developed towards an increasingly realistic mode of expression, or his interpretation of the rôle of Christianity in the process. However, his basic challenge for scholars even today consists in his demand that the work of Augustine and his contemporaries needs to be taken into account in a study of the development of modern European literature.

Other papers tackle similar topics for earlier periods. Benedetto Clausi writes on Erasmus' confrontation of Jerome and Augustine in his *Vita Hieronymi* (pp. 343–61), Enrico Fenzi on Plato, Augustine, and Petrarch (pp. 305–42), and Selene Sarteschi on Augustine in Dante (pp. 275–303). Finally, Valeria Viparelli on Augustine and Seneca, or more particularly on self and time in Seneca's *Ep*. 1 and in *Confessions* XI 2.2–3 (pp. 255–73). Seneca was popular among Latin Church Fathers. He is mentioned by Tertullian (*Seneca saepe noster*) and Lactantius. Jerome in his *De viris illustribus* counts him among the saints. By his time the Cordovan's 'correspondence' with St Paul, the work of a fourth-century Roman rhetoric student, held genuine by some until quite recently, was already in circulation. Augustine alone is ambiguous. He praises Seneca as a writer, but repudiates his life (*Civ. dei* 6.10: 'colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat'). For Viparelli it is Augustine the convert to philosophy who judges Seneca here by his own standards. Seneca, among others, had taught Augustine the discourse of the inner self. Augustine's own style is influenced by Seneca. But the big picture of his thought is different. Rather than reducing the self to a very low key attitude of *cotidie morimur*, Augustine opens it towards a new dimension, especially in the *Confessions*. In this work, according to Viparelli, Augustine engages in a protreptic style similar to Seneca's. But he does not exhort a pupil; he prays to God. There is God in Seneca too, but only implicit in, or even reduced to, the self. Therefore, self-sufficiency. The inner in Seneca is a refuge; in Augustine it is an open space. Seneca tells Lucilius privately to acquire *indigentia*, Augustine presents his to the world. In Seneca the universal and eternal meaning of this philosophical act is contained in the present moment, in Augustine eternity is a promising future. Seneca and Augustine link indigence to time. Time is dear. It must be bought (*Ep*. 1.2: 'hodierno manum inieceris'). It causes debt (*Ep*. 2.9–12). But while Seneca advises to evade this by reducing the circumstances of the self to the eternity of the punctual present, Augustine sees it as an investment. Not all of Viparelli's interpretations may be beyond criticism, but her presentation of God in *Confessions* as a kind of venture capitalist and the self as an entrepreneur using time for profit is fascinating. It certainly is in line with the overall intention of this highly recommended volume to present Augustine as a link between the ancient and the modern world.

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AN ADAPTABLE CHURCHMAN

M. CONTI: *The Life and Works of Potamius of Lisbon.* (Instrumenta Patristica 32.) Pp. xviii + 190. Turnhout: Brepols, 1998. Paper. ISBN: 2-503-50688-7.

Potamius of Lisbon is hardly one of the more celebrated churchmen of the fourth century A.D. His life is shrouded in obscurity: we do not know when he was born,

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when he became bishop, or when he died. He emerges into the light of history in the mid-350s when, during the western residence of the 'Arian' emperor Constantius II, many bishops were called upon to adhere to the emperor's preferred version of Christian orthodoxy—a version that would later be denounced as heresy after the triumph of Nicene Christology at the Council of Constantinople in 381. Potamius' actions during this period are instructive. Whereas many of his more famous contemporaries—such as Hilary of Poitiers and Eusebius of Vercelli—refused to submit to Constantius' demands and were forced into exile, Potamius chose instead to cooperate with the emperor and his religious associates. He participated in the Council of Sirmium of 357, apparently helping with the drafting of its statement of faith. This represents the highpoint of the 'pro-Arian' phase of Potamius' career. By the time of the Council of Ariminum two years later, however, Potamius seems to have revised his opinions: it may have been at this time that he wrote a letter full of anti-Arian polemic to the champion of Nicene theology in the East, Athanasius of Alexandria. Thereafter he disappears from view. Potamius' obscurity has not been helped by the tendency of earlier generations of scholars (building on the misapprehensions of medieval copyists) to attribute his works to other people. The *De Lazaro* was thought by some to be by John Chrysostom. It and Potamius' *De martyrio Isaiae prophetae* were also ascribed to Zeno of Verona, since they survived among manuscripts of his works. Meanwhile the *Epistula de Substantia Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti* was ascribed to Jerome.

Marco Conti's short monograph is a preliminary study to his edition of the works of Potamius that has since appeared in the Corpus Christianorum series (volume 69A, with J. N. Hillgarth's edition of the *Altercatio ecclesiae et synagogae* [Turnhout, 1999]). He discusses Potamius' career (pp. 5–28) and writings (pp. 29–44). There are commentaries on the four works mentioned above that are attributed to Potamius by C. (pp. 45–132), as well as the fragment of a letter by Potamius quoted in Phoebadius of Agen's *Contra Arianos* 5.2 (pp. 133–4). Finally, C. provides Latin texts of Potamius' works with English translations (pp. 136–77). The work is completed by indices of citations and names; there is a bibliography at the beginning of the book. C.'s presentation of his material is straightforward and comprehensive. He sets out all the *testimonia* for Potamius' career and discusses them in turn (pp. 11–21). Similarly, his discussion of Potamius' doctrinal opinions sets out at length the differing opinions of various scholars (pp. 22–6). C.'s own views are not often stated explicitly, but his remarks at p. 26 about Manlio Simonetti's 'correct methodology' and 'scientific basis' and Antonio Montes Moreira's 'definitive proof' make it clear enough where C.'s sympathies lie. (For what it is worth, both Simonetti and Montes Moreira are thanked fulsomely in the acknowledgements.)

The book is marred in places by curious English syntax, misprints, and wayward punctuation. Nevertheless, C.'s commentaries on Potamius' various works are very useful indeed: literary and scriptural parallels are comprehensively marshalled and Potamius' stylistic devices are analysed. The texts printed here are taken over from older editions and, apart from correcting previous editors' misprints, lack a thorough critical apparatus: they must now be supplanted by C.'s Corpus Christianorum edition. The translations do not always read easily. At times they are slavishly literal and clunky. I am not sure that Potamius' 'per ambiguas curas hinc inde in concavo vertiginis sinu pronis fluctibus torqueor' (*De Lazaro*, ll. 2–3) is necessarily made any clearer by being rendered as 'amid uncertain anxieties I am whirled this way and that by plunging waves in a hollow vertiginous cavity' (p. 142). To be sure, C. is seeking to render into English the complex metaphors and allusions

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that fill Potamius' writings (cf. p. 58). Indeed, Potamius is a difficult writer to interpret. As C. points out repeated in his commentary, Potamius blends stylistic elements drawn from poetry, philosophy, and scripture. Furthermore, the polemical letter to Athanasius and the works on Lazarus and the martyrdom of Isaiah show that he was also given to the most violent and gruesome imagery. Plainly, then, Potamius is not a writer for the faint of heart. So we should be grateful to C. for presenting us with this handy guide to one of the more vigorous and bizarre voices of fourth-century western Christianity.

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A COMMENTARY ON JUVENCUS

C. HEINSDORFF: *Christus, Nikodemus und die Samaritanerin bei Juvencus.* Mit einem Anhang zur lateinischen Evangelienvorlage. (Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 67.) Pp. viii + 494. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003. Cased. ISBN: 3-11-017851-6.

Good commentaries on Juvencus are becoming more numerous; the time is coming, and perhaps has arrived, when the fingers of both hands are required for counting them. This very well produced book treats the sections of his epic paraphrase of the Gospels that present Christ's encounters with Nicodemus and with the Samaritan woman, some 151 lines of his second book. It thus follows the established pattern of taking not a whole book (Juvencus' four books are all of epic length) but particular excerpts, as done by M. Flieger, *Interpretationen zum Bibeldichter Iuvencus (Gethsemane, Festnahme Jesu und Kaiaphasprozess (4. 478–565)* (Stuttgart, 1993) and R. Fichtner, *Juvencus. Taufe und Versuchung Jesu in den Evangeliorum Libri Quattuor des Bibeldichters Juvencus (1. 346–408)* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1994), who, together with W. Röttger, *Studien zur Lichtmotivik bei Iuvencus* (Münster, 1996), in a study which is in effect a commentary on passages relevant to his theme, and their mentor, Klaus Thraede, have done so much for the study of this fascinating poet. Though small in compass, commentaries of this kind are extremely useful, not only in their analyses of particular sections—the closeness of the paraphrase, the possibilities of exegetical nuance, and the analysis of classical influence on Juvencus' language are favoured topics—but also because they form valuable testing grounds for some of the more generalizing studies of recent times.

The introduction raises various questions about the significance of these portions within the whole work, and the formal ways in which they are inserted. The issues they raise fit well with the gospel of Matthew, which was Juvencus' primary source, H. argues, because of its concentration on justice and the last judgement—themes prominent in Juvencus' own preface or proem. There is discussion, too, of how material from one gospel is welded on to another, including an unexpected diversion into the nativity narratives, where Matthew's story of the Magi seems to be bolted on to the Lucan account with problematic effects. H. deals summarily, as one can, with the question of whether Juvencus used the earlier harmony of Tatian—no, he made his

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