

*Review of 'Proceedings of the PMR
(Patristic, Medieval and Renaissance)
Conference, vol. 11, 1986, pp.1-86'*

Article

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Proceedings of the PMR (Patristic, Medieval and Renaissance) Conference, vol. 11, 1986, pp.1-186

With essays on diverse topics from many eras the contents of the Proceedings live up to the Conference's title. Needless to say the patron saint of the Augustinian Historical Institute of Villanova University, which produces the Proceedings, figures often in its pages.

The General Address by Père Luc Verheijen discusses two grids of composition and reading that underlie Augustine's *Confessions*: one centring round a triple aspect of God as the Light, the Creator and the Saviour and the other exemplified by a structure of argument the speaker finds in Bks. IV and VI. M.G. Burrows finds that Boethius's *De Consolatione* 5, pr. 3-6 is best read as an emulation of *De Civitate Dei* 5, 9-11 and claims the *De Consolatione* provides an essentially 'Augustinian' definition of *providentia*. When discussing the unity of the virtues in the *Dialogues* Scott Davies contends that Abelard's presentation of the virtues is only superficially Aristotelian and that stoic elements and Augustinian tradition are more important here. J. Cavadini prefers to view Claudius of Turin as an admirer of Augustine's teachings on truth, good works and the contemplation of God free from all corporeal imaginings than as an early medieval herald of the Reformation. William of Conches interprets *mundus non incepit unquam* in his *Glosae super Platonem* - successfully according to C. Gross - as evidence for a creationist reading of the *Timaeus*. By his use of Augustine's doctrine of creation *cum tempore* it also provides a revised reading of Boethius's exculpation of Plato.

Augustine also plays a major role in the first of three articles relating to monasticism. P. Ranft argues that the Benedictine Rule with its attention to the external and practical aspects of monastic life was more suited to the mentality of the Dark Ages and early medieval times whereas the rule of St. Augustine, especially the *regula tertia*, with its emphasis on relationships was increasingly used from the eleventh century in the various orders of canons regular, the Teutonic knights, the Dominicans etc., as witness played an increasingly important role in the *vita communis*. A sermon (after 1229) by Hélinand on superfluous monastic buildings reflects the Bernhardine doctrine of people before buildings according to B. Kienzle.

Religious thought of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance are

represented by articles on Nicholas of Cusa and the French Catholic humanist Guillaume Budé. Alarmed by statements such as 'Cusa is the master of Copernicus' C.T. Ebey shows that Nicholas's sophisticated and even mystical cosmology is essentially theological and medieval. G. Echard discusses Budé's objections to the Reformation and the anti-Catholic placards in Paris and the provinces in 1534 in *De Transitu*.

Literature is not neglected. M.S. Grant makes a clever attempt to persuade us that there is an inherent connection between all the stories the First Continuator of Chrétien's *Perceval* tells in the Short Redaction. S. Samples provides a detailed discussion of Hartmann's courtly God in *Erec*. S.L. Clarke, finding significance in what is 'left out' and what is 'left in' in Veldeke's *Eneide*, examines Eneas' unreliability (especially with women), the unfortunate role of women, the imbalance and faults of the plot and a general lack of Christian behaviour and attitudes in a medieval German 'soap opera'. R.L. Schichler looks at the symbolism and meaning of the enmity between the hart and the dragon in patristic and early medieval Christian literature and discusses significant analogies he finds in *Beowulf*.

The Proceedings ends with a worthy plea by T.M. Vann and N. Melechen for collaboration in establishing a computer index of medieval Castilian *Fueros*.

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