

## Preaching and Mesmerizing: The Resolution of Religious Conflicts in Late Antiquity<sup>1</sup>

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A number of important changes at the core of our society and within contemporary scholarship<sup>2</sup> are two factors which may account for the recent beneficial impact upon the modern bibliography of Late Antique studies. A multidisciplinary approach to Late Antiquity has recently emerged including the study of rhetoric – not long ago considered an intruder in the context of Patristic studies<sup>3</sup> – which has since become one of its methodological pillars. Within this field, studies on the sociocultural impact of rhetorical delivery (*actio/hypókrisis*<sup>4</sup>) during that period have multiplied, as scholars survey the extent to which Christian authors considered rhetorical delivery to be a key factor in the context of self-presentation and the establishment of hierarchical relationships.<sup>5</sup> Pivotal to this reinvigoration of rhetoric in Late Antiquity was the stress on *actio*, which was considered a powerful means of identification.<sup>6</sup>

The implication of *actio* however would always transcend the mere performance of a speech. Interpreted in a broader sense within a Christian context, *actio* took the shape of martyrdom, asceticism or the submission of the body to extreme sacrifice, and was central to the antagonism between the human inability to express God's words and the need to preach, as the emperor Constantine reveals in the proemium of his *Speech to the Assembly of the Saints*: 'For if any one, whether in the practice of eloquence, or any other art, expects to produce a finished work without the help of God, both the author and his efforts will be found alike imperfect.'<sup>7</sup>

The transcendence of physical appearance and the semiotics of body gestures in the realm of rhetoric bears testament to an era in which significant emphasis was placed on individuality, a time in which ‘the individual person emerged as the primary lens of human vision.’<sup>8</sup> Indeed, the ability to connect the appropriate voice, gait, gestures and postures with Christian attitudes serves to reinforce this idea.<sup>9</sup> A deficient delivery, an over-flamboyant gesture or a high-pitched voice could not only ruin someone’s reputation but also stigmatize him as an actor or a sophist. Irenaeus of Lyon, for instance, had already castigated Cain and heretics as being deceitful, greedy and ostentatious sophists.<sup>10</sup> Hence for public figures, a tainted ethos had to be avoided at all costs.<sup>11</sup>

In light of Averil Cameron’s concept of Christian rhetoric,<sup>12</sup> within this discussion I will analyse a series of rhetorical performances from several early Christian texts, examining the extent to which rhetorical delivery as a discriminatory component helped influence the construction of religious and cultural orthodoxy in Late Antiquity. I will further discuss how it became a means to stigmatize heretics and pagans as charlatans and sophists in a period when religious alliances and identities were often fought in the rhetorical arena. Passages pertaining to Paul of Tarsus’s custom of preaching will also be discussed as a prologue and framework to a more detailed study of texts by Eusebius of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Jerome and Ambrose of Milan, focusing on the idea that religious doctrines pervaded the concept of self-presentation in the literary and rhetorical milieu.

### The historical background. The ‘how’ matters: Paul of Tarsus

Through the use of an all-inclusive historical contextualization, the aforementioned renovation of Late Antique scholarship has helped broaden the scope of its study. Recent works, for example, have urged scholars not to overlook the sociocultural atmosphere in which early Christianity developed. As has been argued, the cultural milieu of the Roman Empire in the first centuries of the Christian era was involved in the development of the incipient religion.<sup>13</sup> In this context, modern works on Paul of Tarsus’s preaching activity have emphasized the performative and (almost) sophistic

dimension of his mission. In fact, if we accept Kent Stowers's views on Paul's preaching we may conclude with him that 'the widespread picture of Paul the public orator, sophist or street-corner preacher is a false one.'<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, an explanatory appendix is needed to nuance Stowers's convincing arguments against E. A. Judge, who maintains that 'St. Paul may be called a sophist without prejudice to the value or sincerity of his thought.'<sup>15</sup> Classical sources on Paul's activity, analysed through modern scholarship, may suggest that Paul's preaching somehow resembled the public performances of the sophists and Cynic philosophers of his time. Although in a strict sense he was a touring lecturer and an itinerant speaker, a public performer of rhetoric who taught at private houses (a characteristic activity of sophists and philosophers) and someone who lived in a period which saw the upsurge of the Second Sophistic movement,<sup>16</sup> the works of Winter and Stowers clearly state that Paul did not set out to model himself on such public figures. New Testament texts convey an image of Paul forging an anti-sophistical ethos with the intention of distancing himself from those figures.<sup>17</sup> Paul confesses that he does not peddle the word of God (2 Cor. 2.17) – an accusation frequently brought against sophists –, and that he is in fact a layman in speech whose words are not eloquent or flattering at all (2 Cor. 11.6; 1 Cor. 2.1; 1 Th. 2.5). He is a man, moreover, who lacks the ability or the dazzling physical presence to perform a proper *actio* (2 Cor. 10.10). Yet it was precisely this awareness of his own inability to meet the public-speaking standards of the time that served as the basis for his attempts to detach his image from that of other public speakers.<sup>18</sup>

Pauline texts also contain a number of terms which reflect the extent to which words relating to physical appearance, gestures, rhetoric and religious beliefs had become intertwined. ὀρθοποδέω, for instance, appears in Gal. 2.14 in the sense of 'walking straight', and is a verb with evident physiological connotations, the meaning of which was appropriated to a doctrinal context ('not proceeding on the right road to the truth of the Gospel').<sup>19</sup> The historical context of Gal. 2.14 (Paul rebuking Peter at Antioch) would be re-enacted by Basil of Caesarea in relation to a controversial episode with Eustathius of Sabaste. Basil argued that Eustathius was not walking in an upright manner (ὀρθοποδέω) since he was a fickle character whose unpredictability made him profess different creeds and Christian practices.<sup>20</sup> Since Eustathius's strange costume and physical appearance had previously been condemned at the

Synod of Gangra, Basil's accusation regarding his crooked posture may have perhaps been a subtle insinuation on the state of unorthodox self-presentation itself and Eustathius's own approach to preaching.<sup>21</sup>

### The fourth-century AD and the making of orthodoxy

As religious and Christological orthodoxy came to fruition in the fourth century AD, Christianity's transition into a legitimate religion and an inextricable part of imperial power was complete. Yet concern over the homogenization of gestures, movements and stances present in rhetorical performance and within preaching activity still raged among Christian cultural elites. Indeed Pagans, heretics and religious enemies were often portrayed as garrulous sophists, a far cry from those bishops and priests following the orthodoxy who were described in more genial terms as performing canonical and efficient rhetorical deliveries which helped their communities. Hence, *actio* became one of the touchstones in the making of religious orthodoxy. Eusebius of Caesarea's characterization of Paul of Samosata's figure (*HE* 7.30) is built upon theological controversies and denigratory rhetoric. Eusebius relays a letter addressed to Dionysius – Bishop of Rome – and Maximus – Bishop of Alexandria – which contains the decisions of the synod that deposed Paul as Bishop of Antioch.<sup>22</sup> Leaving aside Paul's Christology and the nationalistic aspirations behind his persona,<sup>23</sup> this document reveals how a sophistic duel was played out in the theological arena, since Malchion, a rhetorician and presbyter of Antioch, challenged Paul – who, as someone who played a role in public life, had been well trained in rhetoric<sup>24</sup> – to a public debate, accusing him of introducing the heretical doctrines of Artemon (Jer., *De Vir. Ill.*, 71: *Antiochenae Ecclesiae episcopus dogma Artemonis instaurarat*) and thus urging that he be deposed.

Eusebius's account of this process acknowledges how some of the arguments made against Paul allude to the catalogue of vices of a stereotypical sophist.<sup>25</sup> His proclivity for wealth and greed (*HE* 7.30.7), for instance, parallels excerpts from Lucian's sardonic dialogue *The Professor of Rhetoric* in which acquiring wealth was the driving force behind the learning of rhetoric (*Rh. Pr.* 24–5); likewise his behaviour and habits echoed those of some of the characters from Philostratus's *Life of the Sophists*, in particular Herodes Atticus (*VS* 544–66).

According to Eusebius, Paul's σχῆμα and care for public image epitomized his taste for worldly joys as he (*HE* 7.30.8–9) 'strolls in the marketplaces, reading and dictating letters as he walks in public, and attended by a body guard (. . .) He astonishes the people with the tribunal and lofty throne that he prepared for himself, not befitting a disciple of Christ (. . .) the quackery in church assemblies that devises, courting popularity and posing for appearance's sake and thus astonishing the minds of the simpler folk.'<sup>26</sup> Such a concern for earthly matters once again reminds us of the temptation that Lucian's *Professor* alludes to as reward for becoming a sophist (*Rh. Pr.* 1, 15–17). In addition, examples of worldliness are also prevalent throughout Philostratus's *Life of the Sophists*, and episodes of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (11.8.3) in which they act as caveats against the allure of superficiality. Indeed Paul's interaction with the audience and his theatrical gestures (*HE* 7.30.9) cultivate a mere entertainer-like image, akin to those sophists who did not declaim but sang to amuse and please their audience (*Them., Or.* 23.283; 28.341; 26.330; Dio Chry., *Or.* 32.29–30; 34.10). Evidently, in the eyes of Eusebius, Paul is little more than a public persona whose heretic beliefs (according to Eusebius's orthodox judgement) did not entitle him to represent the church.<sup>27</sup>

This may be contrasted with Eusebius's description of Malchion, that of a learned man who taught rhetoric (*HE* 7.29.2: λόγιος καὶ σοφιστοῦ), as opposed to Paul who, as he decries, owed his knowledge and adeptness to heretical convictions which turned him into a σοφιστῆς καὶ γόης (γόης, a word with derogatory connotations, linked to the world of magic and the concept of charlatanry: Aesch., 3.137; Pl., *Smp.* 203d; Eun., *VS* 6.5.9). Such polarized descriptions, therefore, help establish the boundaries for differentiating rhetoric – a useful tool to negotiate within the cultural elite – from sophistry and its immoral set of practices. In doing so, the customs and habits of a sophist became associated with the guise of the heretic (in this case, Paul of Samosata's monarchianism) as the embodiment of wickedness.<sup>28</sup>

In a not too dissimilar way, Gregory of Nazianzus took recourse to the stereotypical figure of the sophist in censuring religious enemies both within and outside the church. His works exemplify the ambiguity inherent in the term 'sophist' in Late Antiquity since, as B. Puech has pointed out, 'it could have different nuances and connotations depending on its context'.<sup>29</sup> As either a mere label or as a name harbouring derogatory connotations,<sup>30</sup> the word

'sophist' pervades Gregory's works, yet when it is applied to the emperor Julian it carries an evidently depreciative nuance which seems to fit the high disregard in which Gregory happened to hold the emperor. As part of his invectives against Julian (*Or.* 4–5) Gregory uses the term 'sophist' to denigrate Julian's entourage (for instance, Maximus of Ephesus, *Or.* 4.55) and duly criticize the emperor's ideology (*Or.* 4. 27, 112; 5.30<sup>31</sup>). In a similar fashion, Gregory (*Or.* 7. 11–13) narrates a forensic *agon* in which his brother, Caesarius, defended his Christian faith by opposing Julian's sophistries.

Furthermore, examples from the pagan mythological legacy appear to help fuel Gregory's damning critique of Julian (*Or.* 4.62, 82), who is compared to Proteus, the Egyptian sophist (see Plato's *Euthydemus* 288b), a clear allusion to Julian's ability to deceive.<sup>32</sup> Consequently, Gregory's use of the term 'sophist' had a polemical purpose, namely the 'demolizione del charisma giuliano'.<sup>33</sup>

Gregory was also forthright in his attacks on those priests and bishops who took too great a care over the performative dimension of their preaching. With loquacity the object of his scorn, the theologian sought to condemn his peers for succumbing to the dazzling and overly ornate style of fourth-century AD sophistry. In *Or.* 2, for instance, in which he discusses his defence of his flight to Pontus and offers an apology over his conception of priesthood, Gregory saves several passages (especially 42–7) arguing for the importance of restraining oneself from stirring an untrained tongue (*Or.* 2.47: γλῶσσαν κινεῖν ἀπαιδευτον). Similarly, in his discourse against the Eunomians (*Or.* 27), Gregory censures their tendency to elaborate speeches as well as their *horror silentii*. Likewise in *Or.* 42, composed on his resignation as president of the council of Constantinople in 381 after finding himself unable to 'please the majority' (*Or.* 42.24), Gregory urged his fellow bishops to realize that, sadly, churchgoers were demanding 'orators, not priests' (*Or.* 42.24).<sup>34</sup>

As touched upon earlier, this level of criticism reveals 'a tension at the heart of Gregory's own career and self-understanding'<sup>35</sup> and an anxiety over combining religious instruction with entertainment. Clearly, Gregory's conception of rhetoric (one should not forget that at one point he was a professional rhetor<sup>36</sup>) was one which longed for the transformation of the *vir bonus dicendi peritus* into the *vir sanctus dicendi peritus*. Church affairs, however, seemed to dictate otherwise.

It was Basil of Caesarea who, in Gregory's eyes, embodied this new model of Christian orator, the *vir sanctus dicendi peritus*.<sup>37</sup> Indeed his fondness for the

bishop was never more evident than in the oration he gave at the funeral of Basil, an oration which bears witness to his quest to nurture the perfect priest, someone who could express intellectual and religious truth without histrionic gestures (*Or.* 43.65), and with a sincere outward appearance that mirrored his inner beauty. In advocating such a figure Gregory was, in S. Elm's words, 'propagating a new personality (. . .), a model bishop for the Theodosian age'.<sup>38</sup>

In much the same way, rhetoric, religious orthodoxy and *actio* are all also closely related in John Chrysostom's homilies *apropos* the Riot of the Statues in Antioch. In February 387 the emperor Theodosius levied an extraordinary tax on the city which spurred the Antiochenes to protest and demonstrate. Animosity gave way to violence and before long imperial statues and portraits were stoned, denigrated and torn down, followed by arrests and executions, and the population of the city fled in panic.<sup>39</sup> Amidst this pandemonium, Chrysostom would compose his *Homilies on the Statues*, of which *Homily 21* merits particular attention, owing to Chrysostom's account of the intervention of the Bishop Flavian, who undertook a long and painstaking journey to Constantinople to ask for forgiveness before Theodosius.<sup>40</sup> After such an arduous trip, Flavian 'as soon as he came to that great city, and had entered the royal palace [. . .] stood before the emperor at a distance, – speechless, – weeping, – with downcast eyes, – covering his face as if he himself had been the doer of all the mischief; and this he did, wishing first to incline him to mercy by his posture, and aspect, and tears; and then to begin an apology on our behalf; since there is but one hope of pardon for those who have offended, which is to be silent, and to utter nothing in defense of what has been done'.<sup>41</sup>

Far from being a spontaneous rhetorical delivery, this was in fact a stage-managed *actio*, one which offers an important insight into the political and social dimension of rhetorical delivery. First, the stage – the royal palace at Constantinople – became the perfect platform from which Chrysostom could emphasize the supremacy of the heavenly presence as depicted by Bishop Flavian over earthly matters.<sup>42</sup> Added to this, Flavian is rendered speechless (*ἄφωνος*) yet this does not necessarily mean that he was in a weak position in asking for forgiveness since silence had become a semiotic element and a rhetorical device within Christian literature. Hence, the speechlessness of Flavian does not hint at a humiliating gesture on his part but was rather a proper sign of the authority of the bishop and advocacy of his supremacy over the earthly ruler.<sup>43</sup> Incidentally, the influence of Ignatius of Antioch's

conception of silence is evident here since his bishopric became the catalyst for Chrysostom's concept of the leadership of bishops (PG 50, 589).<sup>44</sup> In fact, as Claudia Rapp has pointed out concerning bishops' relationship with emperors, 'their appearance and comportment declared their ascetic authority, which, in turn, held the promise of their spiritual abilities of *parrhesia* with God'.<sup>45</sup> Hence, Flavian's *σχῆμα* became a persuasive means by which to impose his authority.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, Chrysostom represents the bishop weeping and feeling ashamed of Antioch, which, it seems, is yet another deliberate ploy to try to sway the emperor into overcoming any initial prejudices. Since the nature of the case made it extremely difficult to defend, Flavian used tears and shameful gestures as an *admirabile exordium*.<sup>47</sup>

Nevertheless, in *Homily 17* on the Riot of the Statues, Chrysostom reports an encounter between the emperor's emissaries in charge of the investigation of the riotous events (Hellebichus, *magister militum*, and Caesarius, *magister officiorum*) and an anonymous monk from the mountains surrounding Antioch.<sup>48</sup> The monk declares that 'the Statues which have been thrown down are again set up and have resumed their proper appearance; and the mischief was speedily rectified; but if you put to death the image of God, how will you be again able to revoke the deed!'<sup>49</sup> Fortunately, in his *History of the Monks of Syria*, Theodoret of Cyrus provides us with a more complete account of the identity of this man, Macedonius (*HRel* 13). As far as the accounts of the event can be trusted, Flavian's and Macedonius's *actio* appears to have been very different. While the bishop's rhetorical delivery was consciously planned, Macedonius's unadorned speech in Syriac needed to be translated. This reflects how different monks were from religious authorities when it came to self-presentation and rhetorical delivery. As Peter Brown has pointed out, 'while the urban clergy were forced to design themselves, to kiss the knees and clasp the feet of the imperial commissioners, in order to secure the release of only a few persons, Macedonius, as a holy man who owed nothing to Antioch, was able to speak for the city as a whole. He confronted the commissioners with a brusque courage so alien that it seemed to carry with it the awesome force of the Holy Spirit'.<sup>50</sup>

Theodoret's text differs from Chrysostom's in that it reveals the name of the monk and underlines the simple (though effective) rhetorical delivery of Macedonius. Yet at the core of this contrast, which left Macedonius as an unnamed monk in Chrysostom's account, was Macedonius's unsolicited



ordination as a priest by Flavian. According to Theodoret (*HRel* 13.4) the monk was ignorant of the rite performed in front of him, one which bestowed upon him the honour of priesthood and, soon after realizing what had happened, he tried to chase Flavian to beat him with his cane.<sup>51</sup>

Evidently Chrysostom endeavoured to portray Flavian as Antioch's saviour as part of his propagandist agenda in the context of the Meletian Schism, a process which went back to the time of the council of Nicaea and lasted until the first decade of the fifth century.<sup>52</sup> When Meletius died in 381, Flavian was appointed bishop ahead of Paulinus, the candidate of the Eustathians (one of the schismatic groups), who in 387 were still claiming Antioch's bishopric for Paulinus. It was in this volatile setting that Flavian intervened on behalf of the city, defending the Meletian section of the Nicene Creed as part of Chrysostom's plan to cement Flavian's authority as the legitimate bishop of Antioch. To this end, Meletius and Flavian are linked in Chrysostom's homilies with the authoritative figure of Moses (PG 49.44). Chrysostom's account of Flavian's eloquence avoids his assimilation into the mould of the stereotypical sophist since he carved an image of a classical orator who defends his city, drawing upon his persuasive abilities (PG 49.207; 214) and, as suggested by Aristotle (*Rh.* 1385b 13–16; 1386a 4–9), is a man who inspires pity, speaking with *parrhesia*.<sup>53</sup>

In the western part of the empire, authors such as Jerome, Ambrose or Augustine dealt with the transformation of the performative elements of rhetorical deliveries and the preaching of clergymen in order to adapt them to the Christian ideology. Jerome's letter 22 to Eustochius, for example, is part of an epistolary tradition that touched upon topics such as virginity, self-presentation and the behaviour of widows. In essence, it helped illustrate the tense atmosphere of sensuality and asceticism which permeated fourth century AD Rome.<sup>54</sup> In warning Eustochius against man's passion for vainglory, Jerome denounces those who (*Ep.* 22.28) 'loaded with chains and wearing their hair long like women, contrary to the apostle's precept, not to speak of beards like those of goats, black cloaks, and bare feet braving the cold'.<sup>55</sup> In his opinion, their obsessive preoccupation over their external appearance could be defined as tricks of the devil (*Ep.* 22.28: *haec omnia argumenta sunt diaboli*). This demeanour was more censurable when 'men of my own order' showed an excessive love for clothing and externals. 'Such men', Jerome complains

(*Ep.* 22.28), ‘think of nothing but their dress; they use perfumes freely, and see that there are no creases in their leather shoes. Their curling hair shows traces of the tongs; their fingers glisten with rings; they walk on tiptoe across a damp road, not to splash their feet. When you see men acting in this way, think of them rather as bridegrooms than as clergymen.’ Other sources also confirm that Rome was fast becoming a real hotbed for displays of vanity. Ammianus Marcellinus, for example, censured (14.6.8) Rome’s adoration of singers, actors and teachers of stage-craft ahead of more righteous figures such as philosophers or orators. Such inclination to ostentation (in Ammianus’s opinion 27.3.14: *ostentationem rerum considerans urbanarum*) was precisely what Jerome wished to extirpate from the public department of Christian figures, as this superfluity might poison the ethos of those engaged in preaching.

Awareness of the importance of standardizing the characteristics of rhetorical delivery also occupied an important place in the works of Ambrose of Milan, yet assessment of his work must not be confined to the mere accommodation of Stoic concepts in the Christian belief system; on the contrary, his acute perception of the importance of the physical dimension of preaching and delivering homilies should also be recognized.<sup>56</sup> Aside from dealing with theological matters, Ambrose’s *De Officiis* is a programmatic work which seeks to establish a protocol for his *Dei milites* (i.e. those who professed the Nicene Creed) who were confronting heretical groups (especially with Arians) in Milan. Described as ‘all style and tactics’, and as a ‘master of the ceremonial style’,<sup>57</sup> Ambrose knew that the sociocultural implications of public performance and self-presentation were firmly embedded in religious affairs, and thus set a Christian political agenda which involved the mastery of rhetorical and performative techniques. Rhetorical delivery and performance became the arena in which concepts such as *verecundia*, *temperantia* and *modestia* became entangled in Ambrose’s construction of the ideal clergyman, a figure who would combine a new conception of manliness and holiness.

In this way Ambrose recovered Stoic and Ciceronian concepts and adapted them for his own purposes. In *De Off.* 1.71, for instance, he declares that ‘modesty ought to be maintained in all our physical movement as well, in the way we carry ourselves, and in the way we walk. It is from the attitude of the body that the condition of the spirit is gauged (. . .) The movement of the body thus acts as a kind of voice for the soul (*Itaque vox quaedam est animi corporis*

*motus*).<sup>58</sup> Thus, one's improper gait provided another branch of discrimination which Ambrose would use to debar a man from entering the clergy. He reveals how an arrogant way of walking stopped one man from being accepted into the local clergy, while another was not admitted because of the unseemly way in which he carried himself. Nevertheless, Ambrose is proud to declare (I.72–3) that he was right in his judgement since both men eventually deserted and betrayed their faith. Furthermore, he did not approve either of people who walked too slowly or too hurriedly. In his opinion, the type of gait that exudes the correct impression is one that allows 'the movement to be natural and simple' (I.75: *motus sit purus ac simplex*). Hence within those texts, actors, heretics and traitors are characterized by a set of improper physical movements (I.73: *histrionicos gestus*) and an inappropriate gait (I.72: *insolentis incessus*).

Added to this, Ambrose's 'strict code of discipline'<sup>59</sup> also included recommendations on the tone of the voice, which, in his eyes, had to be manly and avoid theatricality and be free from the effeminate tarnishing of sophists and actors. Yet in his long treatment in *De Officiis*' proemium, the importance of silence (I.1–22) is contextualized within the realm of rhetoric. Although his treatment tends to revolve around wisdom and prudence (I.5–8), his statement that there was a '*tempus tacendi et tempus loquendi*'<sup>60</sup> (I.9) seems to acknowledge what Gregory of Nazianzus also censured: namely that same virtuoso rhetoric which some priests and bishops exhibited as though they were competing in a rhetorical *agon*.

Ambrose was not alone in criticizing the preponderance of garrulousness and immoderate gesticulation over moderation in preaching. Strong disapproval of sophistry and theatricality became a recurrent leitmotif throughout Christian literature. In fact Augustine devoted some lines of his *De Doctrina Christiana* towards admonishing the overuse of rhythmical clauses (4.XX.41). The fourth book of DDC discusses interaction with the audience (4.XXIV.53), and advice about acceptable voice modulation (4.VII.13–21). The final objective of a preacher, as Augustine confessed, was to instruct, to please and to persuade (4.XII.27: *ut doceat, ut delectet, ut flectat*).<sup>61</sup>

To conclude, Eusebius of Caesarea's portrait of Paul of Samosata as a sophist, John Chrysostom's insistence on emphasizing Bishop Flavian's canonical *actio* before the emperor Theodosius, and the concern of Christian authors of the Latin west over regulating the gestures, voice and clothing involved in their

preaching must be studied as efforts to integrate the performative facet of Late Antique rhetoric into religious orthodoxy. If approached from a broader perspective, the above-mentioned transition from the *vir bonus dicendi peritus* to a *vir sanctus dicendi peritus* did not take place in Russell's *Sophistopolis*<sup>62</sup> but rather in a sort of *Episcopolis* in which the bishop was a multifaceted figure who was at the heart of the creation and resolution of conflicts. The complex process of creating religious orthodoxy entailed seeking approval for the ways homilies and speeches were delivered, and equated heretics and pagans with public figures such as actors or sophists in order to prevent the Christian elites from crossing the thin boundary that existed between preaching and acting, between instructing and entertaining.

## Notes

- 1 My gratitude goes to Mr Mark Hunter for his invaluable help.
- 2 Av. Cameron (2002) 'The Long Late Antiquity: A Late Twentieth-century Model', in T. P. Wiseman (ed.), *Classics in Progress: Essays on Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 180–1.
- 3 L. Pernot (2002) 'Christianisme et Sophistique', *Papers on Rhetoric* 4: 253.
- 4 Classical sources on rhetorical delivery: Quint., *Inst. Or.* XI.3; Arist., *Rh.* 3.1; *Rhet. Ad Her.* III.xi 20–xiv 25; Aristox., *Harm.* 1.3, 9–10; Cic., *De Or.* 3.83, 220.
- 5 Av. Cameron (1991) *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley–London: University of California Press): 122.
- 6 S. Ashbrook (1998) 'The Stylite's Liturgy', *J ECS* 6:3, 525–6. See also P. Brown (1992) *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press): 56.
- 7 Translation taken from P. Schaff's work in <http://m.ccel.org/mt/mobile/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iv.vii.ii.html>.
- 8 R. Kirschner (1984) 'The Vocation of Holinees in Late Antiquity', *VG* 38, 105.
- 9 J. Bremmer (1993) 'Walking, Standing and Sitting in Ancient Greek Culture', in J. Bremmer and H. Roodenburg (eds), *A Cultural History of Gesture: From Antiquity to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Polity Press): 20: 'In fact, in late antiquity an orderly (kosmion), quiet (hemeron, hesychon) and leisurely (scholaion) but not sluggish gait is the cultural idea of pagans and Christians alike.' Similarly T. Penner and C. V. Stichele (2009) 'Rhetorical Practice and Performance in Early Christianity', in E. Gunderson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 253–60.

- 10 E. Osborn (2001) *Irenaeus of Lyon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 155–6.
- 11 B. Leyerle (1960) *Theatrical Shows and Ascetic Lives: John Chrysostom's Attacks on Spiritual Marriage* (Berkeley–London: University of California Press): 5–8.
- 12 Av. Cameron (1991) *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley–London: University of California Press): 20: 'What we might call the "rhetoric" of early Christianity is not . . . rhetoric in the technical sense; rather, the word is used in its wider sense, denoting the manner and circumstances that promote persuasion.'
- 13 V. H. T. Nguyen (2008) *Christian Identity in Corinth: A Comparative Study of 2 Corinthians, Epictetus and Valerius Maximus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck): 125–35; T. Penner (2004) 'Civilizing Discourse: Acts, Declamation, and the Rhetoric of the Polis', in T. Penner and C. V. Stichele (eds), *Contextualizing Acts. Lukan Narrative and Greco-Roman Discourse* (Leiden–Boston: Brill): I, 65–104, especially 68–70.
- 14 S. Kent Stowers (1984) 'Social Status, Public Speaking and Private Teaching: The Circumstances of Paul's Preaching', *NT* 26:1, 81.
- 15 A. E. Judge (1960–1) 'The Early Christians as a Scholastic Community: Part II', *Journal of Religious History* 1, 125.
- 16 B. Winter (2002), *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans): 141–239.
- 17 B. Winter (2002), *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans): 143–4, talks about Paul's 'renunciation of the grand style (. . .) refusal to adopt the rhetorical practices of other Christian preachers in Corinth'. See also R. Dean Anderson (1996), *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* (Kampen: Kok Pharos): 255–6.
- 18 B. Winter (2002) *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans): 221–8. Also V. H. T. Nguyen (2008) *Christian Identity in Corinth: A Comparative Study of 2 Corinthians, Epictetus and Valerius Maximus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck): 125–35.
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- 21 T. George (1994) *The New American Commentary, 30. Galatians* (Nashville: BH Pub Group): 280–1.
- 22 F. Millar (1971) 'Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture and Political Allegiance in Third-century Syria', *JRS* 61: 1–2. Concerning the authenticity of this letter, F. W. Norris (1984) 'Paul of Samosata: Procurator

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- 24 R. Teja (1996) 'Pablo de Samosata: obispo de Antioquía y procurador imperial', *Semanas de Estudios Romanos* 7: 305–20.
- 25 V. Burrus (1989) 'Rhetorical Stereotypes in the Portrait of Paul of Samosata', *VG* 43:3, 215–25.
- 26 Eusebius's translations taken from V. Burrus (1989) 'Rhetorical Stereotypes in the Portrait of Paul of Samosata', *VG* 43:3, 215–25.
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- 28 I borrow some concepts from M<sup>a</sup>.V. Escribano Paño (2010) 'Heretical Texts and *maleficium* in the *Codex Theodosianus* (CTh 16.5.34)', in R. L. Gordon and F. Marco Simón (eds), *Magical Practice in the Latin West* (Leiden–Boston: Brill): 110–14.
- 29 B. Puech (2002) *Orateurs et sophistes grecques dans les inscriptions d'époque impériale* (Paris: Vrin): 12.
- 30 E. Bowie (1982) 'The Importance of Sophists', in J. Winkler and G. Williams (eds), *Later Greek Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 38; B. Schouler (1984) *La tradition hellénique chez Libanios* (Paris: Belles Lettres): 898–9. The problem is exhaustively but unsuccessfully addressed in G. R. Stanton (1973) 'Sophists and Philosophers: Problems of Classification', *AJPh* 94:4, 350–64. See also M. Heath (2004) *Menander: A Rhetor in Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 289–317.
- 31 On this allusion, see L. Lugaresi (1997) *La morte di Giuliano l'Apostata* (Firenze: Nardini): 235–6.
- 32 J. A. MacGuckin (2000) *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood: New York): 114–26.
- 33 L. Lugaresi (1993) *Contra Giuliano l'Apostata* (Firenze: Nardini): 256.
- 34 B. Mayne Kienzle, B. (2002) 'Medieval Sermons and Their Performance: Theory and Record', in C. A. Muessig (ed.), *Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill): 97: 'The concept of moral performance entails for Gregory, like Augustine, a distrust of theatre. Actors are to be watched and not imitated, while preachers must offer a model for imitation.'
- 35 B. E. Daley (2006) *Gregory of Nazianzus* (London–New York: Routledge): 152, n. 714.
- 36 On the elusive information about his career, N. McLynn (2006) 'Among the Hellenists: Gregory the Sophist', in J. Børtnes and T. Hägg (eds), *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum): 220–4.

- 37 A. F. Memoli (1968) 'Eloquentia classica e sapientia cristiana nell' oratio funebris in laudem Basilii Magni di Gregorio Nazianzeno', *Orpheus* 15: 33–71. Similarly D. Westberg (2009) *Celebrating with Words. Studies in the Rhetorical Works of the Gaza School* (Upsala: unpublished PhD): 114–15.
- 38 S. Elm (2000) 'A Programmatic Life: Gregory of Nazianzus' *Orations* 42 and 43 and the Constantinopolitan Elites', *Arethusa* 33:3, 427.
- 39 F. Van der Paverd (1991) *St. John Chrysostom. The Homilies of the Statues* (Rome: Institutum Studiorum Orientalium).
- 40 For bishops acting as ambassadors W. Schoedel (1989) 'Apologetic Literature and Ambassadorial Activities', *HTR* 82:1, 55–78.
- 41 Translation taken from P. Schaff's work in <http://m.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf109.i.html>.
- 42 C. Rapp (1998) 'Comparison, Paradigm and the Case of Moses in Panegyric and Hagiography', in M. Whitby (ed.), *The Propaganda of Power: The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill): 282–3.
- 43 See also V. Burrus (2000) *Beggotten, not Made: Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press): 171: 'In Ambrose's text, silence thus becomes a metonym for a larger complex of virtues joined under the virginalized image of the ideal self as an enclosed garden.' See also H. O. Maier (2004) 'The Politics of the Silent Bishop: Silence and Persuasion in Ignatius of Antioch', *JThS* 55.2, 516.
- 44 Chrys., *In Ignatium* (translation taken from [www.newadvent.org/fathers/1905.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1905.htm)): 'Boldly, therefore, would I say that Ignatius took an accurate impression of the whole of this, in his own soul; and was blameless and without reproach, and neither self-willed, nor soon angry, nor given to wine, nor a striker, but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money, just, holy, temperate, holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, sober, sober-minded, orderly, and all the rest which Paul demanded.'
- 45 C. Rapp (2005) *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity. The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley–London: University of California Press): 272.
- 46 Chrys., *Hom. De Statuis* XXI, 3 (PG 49, 214). However contradictory this may seem, Chrys., *De Sacerdicio*, IV 6 advises against external adornment. See Anon. Seguer. 233.4. Also Ar., *Rh.* 1378a 19ss.
- 47 Cice., *Inv.* I, 15, 20; Quint., *Inst. Or.* IV, 1, 40.
- 48 E. Soler (2001) 'L'utilisation de l'histoire de l'Église d'Antioche au IVe siècle par Jean Chrysostome dans les débuts de son prédication', in B. Pouderon and Y. M. Duvali (eds), *L'historiographie de l'Église des premiers siècles* (Paris: Beauchesne): 509 clarifies why Chrysostom did not reveal the name of the monk: 'le silence de Jean Chrysostome s'étend à tous les grands ascètes du Silpios qui se sont illustrés dans l'histoire de l'Église d'Antioche au IVe siècle.'
- 49 Chrys., *Hom. De Statuis* XVII, 3 (PG 49. 173).

- 50 P. Brown (1992), *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press): 106. See also C. Rapp (2000) 'The Elite Status of Bishops in Late Antiquity in Ecclesiastical, Spiritual and Social Contexts', *Arethusa* 33:3, 379–89.
- 51 On refusing religious ordinance, see R. Kirschener (1984) 'The Vocation of Holiness in Late Antiquity', *VCh* 38:2 (1984): 109–14.
- 52 H. Chadwick (2001) *The Church in Ancient Society: From Galilee to Gregory the Great* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 415–32; C. Shepardson (2007) 'Controlling Contested Places: John Chrysostom's *Adversus Iudaeos* Homilies and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy', *J ECS* 15:4, 494–5.
- 53 C. Rapp (2000) 'The Elite Status of Bishops in Late Antiquity in Ecclesiastical, Spiritual and Social Contexts', *Arethusa* 33:3, 396–8.
- 54 V. Burrus (2001) 'Queer Lives of Saints: Jerome's Hagiography', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 10:3/4, 442–79; G. Castelli (1986) 'Virginity and its Meaning for Women's Sexuality in Early Christianity', *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 2:1, 61–88.
- 55 Jerome's translations taken from C. Mierow (1963) *The Letters of St. Jerome* (London–Longmans).
- 56 I. Davidson (2000) 'Stating the Church. Theology as Theater', *J ECS* 8:3, 413–51.
- 57 V. Burrus (2000) *Beggotten, not Made: Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press): 134.
- 58 Ambrose's translations from I. Davidson (2001) *Ambrose of Milan. De Officiis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). See also Cic., *Leg.* I.9.27; *De Off.* 1.126–32.
- 59 I. Davidson (2001) *Ambrose of Milan. De Officiis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 511.
- 60 *Eccl.* 3:7. See also Ambrose, *De Off.* I.35: 'most people speak simply because they have no idea how to be silent. It is a rare thing for anyone to keep silent, even when there is no gain in speaking. A wise person, before he speaks a word, first asks himself a series of questions. What should he say? To whom should he say it? Where, and when?'
- 61 A. Olivar (1991) *La predicación cristiana* (Barcelona: Herder): 41–4; P. Auski (1995) *Christian Plain Style. The Evolution of a Spiritual Ideal* (Montreal–London: McGill–Queen's University Press): 110–43.
- 62 D. A. Russell (1983) *Greek Declamation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 22.

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