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Review of De Gratia: Faustus-Of-Riez 'Treatise On Grace' and its Place in the History of Theology, by T.A. Smith

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BOOK NOTES

Visite pastorali ed elaborazione dei dati: Esperienze e metodi. Edited by CECILIA NUBOLA and ANGELO TURCHINI. *Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico* 34. Bologna, Italy: Società editrice il Mulino, 1993. 448 pp. L 50,000.

This is a collection of papers from a conference held in 1991 at the Istituto storico italo-germanico at Trent. The conference, which had the same name as the volume under review, focused on the methodological problems of using computers to study the records of pastoral visitations by Italian bishops or their representatives, primarily in the aftermath of the Council of Trent. The geographical focus is on the northern half of the peninsula: Trent, Florence, Imola, Brescia, Milan, Venice, Verona, Como, Tortona, and Umbria (with one paper on Sicily). Of the methodological problems discussed *ad nauseum*, the most fundamental is the difficulty encountered in transforming the qualitative information taken from the reports of the visitations into quantitative data. A good example of this is the varied vocabulary in ecclesiastical Latin used to denote the learning of priests. Those historians who intend to use computers to analyze the records of pastoral visitations in Italy should purchase this book. Others will find it of very limited use since the lack of an index makes it difficult to find the few nuggets of information contained in it.

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A. LYNN MARTIN

De Gratia: Faustus of Riez's Treatise on Grace and Its Place in the History of Theology. By THOMAS A. SMITH. *Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity* 4. South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990. ix + 254 pp. \$29.95.

Reading this fine book reminds me of the old seminary adage: "Augustine in the classroom, Pelagius in the pulpit." Although theologians have traditionally accepted Augustine's arguments on grace and predestination, most Christians have felt uncomfortable with the notion of a seemingly capricious God. This book demonstrates how one bishop, Faustus of Riez (around 408–490), had to deal with predestinationism in the decades after Augustine's death (430).

Interestingly, Smith starts off with Faustus's place in the history of theology, demonstrating that scholars traditionally viewed him through an Augustinian lens and thus dismissed him as a theological lightweight or, worse, a classic representative of that scholarly invention, Semi-Pelagianism. Smith admirably chooses to examine Faustus on his own terms, and he presents him as a conscientious bishop who rejected Pelagius and who genuinely admired the great North African but feared what his self-proclaimed follow-

ers had done with the master's teachings. Faustus emerges as part of a South Gallic circle with conservative leanings, wary of the *novitas* of rampant predestinationism. Faustus argued that the "initial grace of God, which is to say, the fundamental grounding of human nature in the divine gifts, has been attenuated but not abrogated" (p. 196). In some small way, we had to contribute to our own salvation.

A well-written work on an attractive figure, this book belongs in the graduate and seminary curriculum as well as on the church historian's bookshelf.

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JOSEPH F. KELLY

The Concise Dictionary of Early Christianity. By JOSEPH F. KELLY. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1992. 203 pp. \$24.95.

This intentionally brief volume concentrates "on people, movements, and terms" in the first to the sixth century and omits geography, liturgy, major doctrinal topics, and other broad subjects. The aim is to follow "the consensus of scholars" without engaging in their debates, but major differences of opinion are occasionally indicated. Origen with four columns (plus two on "Origenist Controversies") seems to receive the longest treatment. The author shows astonishing learning and comprehensiveness within the chosen parameters. One can always find something with which to quarrel, for instance, why in the survey of Eusebius of Caesarea's works is nothing said about his apologetic activity? However, readers will have few occasions for such quibbles. The author's Roman Catholicism is unobtrusive. All the popes and many saints, including legendary ones, receive entries. Three appendices give an excellent seven-page "Brief History of the Early Church" and list popes and Roman emperors with their dates. The publisher needs to produce an inexpensive paperback edition for the popular audience, to whom this work is best suited.

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EVERETT FERGUSON

The Durham Collectar. Edited by ALICIA CORRÊA. London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1992. xii + 302 pp. \$50.00.

Whereas a liturgical book which contains collects for the mass is known as a "sacramentary," one which contains collects for the seven daily offices is known as a "collectar." This book, which was originally a doctoral thesis at the University of St. Andrews, is about the history of such collects with specific reference to a collection from Durham dating from the early tenth century.