

learned and brave warrior, the manly fusion of a hoplite and a philosopher, who held fast against heresy and was likened to biblical prophets and the Greek heroes of old. Gorgonia and Macrina, finally, triumphed over their bodily suffering with fortitude, composure, and resolve, offering models of piety, self-control, and sacred *arete* within an appropriately familial and domestic sphere. Chapter four likewise focuses on hagiographic biographies, arguing that Nazianzen used the examples of Athanasius of Alexandria and Basil of Caesarea to associate pro-Nicene Christianity with rigorous training, expertise, and proper ascetism. Nyssen's Macrina, on the other hand, served as a model of spiritual excellence, self-control, and wisdom for her brothers, tempering their traditional *paideia* through her pious example. Such qualities, Howard asserts, were intended to legitimize pro-Nicene Christians as the heirs of classical learning, whose spiritual and physical *agones* purified them and thus authorized their understanding of the divine: they were holy *pepaideumenoï* and Christian *agathoi*, embodiments of traditional manliness who defended the truth; their non-Nicene rivals were the opposite. The book then concludes with a brief epilogue, which restates its chapters' conclusions and offers some suggestions as to the legacy of this form of masculinity into the Middle Byzantine Period.

This book is not always an easy read and may strike some, especially the nonspecialist, as something akin to *agon* in and of itself. Nevertheless, it is an important study, not just of the Cappadocian Fathers and their rhetoric, but also of the influence and pervasiveness of classical ideas about masculinity in an increasingly Christian world. Howard insists that such notions were inherently Greek and thus eastern, but one wonders the extent to which analogues might be found among contemporary Latin authors, who did not live in an intellectual vacuum. The letters of Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine readily come to mind, as do a number of Christian biographies.

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Living Martyrs in Late Antiquity and Beyond: Surviving Martyrdom.
By Diane Shane Fruchtman. Abingdon: Routledge, 2023. xiii + 280
pp. \$170 hardback; \$47.65 eBook.

Diane Fruchtman's main claim is that scholars too often conflate martyrdom with death and thus ignore "living martyrs," i.e., Christians who are considered as martyrs by their promoters without having faced a violent death and whose title to martyrdom comes not from death but from life. It is not that these living martyrs are not known but that they are explained away and marginalized. Diane Fruchtman makes a strong case that this is mistaken and can only lead to a partial understanding of martyrdom. Fruchtman endeavors to remedy this oversight by focusing on three authors who write in Latin at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century: Prudentius (chapters 1 and 2), Paulinus of Nola (chapters 3 and 4), and Augustine of Hippo (chapters 5 and 6).

The cases of Vincent, who died after his release from prison, or of Encratis, who lived to tell the tale of her tortures, illustrate how death is not centrally relevant to

Prudentius's conception of martyrdom. It is well known that Paulinus of Nola composed many poems about the power of Felix and the power of his relics even though Felix died of old age. We have always been aware that some of the martyrs promoted by Prudentius and Paulinus did not endure actual death, but before Fruchtman's intervention, we thought they were an exception to the rule. Her close reading of the texts shows that both writers deploy a whole array of techniques to demonstrate a fully developed conception of martyrdom that does not focus on death and to teach their audience how to lead a life of martyrdom, either as witness (Prudentius) or through imitation (Paulinus). Ultimately, the goal of these writers is to encourage Christians to try to be martyrs, another way for them to promote a program of Christianization.

The chapters on Augustine are no less impressive. As with every topic related to Augustine, so much has been written that it is a daunting task to offer a valuable contribution. Fruchtman engages well with the scholarship on martyrdom in Augustine, whether in English or in other languages, and succeeds—again, it is no small achievement—to point to a blind spot. The well-known phrase *non poena sed causa* (it is not the punishment, i.e., death, that makes a martyr, but the cause) is often treated as a product of Augustine's controversy against the Donatists, and even when it appears in a context that is not related to that polemic, it is considered as an offshoot of it. Fruchtman establishes that there is a lot more to it and that Augustine—despite his notorious promotion, especially through his sermons, of martyrs who died for their cause—also develops a whole program of a “life of martyrdom” for his audience with a strong emphasis on how they can achieve martyrdom in their daily life. Several sermons, for instance, describe a sickbed martyrdom, that of Christians who on their deathbed refuse “pagan” remedies: their martyrdom does not consist in the death that follows but in their lying in bed; they are martyrs before they actually die.

Many pages of the monograph are a tour de force. Fruchtman more than once surprised me with her close reading of texts with which I am, or so I thought, familiar. Her reading of *Sermon 81* deserves special mention. She renders a long, dialogic section of it as a script for a play in three columns: dialogue, directorial commentary, notes. It is a great tool for analyzing sermons, one that could be adopted fruitfully for reading sermons on many different topics.

Fruchtman does not fully explain why she focuses on these authors and this period. Long ago, Edward E. Malone had suggested that monasticism came to rank equally with martyrdom on the scale of Christian perfection (*The Monk and the Martyr: The Monk as the Successor of the Martyr*, Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1950). Though he did not include Prudentius, Paulinus, and Augustine in his survey of sources and focused exclusively on monasticism for the fourth and fifth centuries, he had shown that earlier on some Christian writers had deemphasized death in their valuation of martyrdom. Fruchtman suggests that the three authors she studies proposed “new paradigms” (15) and, though she mentions in passing these earlier writers (e.g., 2 and 252), she never tackles the question of how new these paradigms are and what could have motivated Prudentius, Paulinus, and Augustine to propose them to their audience. Her material seems to point to a shift in emphasis that could be easily explained by the end of the persecutions. Although I do not think that such an explanation is satisfactory, in part because of the fallacies attached to the notion of a “Constantinian turn,” Fruchtman's choice to focus on three authors, all writing at the same time, while she asserts the “broad presence of these [living] martyrs throughout Christian history” (14) is not fully satisfactory neither.

The monograph, however, is definitively an original contribution of high quality to the field of late antiquity and will, I am confident, have an impact on martyrdom scholarship.

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Dorotheus of Gaza and Ascetic Education.

By **Michael W. Champion**. Oxford Early Christian Studies. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2022. ix + 261. \$105.00 hardcover.

The monastic movement spread across the Christian world during the fourth century. The first monk in Gaza was Hilarion, who, by 350, was the leader of a large monastery. Then the last we hear of monasteries in Gaza is in the biography of John the Almsgiver, patriarch of Alexandria from 610 to 620. Gaza was an important commercial and cultural urban center surrounded by a thriving rural hinterland. Pagan religion and classical culture proved resilient, surviving longer than in other regions, with persecution of Christians continuing through the fourth century. Gaza's location on the Palestinian coastline provided a refuge for monks fleeing from Egypt after barbarian raids, and this led to a tradition of spiritual fatherhood with influential figures such as Abba Isaiah and Barsanuphius and John settling in Gaza. Gaza became an intellectual center of Egyptian monasticism, and it is likely that key works such as the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* were written here. This background of classical learning and Egyptian spiritual fatherhood enabled a rich literary tradition with instructions, hagiographies, letters, and polemics. Dorotheus lived during the sixth century, first in the monastery of Seridus, where he was a disciple of Barsanuphius and John, and then in another monastery near to the city of Gaza. His writings come from the end of the period of Gazan monasticism and show the principles of monastic life that had developed in the region during these productive centuries.

While many studies of this period have emphasised contrasts—between Christianity and paganism; between desert and city, Dorotheus's approach was shaped by both classical and Christian culture. These shared traditions and methods led him to develop an ascetical form of education, influenced by the philosophical and rhetorical traditions of late antiquity. This is not a temporary imparting of knowledge but rather a lifelong transformative process of shaping personality. His teaching shows the nature of virtuous life and how it builds monastic character. It explores the connections and shared methods of ascetic and classical education while also showing how asceticism redefined and reshaped educational principles and methods.

The sections of this book show how Dorotheus was familiar with the study of rhetoric and philosophy and how he applies these to an ascetic education. Like the schools of classical learning in nearby Gaza, pupils form a community around the teacher. Using the methods of rhetoric to convey and persuade, the pupils reflect on authoritative texts, which, in the case of the monastery, are from scripture and commentary. Dorotheus, looking after the infirmary, also uses the medical approach of Galen and others to show how the health of both soul and body can lead to virtuous living.