letters that P. offers justification when his dating of them diverges from those of other scholars, although he notes rightly that the details contained in many of the epistles is too vague to allow them to be dated precisely (e.g. pp. 109, 183–4, 242). P. also discusses Symmachus' epistolographical techniques, a topic especially pertinent to Letters 11–12, 22, 44, 57, and 79, in which Symmachus addresses his correspondents specifically on questions of style. Verbal and thematic parallels elsewhere in Symmachus' writings are noted throughout the commentary.

These commentaries on individual letters will prove useful to all scholars of Symmachus. The value of the volume is much greater, however, owing to P.'s perceptive general introduction. He stresses the coherence of the material contained in Book 3: the letters date from the 370s to the 390s, and the recipients are mainly persons associated in some capacity with the imperial court. P. demonstrates that the letters reveal Symmachus to be a canny observer of contemporary affairs of state. Discussions of Symmachus' political activities in the age of Theodosius I have been dominated by two episodes: his debate with Bishop Ambrose of Milan over the altar of Victory in 384 and his ill-advised attachment to the usurper Magnus Maximus in 387–8. P.'s thorough analysis of Book 3 shows, however, that these affairs need to be seen in the wider context of Symmachus' longer-term contacts with influential personages at court. Throughout the period, Symmachus corresponded not only with members of Western élites, but also, and more importantly, with prominent figures at the Eastern court (such as the generals Promotus, Timasius, and Ricomer, and the *magister officiorum* Rufinus). P. argues convincingly that the letters collected in Book 3 reflect 'il tentativo dell'autore di creare le condizioni opportune per una possibile co-gestione del potere da parte del senato' (p. 53). Thus P. has produced a volume that is not only indispensable to scholars of Symmachus, but which will repay careful study by anyone interested in the political history of the late empire, and particularly the rôle of the Roman aristocracy within it.

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LATINIUS DREPANIUS PACATUS—THE FULL STORY

A.-M. Turcan-Verkerk: *Un poète latin chrétien redécouvert: Latinius Pacatus Drepanius, panégyriste de Théodose*. (Collection Latomus 276.) Pp. 194, pls. Brussels: Éditions Latomus, 2003. Paper, €26. ISBN: 2-87031-217-2.

This remarkable piece of scholarly detective work follows an unusual variety of lines of enquiry, delving into poetry and oratory, prosopography and history, palaeography and codicology, and liturgiology and theology to present a fascinatingly new picture of the man best known to scholars as the panegyrist of Theodosius and the friend of Ausonius. The investigation centres on a short poem in MS Par. lat. 7558, whose multiple contents—it is a notable testimony to the popularity of classicizing verse, especially in the epic metre, among Christians in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages—include some works seldom printed and studied. For one of these, entitled *De cereo paschali* (about the wax taper in the Easter Liturgy), its early editor Fabricius invented an author Drepanius Florus, crudely combining the Drepanius in

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its title with Florus the ninth century bishop of Lyon whose poetry is certainly represented in this collection; now T.-V.'s intriguing monograph not only claims the poem for Drepanius Pacatus but also constructs for him an exciting career as scholar, poet, heretic, and finally elder statesman of the church.

The investigation starts in sixteenth century Lyon, where Voss. lat. F 111 (usually known as V), which is the bedrock of the text of Ausonius, came to light. Many other authors are subjected to detailed and ingenious inquiry, but I will focus on him, briefly selecting some important points. T.-V. argues that Par. lat. 7558 also existed in Lyon at this time, although a contemporary seems to have found it in Tours; that it was closely related to the manuscript known to Accursius but now lost, which Sannazaro also used; and that its contents closely match in size the lacuna in Par. lat. 8093 (P), a kind of 'Anthologie hispanique', which is known to have originally formed a single manuscript together with V. T.-V. reconstructs from all this a manuscript from Visigothic Spain which gave rise both to P+V and to Par. lat. 7558. The Drepanius to whom *De cereo paschali* is attributed may well, then, be the friend of Ausonius, but there is more: he also edited the collection of Ausonius' poems which we read in V. Those of us who have been inclined to agree with Della Corte that this distinctive selection—with, for example, little that was obscene, or in Greek—could have been compiled *by* Paulinus of Pella, grandson of Ausonius, are now asked to consider that it may have been compiled *for* him, a distant forerunner of versions *in usum Delphini*. Ausonius' ambitious pupil also took it upon himself to collect and edit the *Panegyrici Latini*, as Pichon long ago suggested.

It has long been known that Spain played a vital rôle in the early transmission of Ausonius; but why Spain, when he wrote these works in or near Bordeaux? We now turn to the careful study of the liturgical and theological contexts of the *De cereo paschali*. Our knowledge of the liturgies that obtained in various places and at various dates is very patchy, but having seen off the comment of the Maurists that this poem is not paschal at all, T.-V. finds enough to suggest that there are significant similarities with a well-documented rite which (at least in details) is said to go back to Visigothic Spain. Then an inquisition into the poet's theological language leads us into the murky world of Priscillianism, a heresy that flourished in Spain. When his words are compared with pronouncements of various Church Councils, Drepanius comes out badly; but perhaps he can be defended, not only on the general ground that it is difficult to say something which someone at some time did not deem heretical, but on matters of detail too. The expression *perpetui patris indiscreta propago* (*perpetui* being a very reasonable emendation of *prope tui* in l. 40) seems a fair way of saying concisely that the Son is absolutely co-eternal with the Father—the Nicene position, reaffirmed in 381—though the 'confusion' of the divine persons was indeed becoming a hot theological issue. A defence could also be mounted of *hominis sub imagine* in 29, which need not be a sham like Jupiter's disguise in Ovid, *Met*. 1. 213, and the verb *creasti* in 26, especially in its unclear context. In her Epilogue T.-V. adds to the supposed heresies of Drepanius those of a poem—also in the manuscript—long considered the work of Paulinus of Nola, *laus sancti Iohannis*. This removes a theologically dubious work from the cv of a future saint; but a brush with heresy, even after the judicial execution of Priscillianists by the usurper Maximus in the mid-380s, would add little to the turmoil of Paulinus' life at this time.

The analysis of the poem, which consists mainly of prayer and praise, is by no means exclusively theological. It at last receives a careful critical edition, and a commentary which shows its literary affinities. The results are very interesting: unlike writers of the *laus cerei*, who, according to Jerome, tended to drag in Virgil's bees (so

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these deacons knew something of the *Georgics*), Drepanius has a wide range, both classical and contemporary. There is evidence of works of Ausonius, including perhaps some not present in V, and enough similarity with Claudian—two pairs of words, to put it a little brutally—to date it before 396/7. The direction of imitation looks like a fifty–fifty issue to me, but the point is not crucial to the author's picture of the convert's 'evolution'.

Finally, having discussed whether Drepanius' God was one or two (there is no evidence of the Holy Spirit in *De cereo paschali*), she asks whether the Pacati known to us from this period are three or one (two is also a possibility), reinstating a reasonable suggestion of Harnack. If Drepanius was in his mid-thirties when he stood up and praised Theodosius for having combined valour and maturity when he became emperor at exactly that age, he could have been not only the Pacatus who wrote against Porphyrius (this fragmentary work is dated, tenuously, to 410–20), but even the Pacatus who received material with which to write a life of Paulinus of Nola soon after the saint's death in 431. Such a work, about a fellow-pupil of Ausonius, and a man who in places begins to look like the *alter ego* of Drepanius, could have been a most interesting document.

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MAXIMIAN

W. C. Schneider: *Die elegischen Verse von Maximian. Eine letzte Widerrede gegen die neue christliche Zeit. Mit den Gedichten der Appendix Maximiana und der Imitatio Maximiani*. Interpretation, Text und Übersetzung. (Palingenesia 79.) Pp. 255. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2003. Cased, €48. ISBN: 3-515-07926-2.

Schneider offers here a new interpretation of the poetry of Maximianus along with more general discussions of both Maximianus and the so-called *Appendix Maximiana*, followed by a new text and translation of both.

Part I, with its fourteen subsections devoted to such issues as content, genre, language and metre, date, and poetic imitations, is the heart of the book. In the less original parts, S. acquits himself well, with (for example) some thoughtful discussions in I.8 of the alleged imitations of or by other poets of late antiquity, though parallels for some of these phrases in Virgil, Horace, and Lucan are not discussed (and Boethius, another *senex maestus*, is not among the poets considered). On the other hand, the discussion of Maximianus' relationship to Augustan poetry (I.9) fails to identify a single concrete example of the kind of intertextual allusion that is crucial to the claims of Section I.14 and to the general thesis; moreover, it lacks any explicit comparison with earlier Latin love-poetry, which ought to be crucial to understanding the erotic contents. Space does not permit a complete review of S.'s argument that Maximianus wrote a kind of 'Widerrede' or 'Gegengesang' contesting certain aspects of contemporary Christianity and raising 'the question of Rome's identity, the question of Roman existence in the new world dominated by Christianity' (pp. 119–20), but I came away unconvinced. Certainly a hymn to the penis seems unlikely in a devout environment, but too many of S.'s suggestions strain belief. See, for example, I.12, which discusses the women involved in the poet's sexual encounters: if

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