photographic record of all the inscriptions, often including close-ups and side-views, as well as shots from the front. Together with detailed verbal descriptions, this makes possible a new appreciation of these inscriptions as monuments. Sometimes *CIL* is found to have provided misleading information, describing what is actually a plaque as a *parva basis*, *epistylium*, or *arula* (nos 18, 20, 253). More strikingly, *CIL*'s *tabula marmorea* turns out to be a 'cippo di basalto a forma amigdaloide' (no. 291). A minor quibble is that although the range of letter heights is given for every inscription, variation between individual lines is not always specified. Historical commentary and bibliography has been deliberately kept to a minimum.

This volume is not just of appeal for its epigraphic catalogue, however, since it also contains two essays on the history of the Farnese and Borgia collections. These are of general interest for the history of collecting in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, revealing, for example, the different strategies of the Farnesi and their librarian Fulvio Orsini. Whereas the former prioritized inscriptions of artistic merit, the latter showed appreciation of their historical significance (acquiring legal texts on bronze, for instance). Painstaking archival research reveals about fifty inscriptions now attributable to the Borgia collection. Consequently, several inscriptions thought to be from Puteoli have now been reassigned to Rome or Ostia (nos 125, 143, 178, 194), and some inscriptions previously published as separate entries have been reunited (nos 68, 382). Finally, a group of inscriptions from the area of the vigna Codini, thought to be forgeries by Ligorio, are now deemed authentic (nos 86–97).

This catalogue now makes possible further work on these inscriptions. Four indexes list the inscriptions by corpus, *ILMN*, inventory number, and Fiorelli catalogue number. This will help scholars to discover quickly whether or not an inscription published in the major corpora is housed at Naples. As the first of four projected volumes in the series *ILMN*, it certainly whets the appetite for more.

University of Warwick ALISON E. COOLEY
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GENEVA PAPYRI

P. SCHUBERT, I. JORNOT: *Les Papyrus de Genève. Premier volume, 2e édition. Nos 1–10, 12–44, 66–78, 80–81: textes documentaires*. With contributions by C. Wick. Pp. xiii + 287, pls. Geneva: Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de Genève, 2002. Cased, SFr 80. ISBN: 2-88220-021-8.

When Jules Nicole published the first fascicule of Volume I of the Geneva papyri in 1896, the modern study of Greek documentary papyri was very much in its infancy. The first volumes from London, Berlin, and Vienna, and the first two of Petrie papyri, had already appeared, but papyrologists were still feeling their way forward. Two main approaches to the editing of texts were emerging (leaving aside the issue of whether the Greek should be accented or not). Mahaffy, Kenyon, and Wessely favoured an explanatory mode, with an attempt to introduce each document and comment on at least some of the difficulties of reading and interpretation; Mahaffy occasionally translated a piece, but Wessely was the first to do so regularly.

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In Berlin, on the other hand, Wilcken and his colleagues, Viereck and Krebs, took a more minimalist line: they gave a Greek text and brief papyrological apparatus, and identified any dates in the text, but offered no further assistance. In due course the explanatory approach established itself as the norm, but it was the other model that Nicole followed when editing the Geneva papyri: his stated aim, admirably achieved, was to put this new resource at the disposal of collaegues as quickly as possible. To a large extent it does not really matter, as all these very early volumes now look their age: whatever approach the editors took, they were working with very few parallels and none of the dictionaries, lexica, and technological assistance available to the modern scholar. Although in the circumstances they often did a remarkable job, it is hardly surprising that it needs to be redone. Subsequent scholars have corrected readings and incorporated the material into their work, but there can come a stage where it is better to start again: texts that remain in antique format tend to be underused or misunderstood, and a new edition can give them a whole new life of usefulness—as the second edition of the (admittedly particularly confusing) Petrie papyri demonstrates. A hundred years ago Nicole did the basic work of producing a text of the Geneva papyri. Those that belonged to the Abinnaeus archive received modern treatment in 1962 with the publication of that whole dossier. Schubert and Jornot are now to be congratulated on having redone all the others: to a fresh examination of the text they add introduction, commentary, and translation—in effect, re-presenting the collection to the scholarly world.

It is worth repeating some of the concrete results that the editors themselves point out. Careful scrutiny of 4.17–18 reveals a new strategos, Iulius Isokrates, who is also to be identified in P. Vindob. Bosw. 1.35. Nicole in a 1895 article failed to identify no. 4 for what it is—a sale on future delivery. Nos 12 and 66–70 (treated together on pp. 242–6) all derive from the same notarial office in Philadelphia in the second half of the fourth century A.D. In 13.4 Nicole read as 22 arouras (κβ) the area of land on which a total of 5 artabas of wheat was charged; this gives an impossibly low rent of 0.2 artabas per aroura, and the land area should be read as (ἀρουρῶν) β. For the first time we have a composite photograph of the three pieces (in Geneva, Munich, and Oxford) that make up the marriage contract of no. 21. A new reading of 25.2 shows that it belongs to the archive of Sarapion. Nos 71–3, 77 and *P.Gen.* II.114 are united by the person of the wine-dealer Tesenouphis. No. 74 belongs to the famous dossier concerning the lawsuit of Drusilla. These and other papyrological improvements are, as always, to be welcomed, but the value of a re-edition such as this lies in something more fundamental than the details: it is simply that the original edition was no longer a viable starting place for consulting the texts it contained. Many of the Geneva papyri are substantial, important documents, and sixteen of them were taken up into Mitteis and Wilcken's *Chrestomathie*, which incorporated the extensive corrections Wilcken had made to Nicole's volume in *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 3 (1906), 379–404. So those texts got a new start in life, but with all the others you had to have the *Berichtigungsliste* open in front of you and at least Wilcken's *Archiv* corrections; having thus established a reasonably secure text, you then had to translate it and work out for yourself what you thought it was about—a familiar process, of course, for the papyrologist, but time-consuming work and distinctly user-unfriendly for the non-papyrologist.

S. & J. have done away with all that, producing a modern, professional edition that gives these fine texts a new life, translating them, placing them in their context, and introducing the reader to the main issues of each. The photographs are excellent,

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enabling you to check any reading. The editors have wisely decided not to offer an apparatus, including Nicole's now manifestly incorrect readings, but they have also, and again wisely, stuck with his numeration, even though there was no particular rationale behind his order. Chronologically the texts range from A.D. 38 to the sixth/seventh century. With just a few exceptions they come from the Arsinoite nome and comprise a familiar mixture of official and private documents: contracts, receipts, petitions, declarations, some letters. While familiar in subject matter, they are, however, an exceptionally well-preserved collection: the majority of texts are complete or nearly complete, and that makes it all the more welcome that access to them is now so dramatically improved. Styles of papyrological commentary vary considerably. These editors say most of what they want to say in the helpful introductions to the texts, and do not add much by way of line-by-line commentary. I personally prefer to have more explained to me, but it is a matter of taste, and this is a careful and elegant work of modern papyrological scholarship.

Trinity College, Dublin BRIAN McGING
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A COPTIC TOWN

T. G. WILFONG: *Women of Jeme. Lives in a Coptic Town in Late Antique Egypt.* Pp. xxvi + 192, map, ills, pls. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002. Paper, US$24.95, £18 (Cased, US$49.50, £35.50). ISBN: 0-472-06612-9 (0-472-09612-5 hbk).

The Coptic archives from the town of Jeme, later known as Medinet Habu, situated largely within an old temple enclosure on the West bank of the Nile opposite Luxor, have long been known. The obscurity of the site and the difficulty of the Coptic have meant that they have never had the attention they deserve. Copticists tend to concentrate on literary texts, and the scrappy, difficult, formulaic Byzantine and early Arab period documents have not been attractive. W.'s contribution, in bringing this material to a wider audience, is welcome, and this is an interesting study of women of a social class not normally visible in the literary sources from which most of the social history of this period is written.

The Jeme archives date from the end of Byzantine rule in Egypt and the start of the Arab period. Nevertheless, although the changing political conditions in Egypt are reflected in the archives and the people of Jeme appear to have suffered during the Sassanian wars, the texts discussed come from a firmly Christian religious context. Indeed, Jeme itself appears not to have made the transition from Coptic to Islamic town, the archives and the archaeology ending in the first decades of the ninth century. Apart from the occasional mention of Arab administrators, there appears to have been few converts to Islam from Jeme. W.'s study, therefore, relates to an early or mid-Byzantine Christian community.

Jeme provides a rich mix of material. The archaeological context of the community is relatively well understood, there is ample documentary material of a varied nature and on different media, and there is a surviving local homelitic and sub-literary corpus. W. is able to compare the religious literature to the documents and concludes,

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