

Life serves to point readers to their ethical responsibilities. The function of this genre is quite evident: it offers readers a (human) figure they can relate to, and whom they can seek to imitate in their aspiration to achieve ascetic perfection. Moreover, it emphasizes the relation between the material and the divine; in other words, it is through the material world that one may encounter the divine.

Interestingly, Chapter Seven returns to Paul with a discussion of Jerome's *Commentary on Galatians* with a prelude on Jerome's conflict with Rufinus: it is Jerome's retort that Rufinus better remembers his (ethical) responsibility as *imitator Christi* that offers the bridge to *Galatians*. It is in the act of scriptural reading that one encounters Christ, and it follows that this enables readers to form a mimetic response. What is significant is that for Jerome, this is a dialectical relationship between text and reader, whereby the interpretation of the text may be subject to change. This is further elaborated in the penultimate chapter, where Hunt discusses Jerome's polemic *Against Jovinian*. In a truly Jeromesque-style, Hunt finishes his study with a reflection on *On Famous Men*.

Hunt has produced a very fine monograph that is highly commendable, certainly for those scholars who are not the regular Jerome-aficionados: the author has managed to portray our Dalmatian monk as a dedicated scholar and theologian profoundly concerned with the ethical responsibility that comes with literary production.

Unfortunately, the book still has several minor typos seemingly stemming from (multiple) revisions. I am also curious why the author chose the use of "u" over "v" for the Latin quotes. These petty remarks do not affect the quality of Hunt's literary production.

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Blake Leyerle

*The Narrative Shape of Emotion in the
Preaching of John Chrysostom*

Christianity in Late Antiquity 10

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Understanding the meaning, representation, and significance of an emotion is a complex proposition, even in a contemporary context. Therefore, when a scholar decides to investigate the affective contours of John Chrysostom's prodigious preaching in late antiquity, one might naturally wonder how this could be possible. How could the emotions—or passions, to be more precise—of a milieu shrouded in the mists of time be retrieved and examined? However, in recent years, scholars have explored how emotions were understood and enacted throughout history, examined how emotional discourses acted as drivers of cultural and political change, and probed the performativity of emotions. While personal feelings of anger, grief, and fear are difficult to retrieve, the literariness of homilies can serve

as a historical source for the study of emotions. Blake Leyerle's fascinating study considers how the homiletic brilliance of Chrysostom deployed biblical stories to arouse, allay, and transform the emotions of his audience. As Leyerle shows, Chrysostom knew all too well that, when it came to the spiritual pedagogy of his flock, the emotive power of narrative could succeed where precepts had spectacularly failed.

Chapter One shows how Chrysostom's homiletic explorations of scriptural stories portrayed anger as an interpersonal emotion that—surprisingly—has a role to play in a life of holiness. Harnessed well, anger can stave off demons, leap to the defense of someone wronged, and correct sinners. The cleansing of the Temple narrative is a case in point. Chrysostom reveals that the anger Jesus felt was a blessed emotion stirred by a desire for instruction: “unlike humans, who strike back in the heat of passion, intending to injure and humiliate, God's wrath is benevolent and aims only to correct” (50). The story of David and Saul also illustrates the point. Unlike the wrath of Achilles, David restrains his anger and becomes an exemplar for the faithful to emulate, thus rendering the ancient Greek warrior a counter-ideal. Foreshadowing how the performance of Byzantine hymns would mirror and shape the passions of the singer's soul, inviting the congregation to become part of the sacred drama unfolding before them, Chrysostom sought to elicit fellow-feeling in the faithful, enacting and mobilizing emotion in his retelling of biblical stories.

The second chapter explores the nuances of grief, which can manifest as mourning, melancholy, and despair. However, of all the Greek synonyms for this feeling, Chrysostom becomes fixated with the word *ἀθυμία* (despondency), using it on more than 800 occasions. According to Chrysostom, the wealthy “carry around in their soul a furnace of despondency” (67), igniting a fire of hopelessness when property, health, or loved ones are lost. In stark contrast, tears of repentance are a desirable movement of the soul, provoking action instead of indolence. The remedy for grief is found in the story of Job. By trusting in the divine providence of God, acknowledging the nakedness of mortality, and finding consolation in the dénouement of the story, Chrysostom's congregation could unlock the encouragement they need to feel equanimity in the face of misfortune and sorrow.

Chapter Three shows how Chrysostomic rhetoric did not merely evoke fear as a disciplinary force; it cultivated this emotion as a holy goad for reflection, compunction, and action. Although the “fear of hell is laid like a bridle in our hearts” (116), it can also be a heartbreaker that arouses a constant remembrance of and greater desire for the divine heart-maker. Moreover, the provocation of fear is about more than just personal affect. Invoking fear enhances feelings of solidarity, urging the faithful to sense their connectedness with each other as members of the body of Christ (2 Corinthians 11.29). Leyerle masterfully draws on relevant homilies from the Chrysostomic corpus, investigating how the stories of Cain and Abel, Lazarus and Dives, and other sermons ultimately have a pastoral objective, juxtaposing “the gravity of sin and the certainty of judgment” (149) with the virtuous life of a Christian who desires God's grace.

Chapter Four—“Chrysostom's Goal: Stimulating Zeal”—is the highlight of

the book, building on the insights presented in earlier chapters and exploring the salvific value of zealous feelings. The torpor that afflicts humanity is the underlying sin of *rbathymia*, which is not simply slothfulness, but “the disinclination to resist customary action or to change habitual behavior: an aspect that seems better expressed by *acquiescence*, *heedlessness*, or even *inertia*” (151). As an antidote, Chrysostom administers the invigorating emotions of anger, grief, and fear. However, they are not ends in themselves. The endgame is a disposition of “eager concern (*spoudē*) and zeal (*prothymia*)” (155). Injunctions to adopt such a disposition are often found alongside the competitive emotion of emulation. The Aristotelian concept of emulation becomes a springboard for Chrysostom who mobilizes the cult of martyrs to inspire zeal. While such a bid might seem doomed to fail, Leyerle carefully analyzes the emotive and homiletic dimensions of this achievement. Similarly, Chrysostom’s homilies portray the Samaritan woman as “an imitable model of zeal” (176), who, despite being poor, uneducated, and sinful, reveals the quiet excellence of heedfulness and the beauty of a soul aflame.

Perhaps the greatest desideratum that emerges after reading this monograph is a deeper exploration of the performativity of Chrysostom’s homilies. Leyerle is ultimately concerned with emotions in the writings of John Chrysostom, but it was the performance of these texts within a liturgical environment and an affective arena that awakened, shaped, and transformed the emotions of his flock. Although Leyerle is mindful of these dynamics, they deserve further contemplation. Chrysostomic scholarship has examined the performative dimension of preaching, but the intersections between performativity and emotions are unfathomed. Nevertheless, Leyerle’s analysis of Chrysostom’s affective strategy, homiletic program, and philosophical antecedents yields profound insights. The book is a wonderful contribution to Chrysostomic studies and the history of emotions, showing how Christianity harnessed the power of narrative, rhetoric, and feeling to navigate the spiritual universe of the faithful in late antiquity.

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Jared Secord

Christian Intellectuals and the Roman Empire:

From Justin Martyr to Origen

Inventing Christianity

University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State

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This well-written book assembles in four short chapters a wide range of sources in service of the argument that Christian intellectuals in the second and third centuries were similar to their non-Christian contemporaries and engaged in “the same intellectual culture” (5). By “intellectuals” Secord refers to “people