

Part 2, 'Main Themes and Topics', comprises the bulk of the volume. It is not possible to review all of the many contributions here. As a whole, the essays are particularly strong in investigating what Augustine means by 'God'; in this vein, the essays by P. van Geest ('God') and P. Cary ('Soul, Self, and Interiority') are exemplary for exploring not just the philosophical background, but also Augustine's use of language (cf. van Geest, p. 135). L. Karfiková's chapter 'Memory, Eternity, and Time' makes the compelling claim that *Confessions* 'captures a new kind of personal identity created by narration that relies extensively on memory' (p. 175). This, along with A. Kotzé's comments on the relation of *Conf.* 1–9 to *Conf.* 10–13 in Part 1 of the volume (pp. 34–8), is useful for exploring the vexed issues of genre and autobiography. All in all, the contributors are conservative in the sense that they regularly cite some of the giants of twentieth-century Augustinian studies (J.J. O'Donnell, P. Courcelle, F. van Fleteren), scholarship in multiple languages and specialist resources such as the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. At the same time, it is hard not to come away from Part 2 without thinking there is a loss of focus, or sense of fragmentation, in the field at present. This is not necessarily a negative situation, but it does raise questions about the ability of scholars to track 'progress' or to persuade research funding bodies of the 'innovativeness' of a new project.

In any event, for the time being, this is an excellent and affordable companion volume to a reading or re-reading of the *Confessions*. Toom's moving personal comments in his introduction, on how the book has helped his own students reflect on what he calls 'the meaning of life' (p. 3), will probably resonate with many teachers.

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INTERTEXTUALITY AND SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS

DI STEFANO (A.), ONORATO (M.) (edd.) *Lo specchio del modello. Orizzonti intertestuali e Fortleben di Sidonio Apollinare*. (Studi Latini 94.) Pp. 482. Naples: Paolo Loffredo, 2020. Paper, €38.50. ISBN: 978-88-32193-33-6.

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The essays collected here were presented in 2018 at an international conference in Messina. The volume is divided into two parts: 'Forme e funzioni del riuso sidoniano dei modelli' (prefaced by Onorato) and 'Percorsi della ricezione di Sidonio' (prefaced by Di Stefano). The title is inspired by Macrobius, who considers the *Aeneid* a mirror of Homer's poems, but with personal touches: this image perfectly reflects the constant dialogue Sidonius had with the literary tradition, sometimes reproducing it without changes, sometimes with variations and allusive traits. He always displays a rich doctrine, widely investigated by scholars, but, as Onorato remarks, still partially unexplored. This volume offers precious hints of novelty: given its wealth, I will point out only its most significant features.

In the first part some essays discuss the use of myth in Sidonius, particularly the ability to imply political messages, disguising contemporary reality. In this context, offering a new perspective, F.E. Consolino shows that myth can model the structure of the argument, for example in the panegyric for Avitus, where the author describes a council of gods, presided by Jupiter, visited by an afflicted Rome asking for a new emperor, who will be Avitus. Sidonius' novelty consists in using this structure, partially already present in Claudian, and expanding it to its utmost, so as to shape the whole poem. The same

structuring function is observed in the epithalamia, sometimes developing Claudian's model (Epithalamium for Ruricius and Iberia, focused on the scene of Venus' arrival at the wedding), sometimes as an innovation, in the unusual description of two temples imagined for the marriage of the philosopher Polemius and Araneola: one temple hosting philosophers, the other young weavers, the bride among them, under Athena's protection and not Venus', as by tradition.

Athena is described as a warrior, whose shield displays her victory in the Gigantomachy: a mythical theme unexpected in an epithalamium, as Onorato remarks in a dense essay, emphasising, together with literary echoes from Claudian and Ovid, the Neoplatonic interpretation of Athena's victory as the victory of wisdom over the lowest instincts. The descriptive and the philosophical elements are suited to different types of public, according to their cultural level, and this dual tendency is evident throughout the epithalamium, especially in the description of the two temples. Considerable links with Martianus Capella are pointed out, but also with Claudian's panegyric on the consulate of the philosopher Manlius Theodorus, mixing different genres (panegyric and epithalamium).

Myth can also suggest metaliterary interpretations. J. Hernández Lobato analyses, in the panegyric for Anthemius, the lines about the oriental domains of Aurora, where Rome, besieged by Vandals, comes asking for help. The place, a kingdom of eternal spring, is where, according to tradition, the phoenix dies in a nest of herbs, on which it sets itself on fire, then rises from its ashes. The phoenix's death and rebirth are interpreted as the rebirth of poetry under a new aesthetic paradigm linked to the Orient. The description of Aurora's dwellings, rich in metaphors of poetic self-representation, becomes a meta-literary manifesto, where Rome and Aurora represent the imperial power and the poetry legitimising it; or the more austere epic of the Virgilian tradition and Ovid's 'baroque' style.

Sidonius' care in varying the use of myth is also shown by short references, as in the character of Medea, studied by M.J. Falcone: her guilt casts a negative image on her wedding with Jason, contrasting with virtuous weddings; or gives her a dark appearance, and she becomes a comparandum for the wife of the barbarian Aetius; Medea and the myth of the Argonauts acquire a metaliterary meaning in poetic *recusationes*. The theme of food in myth can also have metaliterary associations, as R. Santoro observes, with regard to a section of *Carm.* 9 on Ulysses' *labores*, listing 'monstruous banquets': Antiphates, king of the Lestrigonians, devouring three mariners Ulysses had sent in order to explore the country; Calypso's orchards; the anthropophagous Sirens; the ravenous Scylla and the belching Charybdis: where the real danger Ulysses escapes is being devoured himself.

All the essays emphasise the intertextual relation to previous models, with new references to tradition: for example, S. Santelia, besides the already noticed echoes from Ovid in *Carm.* 12, adds many others from Claudian, Propertius and Catullus (the Sidonian image of the grotesque Burgundians, similar to the Giants, is used by Martial about barbarians, but is developed particularly in late antiquity).

From the perspective of different cultural positions in a Gallic context, A. Pelttari focuses on a letter by Sidonius (*Ep.* 5.10) and one by Claudianus Mamertus (*Ep.* 2), both sent to the rhetor Sapaudus, whose skills are praised, taking into account the classical models of tradition. But while Sidonius, besides the famous writers of the past, also quotes contemporary authors, Mamertus suggests as models only the classical masters of Republican Rome, and his conservative attitude contrasts with Sidonius' equilibrium between traditional and modern stylistic choices.

Presenting some results of his commentary on Book 8 of the epistles, M. Zoeter chooses *Ep.* 8.11, which Sidonius dedicates to the memory of his friend Lampridius, killed

some time before (adding also a joking poem sent to him in the past). The complex way used to recall his personality, his literary preferences and his bloody death gives the letter a particular tone, and the attention is shifted to its meaning in Book 8 and to the way in which the letters are set, juxtaposing themes of the traditional life of Roman aristocracy with images of the new political and social life under the Visigoths.

Part 2 considers Sidonius' *Fortleben*, a branch of studies worth developing. Two essays concern authors living in Gaul in the fifth and sixth centuries: Avitus of Vienne and Venantius Fortunatus. L. Furbetta focuses on Avitus' *De spiritalis historiae gestis*, following its editorial progress, analysing the various echoes of Sidonius' work singled out by scholars and the several ways in which Avitus picks up Sidonian intertexts, from simple verbal refrains to sheer *aemulatio*, in a mnemonic inlay characterised by weak allusiveness (sometimes by metapoetic traits).

By contrast, as S. Condorelli underlines, after a century of the Franks' rule in Gaul, in the presence of a barbarian public as opposed to a culturally refined one, Sidonius leaves few traces in Venantius Fortunatus' poetry. In addition to a few possible intertextual echoes, some poetic genres cherished by Sidonius are taken up with personal rewording. In the panegyrics for the kings Charibertus and Chilpericus the choice of the elegiac couplet instead of the hexameter deviates from epic style; in the epithalamium for Sigebertus and Brunehildes the mythological themes traditional in wedding descriptions are replaced by evoking the spring beauty of nature. In an interesting way Venantius' poem on Saint Saturnine's martyrdom develops some themes alluded to in the lines Sidonius added to *Ep.* 9.16.

Two essays deal with Sidonius' *Fortleben* in the Renaissance. The first commented edition of Sidonius, published by G.B. Pio in 1498, is analysed by Di Stefano, who defines it as characterised by two 'strainings', one the result of the short time given by the publisher, which prevented Pio from checking books and manuscripts, the other the result of excessive erudition, which, adding continuously different topics, by a 'domino effect' in the end lost any links with the text. But Pio's commentary, despite some lacunae, marks a significant starting point in Sidonian studies and collects many sources including the whole of Latin literature and Greek authors of the imperial age. The range of types of notes is particularly rich (as Hernández Lobato points out): lexical, mythological, historical, geographical; corrections based on manuscripts, generally rejected by scholars; conjectures, sometimes remarkable. Some notes on the prosody of Latin names derived from Greek are polemically in contrast with Hermolaus Barbarus, who had charged Sidonius with ignorance of the Greek language.

E. Wolff analyses Petrus Crinitus' (one of Poliziano's pupils) short note about Sidonius in *De poetis Latinis*, which, although based on unidentifiable sources containing mistakes and omissions, is useful for the history of Sidonian reception. Its most interesting feature is the evaluation of Sidonian prosaic style as provincial and excessively elaborate, according to a rigid Ciceronianism in contrast with Poliziano's eclecticism open to different models.

This volume enlightens on the multifaceted nature of Sidonius' work, often supporting new ways for research. The best conclusion is in J. van Waarden's essay: examining the studies on Sidonius of the last decades against the background of the changes that took place in scholarship, he observes that, in addition to the major developments in research on form, structure, intertextuality, poetics and metapoetics, now studies are starting to appear that are based on pragmatic linguistics and narratology or including postmodern elements. His wish, which I share, is that Sidonian studies may always be open to new methods of analysis.

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