proper names thorough. The volume is superb in every way, and should prove enormously useful and attractive to its multiple audience.

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DE VIRGINITATE

N. ADKIN: *Jerome on Virginity. A Commentary on the* Libellus de virginitate servanda *(Letter 22)*. (ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs 42.) Pp. xxxvi + 458. Cambridge: Francis Cairns, 2003. Cased, £75, US$120. ISBN: 0-905205-38-3.

In the past three decades Jerome studies have enjoyed a veritable renaissance. Monographs, translations, commentaries, and legions of articles in several languages continue to proliferate, taking aim at various aspects of Jerome's life and work, from the prosopographical and biographical to the exegetical and epistolary. The new commentary by Neil Adkin on Jerome's *Letter* 22 is a significant addition to this already burgeoning bibliography. *Letter* 22, a treatise (*libellus*) cast in epistolary form, was addressed in the middle 380s A.D. to a Christian teenager, Julia Eustochium, who belonged to one of the wealthiest families of late fourth-century Rome. In this letter the thirty-something Jerome plays the dubious part of sage, doling out advice on how a young maiden of high social standing (Eustochium) is to keep her virginity intact while navigating among the precarious temptations and luxuries of the aristocratic lifestyle. This was Jerome's most famous (or infamous?) letter during his own lifetime and throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, as its staggeringly complex manuscript tradition attests. It is fitting that *Letter* 22 finally receives its first full-length commentary by a noted scholar who is uniquely suited for the task, having authored to date dozens of articles on this letter and on Jerome's compositional technique in general.

In addition to the commentary, which runs to *c*. 400 pages, the book contains an introduction, six indices, and an exhaustive bibliography. In the brief eleven-page introduction A. gives an assessment of Jerome as a stylist that complements and enhances current scholarly understanding. A.'s Jerome is not really an independent thinker capable of creative thoughts. Instead, he is an intertextual artist with a 'magpie mind and a vast memory' who retains and reproduces in *Letter* 22 'flashy formulations or clever conceits . . . encountered in his voracious reading of other authors' (p. 2). Jerome liberally juxtaposes biblical, classical, and patristic phraseology to his own in order to pad his discourse with an air of authority and to dazzle unsuspecting readers with his rhetorical prowess. Keeping an eye on this trend, A. calls attention to some previously unnoticed classical intertexts that Jerome sneakily adapts but does not cite, such as a Terentian *dictum* (*Eun*. 251–2 cited at *Letter* 22.24; see pp. 213–15). A.'s Jerome is plagiaristic, beyond even the lax standards of the ancient world, for two basic reasons: to compensate for his own lack of originality, and to stay afloat in an extremely competitive market of Christian ascetic writing. But, as A. emphasizes, in his skillful adaptation of others' material Jerome shows off his talent as a brilliant stylist and weaver of elegant textual mosaics.

A. knows well the ins and outs of Late Latin idiom, and his insights succeed at clueing modern readers into how forcefully Jerome's language with its vivid cadences

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might have pulled at the heart-strings of a late fourth-century audience. He notes in particular that colloquialisms abound in *Letter* 22, contrary to what we might expect initially to find in a work of such ostensible polish: e.g. *fiere* as a colloquial imperative of *fio* at §18 (p. 146). Jerome deliberately uses this and other street lingo to tailor the letter's austere adult message to an adolescent audience. On some key issues of scholarly debate A. revises accepted orthodoxy with nuanced interpretations. One example involves his treatment of Jerome's well known Ciceronian dream (*Letter* 22.30; pp. 283–97), in which Jerome is raptured into heaven and castigated by God for being more devoted to eloquence than to piety: 'Ciceronianus es, non Christianus'. Scholars have traditionally interpreted the dream's significance in terms of Jerome's alleged vow never again to possess or read books of heathen literature: 'domine, si umquam habuero codices saeculares, si legero, te negavi' (22.30). A. shifts the focal point of the debate and argues convincingly that the dream is actually more about Jerome's newfound love of the Bible, after a long period of aversion to its uncouth style. Jerome's own words seem to confirm A.'s reading of the evidence: 'tanto dehinc studio divina legisse, quanto mortalia ante non legeram' (22.30). The dream thus did not so much turn Jerome off the classics as turn him on to the Bible.

One also has a few criticisms. The notes are keyed to Hilberg's critical edition of *Letter* 22, the only usable edition despite its being outdated. Since Hilberg's text would fill no more than thirty full OCT-size pages, it could have been printed with the commentary, perhaps coupled with a lively translation, to make the volume more immediately serviceable to non-Hieronymites—scholars and students alike—who may not have a reliable text at arm's reach. The general introduction is also a bit lean in its scope and may leave some readers disappointed by a lack of discussion on pertinent topics, such as the manuscript tradition of *Letter* 22, the possible light it may shed on the letter's circulation patterns in the fourth and fifth centuries, and what this in turn can tell us about Jerome's contemporary reception as a figure of ascetic authority. Such a discussion would have dovetailed nicely with A.'s repeated emphasis on Jerome's using autobiographical soundbites and a self-confident tone in *Letter* 22 to prove his ascetic credentials. A. seems to operate under the working assumption that Jerome's plagiaristic tendencies were always conscious and stemmed from a desire to make himself appear far more impressive than he could have hoped to be on his own merit. This is an attractive assumption, as it squares neatly with Jerome's reputation for pompousness. However, there is another important consideration to keep in mind. Jerome was educated in a system that put a premium on rote memorization of large portions of the classical canon. Even in old age he could readily recruit from an enormous storehouse of texts memorized as a young man. As a Christian, he still ravenously read the classics, not to mention scripture and the Church Fathers as well. The language of the classics, the Bible, and the patristic library had become so deeply ingrained in Jerome's literary consciousness that he could and probably did on occasion use snippets of classical and scriptural phraseology without even realizing he was doing so. Therefore not every single loose quotation or adaptation need be part of a conscious ploy to pull the wool over his readers' eyes; some allowance in certain cases must be made for happenstance.

These minor criticisms notwithstanding, A.'s scholarship is impeccable and some of his thought-provoking interpretations will no doubt take Jerome studies down exciting new paths. This book will have an obvious appeal for scholars, especially those of a more philological bent, working on Jerome and comparable patristic writers. The patristic source criticism is indeed masterfully executed. A. has raised the bar to a different level by showing, more fully than has ever been done, the vast extent to which

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Jerome adapted material from his ecclesiastical predecessors (e.g. Tertullian) and contemporaries (e.g. Ambrose). *Letter* 22 is many things to many people. To classicists, in particular, it is an excellent case study in the reception of the classics at a time when prominent Christian writers—chief among them Jerome—were seriously rethinking what place this canon of literature should occupy *vis-à-vis* their own rapidly developing two-pronged canons of scripture and the collective writings of the Church Fathers. A. is commendably aware of how heavily classical subtexts saturate *Letter* 22, and his ground-breaking commentary promises to pay rich dividends to classicists willing to make their way patiently through its close readings. This book will assuredly remain the authoritative work on *Letter* 22 for a generation or more to come.

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AN AUGUSTINIAN COLLOQUIUM

F. E. Consolino: *'L'adorabile vescovo di Ippona.' Atti del Convegno di Paola (24–25 maggio 2000)*. (Studi di Filologia Antica e Moderna 9.) Pp. 428. Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino Editore Srl, 2001. Paper, €43.90. ISBN: 88-498-0298-6.

This volume contains fifteen articles on Augustine, his life and work, his ancient sources and his influence on modern European literature. It is well arranged; only the absence of an index is sometimes frustrating. The collection is published in a series entitled Studies in Ancient and Modern Philology. Rightly: it is the way its contributions relate antiquity, late antiquity, modernity, Augustine himself, his sources and his literary heirs that makes this volume interesting. Augustine is a well-worn topic, and the editor herself asks the question whether another volume on him is really needed. But her answer is affirmative, and her reasons for that are reflected in the title of the volume, a quotation from Paul Verlaine, who called on 'the adorable bishop of Hippo' as a model of his own technique of self-revelation. In her contribution, the last in the volume (pp. 363–425), Consolino reflects on the importance of Augustine for modern European literature. Her paper is about Erich Auerbach's thoughts on this topic. The epigraph by Ernst Robert Curtius sums up her approach: 'One cannot understand the Middle Ages if one only studies the Middle Ages.' Equally, C. implies, one cannot understand antiquity if one only studies antiquity. An author, his work, his sources, and his reception constitute a whole, of which the present interpreter is still a part. Erich Auerbach was a professor of romance studies, whose primary interest was in Dante and the rise of realism. Then he also developed an interest in the ancient sources. But this interest was determined by his interest in living languages. In this respect he may be similar to modern 'Latin' scholars who also experience Latin as part of a living culture, more than many Northern Europeans or North Americans. Latin is alive in modern 'Latin' cultures just as ancient art and architecture. Though there is discontinuity, there is also continuity between antiquity and Modernity, and it is manifest in Late Antique writers. For Auerbach, as for E. K. Rand, these were 'founders of the Middle Ages' (p. 374). Plato, Cicero, St Augustine, and Dante were all links in one chain. One may not agree with some of Auerbach's conclusions, e.g. his idea of how literature

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