while Abbot Richard served as personal envoy and negotiator for Henry III in France and in Rome. Those stories are ably told by Jordan, but it is in the workings of the monasteries' court cases and legal struggles that we see the foundational bases of their respective places in medieval society. Abbot Mathieu and Abbot Richard expended great energy in what Jordan calls the "mind-boggling complexity of tenurial relations … and the existence of multiple intersecting lordships and claims of right" (66). In some instances Westminster or Saint-Denis won new rights or upheld those previously secured. In some instances they lost. The difference between winning and losing legal battles was not their close ties to Louis IX or Henry III, though at times that was helpful. The critical