



Eusebius of Emesa: Church and Theology in the Mid-Fourth Century

Robert E. Winn

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Eusebius, the bishop of Emesa (c. 300-359) is today not a well-known figure of late ancient Christianity. Yet he achieved apparent notoriety in antiquity: he was a student of the famous Eusebius of Caesarea, he was connected to the entourage of the emperor Constantius, he had earned the respect of prominent ecclesiastical figures in the mid-fourth century, and he was recognized as a talented orator and biblical commentator.

Through a careful examination of his extant sermons, some of which survive in Latin and others in classical Armenian, this book invites readers to hear a bishop's voice from the mid-fourth century, an important period in late antique Christianity. The volume first introduces readers to the world of Eusebius by situating him in a historical context of places important in his life--Edessa, Antioch, and Emesa--as well as the people with which he was connected, Eusebius of Caesarea and George of Laodicea among others. After providing a rhetorical study of the sermons, the author then moves to a theological and historical analysis of Eusebius's sermons. Robert E. Winn focuses on the four prominent theological concerns that appear in these sermons: the natural world and human nature, the nature of God, the divinity and humanity of Christ, and asceticism and the church.

Winn argues that Eusebius's primary motivation in his preaching was to emphasize what he regarded as the appropriate religious identity of the church. Remaining true to the apostles would prevent the church from disintegrating into ecclesiastical factions and blurring its distinction with other religious groups, such as Jews, pagans, and Marcionites, all of whom Eusebius saw as a threat to the church's identity.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Robert E. Winn received his Ph.D. in Early Christian Studies from the Catholic University of America and is associate professor of history at Northwestern College in Iowa.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"Robert E. Winn has provided a major contribution to the study of this undeservedly little-known fourth-century author and to our understanding of theological developments of the time. A great merit of the book is its use of both the Latin and Armenian texts, which provide a more balanced picture of Eusebius's teaching."--Sebastian P. Brock, Oriental Institute, Oxford University

"Robert Winn's new book is a remarkable accomplishment. Winn is able to convey clearly the flow of

Eusebius's thought in his various homilies while also conveying the details of Eusebius's rhetorical performance and his exegetical and argumentative strategies...All scholars of Greek Christian thought and practice in the fourth century should read this book. With his philological skill and his sensitivity to the nuances of patristic theology, Winn has placed us in his debt." --*The Catholic Historical Review*

"Winn has provided us with the first systematic study of the contents of the complete corpus of Eusebius' extant sermons . . . Winn has done much to help bring Eusebius back from an obscurity never deserved and has helped to restore him to a more prominent position in the church of the fourth century." --*Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies*

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