

*Abstracts for Conference on
Patristic Homilies and their History of Reception
Short Communications and Parallel Papers
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Fr. Roman Bozyk, St. Andrew's College

St. Ilarion of Kyiv and his Sermon on Law and Grace

St. Ilarion, the first native of Ancient Rus' (Ukraine) to hold the position of Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Rus' (1051-1054 AD.) was also the first writer and theologian of the newly-baptised people of Rus'-Ukraine. St. Ilarion's Sermon on Law and Grace, first delivered as a Paschal Sermon in Kyiv in 1049 AD. is a fine example of a Byzantine rhetorical homily outside of Byzantium proper. The Sermon on Law and Grace compares the Old Covenant (Law) with the New Covenant of Christ (Grace) and proclaims the supersedence of circumcision by Baptism and of Moses by Christ.

I plan to review the main points of the Sermon showing clearly that it is a theological-biblical homily and not an extreme allegory used for political purposes. This will include a discussion of the pious reception of the Sermon in Kyivan-Rus' and its many forms of misinterpretation and thus faulty reception in the more contemporary world. Due to the practice adopted later to downplay the clear patristic-style use of biblical metaphor, the Sermon began to be interpreted as a anti-Byzantine treatise to support autocephaly of the Ukrainian Church and even the Russian desire for a separate Patriarchate. Most of the modern interpretations of the Sermon do violence to the actual thought of St. Ilarion who as a theologian and first Metropolitan of Kyiv of local origin strove to proclaim the Good News of Salvation to the newly-baptised.

The Sermon of St. Ilarion of Kyiv, which represents a neo-patristic rebirth in Rus', had a great reception in the Church and amongst the early Ukrainian people as it set beyond question the allegiance of the Church of Kyivan Rus' to Christ and to the Holy Orthodox Church under the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Dr. Francine Cardman, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

Poverty, Charity, Beatitude: Augustine Preaching the Work of Love

Taking sermons 53 and 53A on the Beatitudes, this paper will examine the ways in which Augustine preaches the works of love, particularly the mercy and justice of the Beatitudes, in relation to the materially poor in these and a number of additional sermons (e.g., 61, 85, 345, 389). The focus is not on alms giving, per se, but the extent to which and the means by which Augustine addresses the practical and particular in these sermons. What I am hoping to delineate in the paper is a space in his preaching on love and charity that is not about correction (e.g., of the Donatists, as in the Homilies on 1 John), on the one hand, or the *uti-frui* binary on the other (e.g., 90A and 385), but everyday love of neighbor: the content of concrete acts of love.

In analyzing these popular sermons, I will also examine how Augustine moves from theology to practice and how he attempts to move his hearers to action. To do that, it will be useful to keep in mind both *On Christian Teaching* and *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* as points of reference; the former for the theory of preaching/teaching as well as for the *uti-frui* distinction, the latter as

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exegesis or commentary in contrast to preaching.

Bibliography

St. Augustine, Sermons 53, 53A, 61, 85, 90A, 380, 385, Homilies on 1 John, On Christian Teaching, Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount

Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of the Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD*

Jennifer Ebbeler, *Disciplining Christians: Correction and Community in Augustine's Letters*

Richard Finn, *Almsgiving in the Later Roman Empire: Christian Promotion and Practice 313-450*

Paul Kolbet, *Augustine and the Cure of Souls*

Frederick Van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*

Johan Leemans Brian Matz, Johan Verstraetem, eds., *Reading Patristic Texts on Social Ethics: Issues and Challenges for Twenty-First Century Christian Social Thought*

Jacob E. Drake, Duke Divinity School

Preaching in the Spirit: Gregory of Nazianzus

In Oration 31, Gregory of Nazianzus unequivocally proclaims the full divinity of the Holy Spirit within the Godhead. Gregory's theological directive claimed orthodoxy in a city misled by a cacophony of heresies. He delivered the oration as a catechetical sermon to a historical church congregation for the benefit and cause of the orthodox faith. He preached under conviction of the Spirit seeking to fortify the true church built on the work of the Triune God. The oration assumes prior theological and biblical knowledge from the laity as he exhorts them to rely on the Holy Spirit as the only true provider of theology. Preaching and worship cannot discuss or commune with God apart from the work of the Spirit. Gregory witnessed the work of the Holy Spirit as true God and must persuade others of this central truth, despite certain opposition from the warring ecclesial, political, and theological factions.

This paper will explore the social, theological and historical significance of Gregory's sermon. I intend to draw theological and historical research from scholars such as Brian Daley, John McGuckin, Lewis Ayres, and Robert F. Taft who read with fidelity and trust of church tradition. Gregory's sermon and rhetoric can empower contemporary churches and leaders to grasp the courage and conviction to preach only in the Spirit. The Church had to rely on the work of the Holy Spirit in ancient Constantinople and must do so today in all branches of Christianity. No preaching or church exists apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.

Sébastien Falardeau, CÉINR\Université de Montréal

"Looking Back; Looking Forward"! Act of Preaching and Rhetorical Settings in the Homilies of St. Augustine and his Reception in Dementia Health Care Center in the 21st Century

There are already excellent biblical and exegetical studies, which enable us to enter in the world of Augustine's homilies. However, these studies do not report Augustine in the act of preaching his exegesis of the Bible. Although Isabelle Bochet claims that the study of « scriptural hermeneutics is thus a priority to enter the Augustinian work," we think that an understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of Augustine's rhetoric is essential to really grasp the structure of his exegesis and predication. As we know, one of the major concern of Augustine was to tailor his rhetoric according to the socio-cultural context of his preach (Thagaste versus Hippo, for example) in order to fully attract the attention of the listeners. Indeed, his formation as a orator made it particularly

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easy for him to use vivid rhetorical as well as theatrical procedures to grasp the attention of the faithful, whether during preaches, Eucharistic celebrations or the anointment of the sick. In fact, the goal of St. Augustine with his rhetoric is to attract the attention of the faithful so they can meet the Christ.

After presenting various examples of the way Augustine did adapt the core of his exegesis according to the topic and to the audience (Expositions on the Psalms and Treatises on the Gospel of John), we shall discuss about the importance of such rhetorical and theatrical approaches centered on people when providing spiritual care to people with dementia as we do in Rouyn-Noranda (Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Québec).

In this particular setting, the person, rather than the exegesis of the Bible or the Christ, is at the heart of our spiritual intervention. Our goal is to reach the person with dementia starting from his own spiritual or religious experience, whether based on catholic dogmas or not. Although catholic rituals do not take into account the single loss or the singular drama of the person with dementia, the oratorical approach of Augustine remains of great interest to reach people with dementia during religious celebrations. The aesthetic and theatrical constructions of religious celebrations as exemplified in the pastoral works of Augustine remain a vivid way to establish a relationship with people with dementia.

Emanuel Fiano, Duke University

Speaking Truth to Whom? Rhetoric and the Multiplication of Audiences in a Homily by Shenoute of Atripe

This paper is devoted to uncovering, through a close rhetorical analysis, the multiple audiences of Shenoute of Atripe's homily *Now Many Words and Things I Said* (Discourses 4.6), thus far untranslated to English. In addressing his monastic federation in this parenetic composition, Shenoute creates a complex intarsia of self-citations from his previous interactions with representatives of the imperial power. During his speech, Shenoute reports the contents of his exchange with one commander Chossoroas, which in its turn contained Shenoute's report of another exchange, held at a yet previous time, with an anonymous commander (as well as a short self-citation from another, unspecified speech of the archimandrite).

A.G. López, in his monograph *Shenoute and Atripe and the Uses of Poverty*, reads Shenoute's discussions with Roman authorities in *Now Many Words* within the framework of the Foucauldian parrhesiastic game, interpreting it as a ritualized exchange loaded with competitive meanings, through which both subjects are re-negotiating their position of authority. My own examination, rather than attempting to retrieve the nature of Shenoute's historical contacts with imperial power, will focus on the level of rhetoric. In particular, I will suggest that the proliferation of self-citations and the sustained usage of the distancing rhetorical device of ἐξέτασις allow Shenoute to multiply his authorial voice by means of a powerful rhetorical machine, while finely tying together his different claims of authority over a variety of subjects: imperial commanders, soldiers, local peasants, ascetics, and heretics. While many of these subjects are addressed directly in one or another self-citation, the composition as a whole complicates our understanding of the notion of "audience" in an homiletic context.

Email response to my question about clarifying the audience and setting of the sermon to be examined:

In response to your question, I was working under the assumption that a parenetic speech delivered in a liturgical setting in front of a monastic audience (and in which the previous speeches in front of Roman authorities are only reported and recalled) qualifies as a homily. I

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meant to convey this with the sentence: "In addressing his monastic federation in this parenetic composition, Shenoute creates a complex intarsia of self-citations from his previous interactions with representatives of the imperial power".

Philip Michael Forness, Princeton Theological Seminary*Syriac Homilies at the Turn of the Sixth Century: A New Approach at Contextualization*

This paper incorporates Syriac texts into the history of homilies during the sixth century. Long assumed to be the century when the homiletical genre declined, studies over the last twenty years have overturned this supposition. But many homilies from this century await incorporation into our knowledge of the nature and the extent of preaching in this century. Syriac homilies, which reached their apex in this time, can help significantly.

Over five hundred Syriac homilies survive from the late-fifth and early-sixth centuries, belonging to a select few authors. These homilists demonstrate training in the Greek rhetorical tradition, Antiochene exegetical methods, and the rich poetical tradition of their native language. Standing at the intersection of Greek and Syriac culture, they show the spread of these traditions throughout the Roman Near East and on into the Persian Empire. Yet these Syriac homilies pose manifold difficulties for the modern interpreter. Their dating, location, audience, liturgical setting, and even authorship prove problematic, if not unattainable. Even when we do know their authorship, we cannot determine a likely location in which they delivered particular homilies.

This presentation offers a new approach to contextualizing these homilies. It proposes that we can analyze these homilies based on their authors' involvement in a developing Syriac intellectual culture. These Syriac homilists styled their homilies to communicate complex theological ideas to monastic, lay, and mixed audiences. But they also participated in an intellectual culture in which their subtle comments both on Syriac and Greek texts and on traditions of exegesis could be appreciated. Their homilies catered to both audiences. The high literary register of these homilies fails to provide clear details about the immediate audience for these homilies. But their authors' interaction with literary texts and the intellectual problems of their day can help situate individual homilies chronologically and within wider discussions. This, in turn, demonstrates how sixth-century homilies served as vehicles for transmitting the doctrinal debates to wider audiences in the Roman Near East and Persian Empire.

Nicholas Groves, Joe Buley Library- New Gracanica Serbian Diocese*Preaching to the Choir? Gregory of Nazianzus on Christian Response to the Poor (Oration 14)*

When Gregory delivered this address in the late 360s (more exactly, probably in 366-367), what were the most specific audiences for which it was intended? Was it, as Bernardi seems to think, primarily intended to support Basil's proposed project for care? Or was it to reach a larger audience, and possibly gather support in Constantinople, as John McGuckin suggests? Can we detect in Gregory's use of particular scriptural texts, and in his understanding of the poor as presented in the discourse, something about those he was trying to reach? From a close analysis of this text, can we learn anything about the context of its delivery ? How can it help us to understand Gregory's vision of philanthropia? Lastly, but by no means of least concern, how does this vision- delivered in a very particular environment- relate to our own philanthropia today?

Dr. Wendy Helleman, University of Jos

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Augustine's Sermons: The Rejection of Hagar as Rejection of the Jews

The pastoral intent of Augustine's preaching did not exclude a lively polemical element. His sermons provide eloquent testimony to his combative spirit, always ready to challenge opponents of the Catholic Christian faith. A study of Augustine's use of the Pauline allegory of Sarah and Hagar (Galatians 4.21-31) reveals his application of the passage in debate with Manichees, Donatists and Jews, whether in literary published work (*De Civitate Dei*, *De Trinitate*, *Contra Faustum*, etc.) or in sermons, especially *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus XI*, *Adversus Iudaeos*, and *Enarratio in Psalmum CXIX*.

While Augustine's response to Manichees and Donatists has mainly a historical significance, his treatment of Jews and Judaism remains a live issue. The negative character of Augustine's approach has been noted recently by Joh. Van Oort ("Jews and Judaism in Augustine's Sermons" in G. Partoens et al. eds., *Ministerium Sermonis*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009: 243-265). Van Oort does recognize a degree of ambivalence in Augustine's judgment, and also notes the complexity of the charge of anti-Semitism. To address the question more adequately, it is helpful to compare Augustine's rhetorical strategy with that of John Chrysostom, his contemporary in the East. The present essay seeks to evaluate some mitigating factors raised in Robert Wilken's *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1983), insofar as these are applicable to the relevant sermons of Augustine. // See my discussion, "'Abraham had two sons': Augustine and the Allegory of Sarah and Hagar (Galatians 4:21-31)" *CTJ* 48 (2013): 35-64; also 'Augustine and Philo of Alexandria's 'Sarah' as a Wisdom Figure (*De Civitate Dei* XV 2f.; XVI 25-32)' in *St Augustine and his Opponents*, *STUDIA PATRISTICA LXX*, Vol. 18 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013): 105-116.

Anne Keidel,

Basil's Homilies on the Psalms

Basil's Homilies on the Psalms have a strong pastoral quality with the aim of providing a spiritual education for the faithful. The audience was varied and perhaps each of the fifteen homilies had a different variation on the variety that was found among the faithful for whom Basil felt a strong pastoral responsibility. The Psalms played an important role in Christian liturgies and, as such, homilies aiming to communicate their message helped guide the faithful in leading a Christian life so as to travel the path that leads to the end our Faith points us towards. As Basil comments on each verse of a particular Psalm, he makes Scripture the jumping off point for the message he is trying to get across. There are many points that Basil endeavors to communicate to his listeners. The importance of judgment is emphasized, God's judgment and our judgment. Among the issues related to this theme are the presence of free will in the human being, the role of intention and the interior balance within us, by which we weigh the alternatives. Basil concerns, in helping members of his flock live a Christian life, make these homilies a good source for his teaching on Christian discernment.

Matthew Knotts and Anthony Dupont, Catholic University of Leuven

Incarnation as criterion. Augustine's sermones ad populum 182-183 as loci theologici-philosophici

Patristic sermons have long been disregarded by scholars, being seen as merely 'pastoral' or 'moralizing' talks, and were not considered as loci of original philosophical and theological

Matthew Knotts and Anthony Dupont, Catholic University of Leuven

reflection and communication. But such a view implies a neglect of the dynamic nature of sermons in the patristic period (consider, e.g., Basil's homilies on the Hexaemeron), especially the approach taken by Augustine, the material of whose sermons is not limited to the pastoral and the practical, but engages with and is informed by the very same philosophical-theological topics he discusses in his other writings. Indeed, the primary difference between his doctrinal writings and his homilies is rooted not in differences in content, but rather in such bases as the latter's liturgical context and their direct contact with a (usually) sympathetic audience. We believe that an analysis of the content of the sermons can both provide insight into Augustine's pastoral and spiritual perspective on philosophical and theological topics, and even complement our understanding of his thinking as such. In order to illustrate this point, we shall consider Augustine's Christological-polemical exegesis of 1 Jn 4:1-3 in the consecutively preached sermons ad populum 182-183.

The main part of our lecture will be devoted to the very 'creative' Biblical hermeneutics Augustine deploys in this pair of sermons, in which he defends an orthodox, Nicene theology of the Incarnation and the Trinity as an essential, non-negotiable aspect of true Christianity (cf. Drever 2007). Drawing upon 1 Jn, Augustine seeks to demonstrate that every heresy in some way entails a denial of the Incarnation. In sermo 182, which Augustine directs against the Manichaeans, we see a pastor and theologian informed by and relying on philosophical arguments and concepts which led him to his Christian conversion decades before, in particular the (Neoplatonic) doctrine of evil as *priuation boni*. However, unlike John, Augustine is in his time confronted with heresies which actually do confess, at least apparently, that Christ has come in the flesh. As Dodaro (2007, 164) writes, Augustine's sermo 183 is intended to show that, *inter alia*, the Donatists' 'verbal orthodoxy is not matched by their understanding of the divine and human natures of Christ.' In our contribution we will thus illustrate that Augustine's rhetorical masterwork was on par with a theological *pièce de résistance*. Augustine succeeded in turning John's 'Christological test' against both the Donatists and Pelagians, who at first sight seemed to be Christologically orthodox, and exposing them as heretics, and thus as enemies of Christ and His Church (Cassidy 1995, Finan 1995). Sermons 182-183 exhibit a combination of Augustine the pastor-preacher and Augustine the philosopher-theologian and exemplify the specificity of patristic homiletic rhetoric: sermons as a genre within a specific liturgical/scriptural context; as locus of philosophy and theology; and as a specific form of oral communication and interaction between preacher and audience.

Julia Lillis, Duke University

Thekla's Status in Severus of Antioch's Preaching: Diminished or Enhanced?

Recent decades have seen a wealth of scholarship on the early saint Thekla, on the account of her exploits found in the Acts of Paul, and on late ancient textual and visual works that present her anew. One work centered on Thekla that has received little attention so far is a sermon by Severus of Antioch—his 97th Cathedral Homily—which survives in Syriac translation (both in Jacob of Edessa's translation from about 700 C.E. and in a sixth-century translation from an unpublished manuscript in Rome). In a small handful of recent engagements with the sermon, scholars have asked how its rhetoric affects or reconstructs the status of this famous figure: In what ways and by what strategies does Severus praise Thekla, invite or discourage his audience's imitation of her, and seek to exalt, contain, transform, or otherwise make use of her memory?

Scholars have claimed that Thekla's status as a praiseworthy model for Christians is either diminished or problematized in Severus' homily: he robs Thekla of her humanity and imitability by identifying her with the Church on a cosmic-symbolic level, and he warns women away from imitation of her controversial practices of cross-dressing and teaching, perhaps thereby seeking to squelch such practices among female believers in his own day. Such observations fit neatly inside the widely held view that late ancient church leaders domesticated Thekla, condemning or

Julia Lillis, Duke University

omitting the gender-bending elements of her story so as to depict her as a more proper virgin-martyr. In contrast to these views, I argue that the rhetorical result of Severus' sermon is an enhancement of Thekla's status. Though Severus does defend restrictive norms concerning women's teaching and cross-dressing, he also defends and exalts a teaching and cross-dressing Thekla, encouraging and not curtailing devotion to her. Rather than portraying her as a woman subordinated to church policy (as has been suggested), he equates her with the Church itself while creating a rationale for the historical Thekla's exemption from the laws she seems to transgress. Despite the distance created between saint and imitator as Severus locates her in a symbolic realm and in a distant past, he does not reduce her authority as a model or make her a mere symbol; instead, he also creates proximity by bringing the saint near to his audience, assuring female devotees in particular that they are bonded to Thekla in kinship and that the limited forms of imitation available to them are nonetheless true imitation. A close reading of the sermon's difficult rhetorical twists and turns reveals a preacher's struggle to hold together potentially conflicting impulses, with an end result that does not discredit Thekla's example but makes the saint and her disruptive story vividly present for hearers and readers.

Dr. Lisa D. Maugans Driver, Valparaiso University

Homiletic Diagnosis and Therapy for Schismatic Elitism through Lucan Parables

Asterius of Amaseia (ca. 330/335-420/425) faced ruptures within his congregation pitting those who regarded themselves as truly spiritual against those derided by these so-called elites as lukewarm or even lost. The divisions threatened to splinter not only the laity, but also his subordinate clergy. Asterius employed several Lukan parables in his homilies to address these factions and to reprimand his clergy publicly. At first glance, these divisions should not be surprising to students of the patristic era. I will use the Cappadocian fathers—Asterius' neighbors and near contemporaries—as a back-drop to show that they faced similar problems with ascetic elitism. However, I will argue that Asterius' situation uniquely bears witness to how the disputes divided his clergy, even to the point of some clergy refusing their parishioners access to the sacraments and to penance itself. I will further explore how Asterius' atypical use of the parable of the Two Sons and the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican anchor his pastoral theology. He engaged these parables to diagnose his flock's spiritual afflictions and to offer a remedy. In these homilies, Asterius was especially concerned to address the elitism of some of his clergy, claiming that they had abandoned what it meant to be a good pastor. Thus, his homily on repentance turned more on allowing people to repent than on urging them to do so.

Asterius' homilies allow us to build on our understanding of patristic preaching as an important tool for managing relationships among the faithful when they varied so widely in their zeal. This touches on several research tracks involving homiletics, theology and asceticism. Central to my analysis are the many studies on the cultural context of preaching by Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen. With respect to the relationship between ascetics and local churches, I draw on works such as Paul Fedwick (*The Church and the Charisma of Leadership in Basil of Caesarea*) and Andrea Sterk (*Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church*). Finally, Susanna Elm (*Virgins of God*), Daniel Caner (*Wandering Begging Monks*) and Hannah Hunt (*Clothed in the Body*) deepen my understanding of ascetic variety and radicalism.

Preliminary Bibliography of Primary Sources

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Samantha Miller, Marquette University*Fear Not: John Chrysostom's Demonological Discourse as Motivation for Virtue*

John Chrysostom is known for inciting fear in his congregation as a motivational tool, but about the devil and his demons Chrysostom tells his congregation to fear not. Instead, the congregants should think of demons and be emboldened. They should remember their free will, spit in the devil's face, and choose virtue. Demonological discourse thus becomes a homiletic tool Chrysostom uses to achieve his desired effect. Though one tradition of scholarship has dismissed Chrysostom as "just" a moralist, I hope to show that there is a sophisticated line of reasoning behind Chrysostom's choice for method of persuasion. Through an analysis of his *De diabolo tentatore* and supplemental passages from his *Catechetical Homilies*, I argue that Chrysostom's choice to speak about demons is practical and in service of an overarching goal: to encourage his congregation to pursue virtue.

I make my argument in three parts. First, I demonstrate the practicality of Chrysostom's rhetoric about demons by showing that Chrysostom's immediate goal in speaking about the devil is often to eradicate fear of the devil from his audience. Second, I evaluate Chrysostom's use of the term *προειρεσις* in his rhetoric about demons in order to show the proportional relationship between his emphasis on *προειρεσις* and his admonishments against fear. Finally, by exploring the nuances of this relationship, I demonstrate that Chrysostom's demonological discourse is aimed at exhorting his congregation to virtue. In doing so, this study offers one approach for thinking about the various methods patristic preachers used to encourage their congregations to the pursuit of virtue and the possibility of seeing preachers as more than "mere moralists."

Dr. Nicholas Newman, University of Zurich*A Festival of Words: Patristic Sermons in their Festal Context*

The style of Patristic sermons owes a great deal to the rhetorical tradition of late antiquity, one important difference, however, lies in the context in which these sermons were given. In this paper I propose to discuss the context of these sermons, how the authors of the sermons weave the themes of the feast day and the hymns of the liturgical celebration into their texts.

In order to illustrate this, I will explore several themes from the feast day of the Presentation (Hypapante): such as the theme of righteousness, as exemplified by Symeon and Anna; the theme of light, as is seen in the *Nunc Dimittis* prayer and in the association of this feast with the Theophany; and humility, as exemplified in Christ's condescension to abide by the laws of the Old Testament which He, as God, set in place.

As the majority of the Patristic sermons on the Hypapante have yet to be translated into English, and as they are quite numerous, I have narrowed the scope of this paper by choosing four sermons, those by Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyril of Alexandria and Timothy of Jerusalem. By exploring the interplay between the homily and the festal/liturgical cycle of the Church, I hope also to shed light on the interaction between the homilist and his audience. The homilist uses elements from the festal/liturgical cycle to engage the audience, which, in turn, gains a deeper understanding of the feast through the homily.

Dr. Adam Serfass, Kenyon College

Dr. Adam Serfass, Kenyon College*Reading Patristic Homilies with Students of Ancient Rhetoric*

Both pedagogical and scholarly, this paper will discuss the experience of reading the Cappadocians' homilies on wealth and poverty with students in an undergraduate course on Greek and Roman rhetoric. It will show how recent research on patristic homiletics informs – and, perhaps, may even be informed by – our classroom discussion of the sermons. The paper will begin by introducing the course, paying special attention to its last two weeks, when the students, after digesting parts of Peter Brown's *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity* and Susan Holman's *The Hungry are Dying*, read in English translation Basil's homily "In Time of Famine and Drought" (CPG 2852) and Gregory of Nyssa's two homilies "On the Love of the Poor" (CPG 3169-70). The paper will concentrate on two issues that regularly arise during class discussion. First, steeped in Aristotle's tripartite taxonomy of speeches, the students debate the homilies' genre. They usually conclude – anticipating in part the fourth book of Augustine's *On Christian Teaching* that they read for the last day of class – that the sermons admix elements from different genres and resist easy categorization. Secondly, knowing that a good orator must calibrate his speech to the situation at hand, students query the circumstances of the sermons' delivery and the composition of their audiences. I will discuss how I fold into the discussion recent research on ancient homiletics – for example, Ramsay MacMullen, Philip Rousseau, and Wendy Mayer on the preacher's audience – as well as students' reactions to the scholarly perspectives presented. In concluding, I will suggest a way to generate interest in patristic homilies – by reading them side-by-side with more recent speeches that share their themes and concerns. In my rhetoric course, students read the aforementioned homilies together with Martin Luther King's speech at the Lincoln Memorial. They marvel that speeches separated by more than a millennium share so many similarities, both stylistic and thematic. Reading ancient homilies and modern speeches together enables us to appreciate the skill and immediacy of the former and the rhetorical tradition to which the latter are indebted.

Rev. Dr. Demetrios E. Tonias, Taxiarchae Greek Orthodox Church*An Icon for All Seasons: John Chrysostom's Presentation of Abraham as a Model Christian*

John Chrysostom used the great men and women of the Old Testament to convey a variety of pastoral messages to his congregation. The rhetorical method that John embraced, rooted in the Greek philosophical tradition in general and Stoicism in particular, promoted an encomiastic presentation of virtuous heroes as a way to inspire the congregation to imitate them as personifications of goodness. In the patriarch Abraham, the Antiochene preacher found such a figure, possessed of a host of seemingly contradictory, but in effect universal traits applicable to the rich and the poor, the married and the monastic, the parent and the child. For Chrysostom, Abraham was not simply a representative of one, two, or several virtues but rather the embodiment of all virtue.

In this paper, I examine the ways in which John Chrysostom utilized a specific figure of the Old Testament to convey a variety of seemingly contradictory pastoral concerns. The rhetorical method of John, however, allowed him to simultaneously present the aged patriarch as both the summit of ascetic virtue and the model, Christian husband and father. His goal, however, was not simply to extol Abraham for the rhetorical sake of praise alone, but rather to demonstrate to his flock that they too could achieve such virtue in their everyday lives. John's encomium to Abraham was not confined to an individual sermon or even a series of sermons but was rather sprinkled throughout his corpus in hundreds of discrete references. A classical encomium of the patriarch emerges from these numerous references in which Chrysostom depicted the father of many nations as a model

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Christian – an icon for all seasons and for all people.

Sarah Van Pee, KU Leuven

Severian of Gabala's Homiliae in Hexaemeron. The Preacher's Expectations for his Audience

Severian of Gabala (†between 408 and 425 A.D.) was a Syrian bishop who preached in Constantinople at the invitation of John Chrysostom. He is chiefly known for his subsequent enmity with the latter. The *Homiliae in Hexaemeron*, a series of six exegetical homilies on Genesis 1-3, are his main work (*Patrologia Graeca* vol. 56, cols. 429-500). Severian was one of the first to give dialogue and drama a prominent place within the genre of the homily (Regtuit, 1993; Kecskeméti, 1993). Ingunn Lunde (1999) distinguished between an intra- and extra-textual type of dialogue in Byzantine homilies. In this paper, I will discuss extra-textual dialogue, the preacher's dialogue with his audience, as characterised by the use of questions and answers.

Mary Cunningham (2003) assumed that the only function of extra-textual dialogue was to attract and retain the attention of the audience. This is, however, only one part of a bigger picture. It is not only a rhetorical tool, but also a didactic and hermeneutical method which reveals several expectations regarding knowledge, skills and attitudes the preacher has for his audience. The use of questions and answers thus reflects both a hermeneutical method for the preacher and a didactic method, whereby the preacher functions as an example for his congregation concerning the application of his hermeneutical method. This intention becomes clear when Severian anticipates questions from his audience. Severian thus expects his audience to be able to raise questions evoked by the biblical text and to express their agreement or criticism, either during or after service.

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Narsai's Sermon on the Canaanite Woman: A Call to Imitation

Narsai (d. ca. 500 CE), a poet and teacher at the School of Edessa and later the School of Nisibis, composed verse homilies which represent the Eastern Syriac theological and exegetical tradition. There are 81 extant memre of Narsai preserved in manuscripts intended for liturgical use, and the A. Mingana published an edited volume of 47 memre in 1905. Subsequent scholars have edited and translated individual works, but several homilies have not been edited and there are only a select few translated. The present paper intends to contribute to the study of Narsai's homilies by translating and analyzing a heretofore unpublished and unedited homily, Homily XXXII "On the Canaanite Woman." This particular homily has a very limited manuscript basis: ms. D1 (olim Diyarbakir 70 transferred to the Chaldean Cathedral at Mardin); ms. M3 and M5 (currently at the Chaldean Patriarchate and inaccessible; and ms. Vat. Syr. 594. Diyarbakir 70 is one of the oldest manuscripts containing Narsai's works, rendering it a suitable base along with ms. Vat. Syr. 594 for a critical translation of the text. Having acquired access to ms. D1 and ms. Vat. Syr. 594, I am presently working on a transcription and translation of this homily.

The paper will place this work within the context of Narsai's homilies and manuscript location to surmise its liturgical context. A larger concern of the paper will be the representation of female biblical characters within Narsai's homilies, specifically as models for Christian piety and penance. A brief overview of how this episode of Matthew's gospel (15:21-28) was read among Greek and Syriac Patristic exegetes will provide insight into Narsai's use of earlier traditions as well as his distinctive style of interpretation. The comments of Theodore of Mopsuestia in his fragments on Matthew are significant given Narsai's association with this Antiochene teacher, but

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thought will also be given to the possible influence of Ephrem who mentions episode of Matthew 15:21-28 in a number of homilies. This project will endeavor to advance scholarship on Narsai and to illuminate his exegetical practice as a formative part of the larger East Syrian Church. Sebastian Brock, "Guide to Narsai's Homilies" in *Hugoye* 12.1 (2009). Brock provides a convenient guide to manuscripts and editions of Narsai's homilies, using the numbering system of A. Mingana and Macomber.