und eine allzu lange nur Eingeweihten zugängliche Diskussion auch einem breiteren Interessentenkreis geöffnet haben.

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Jaclyn L. Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity. John Chrysostom and his Congregation in Antioch*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 210 pp. ISBN-10: 978-0-521-86040-6.

Jaclyn Maxwell (M.) gives a good survey of the aspects and means of rhetoric in the public sphere of Antioch of the fourth century through a discussion of John Chrysostom. The book, based on a Princeton dissertation, is well written and offers the reader a great deal of information about these aspects of Antiquity. Maxwell claims that 'one of the most fascinating aspects of Late Antiquity is the prominence of theological debates. Public discussions and fights over such "intellectual" concerns point to the obvious fact that all people think about the nature of the world and the fate of their souls'. Thus 'the preacher's popularity gave him influence but not control over the laity's beliefs about their religious obligations. In the end, it is clear that both sides contributed to the emerging Christian common sense that would define what was acceptable and what was unacceptable in their communities'. She emphasizes as well that 'the nature of the relationship between the elites and masses is particularly important to the study of Late Antiquity because of the development of a common culture based on Christianity that, to some extent, transcended social classes' (pp. 169-71). Having these basic ideas in mind she discusses philosophical preaching in the Roman world, then dwells on rhetoric and society and describes John Chrysostom's congregation in Antioch. His pedagogical methods are discussed as well as the *Sitz im Leben* in which the rhetorician worked. M. demonstrates how Chrysostom made attempts to attract the various segments of society (such as the poor, middle classes, slaves and artisans as well as other workers, farmers and women), thus making an effort to clarify the interaction between a congregation and its preacher against the background of public speaking within the public sphere. I believe that in this she was only partially successful because of three main shortcomings.

Although here and there M. mentions keywords in Greek (p. 97, for instance), there is very little specific philological analysis of the many keywords that were used by Chrysostom and his predecessors, keywords which would have enabled M. to explore in depth the links between the preacher and daily life (theological, political, economic, ethical, etc.). This may be explained by the fact that the book is intended for the general public and the author therefore avoided technical discussion. But this makes the author's observations at times too general for the specialists. I personally think that in addition to discussing habits and customs of a society and their impact on the relationship between the preacher and his community (what Pierre Bourdieu called 'habitus'), M. should have lingered more on the question of language versus discourse and actual utterances (based on the distinction made by Saussure between 'langue' and 'parole'). In other words, she should have used her philological skills in a much more significant and extensive manner. For instance, in the section on Chrysostom and the Jews (pp. 83-4), M. could have analyzed many of the terms he uses to denigrate the Jews, thus demonstrating the manners of discourse against the "other" in his society.

The people loved John Chrysostom 'for his sermons he gave in the church, and they paid no attention to the things his rivals said about him'.[1] In fact, he took part in a very long and enduring

[1] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, Princeton University Press,

process of a "media revolution" that brought Christianity to what it became at the end of the fourth century (and continued to evolve in later centuries). This media revolution, altogether ignored by the author, contained many elements that brought Christianity into public awareness in the first centuries of the common era, such as public performances by leading Christians, martyrdom as a media asset in the public sphere, the vociferous competition of orthodoxy with its heresies (which became an important asset in publicizing the new religion), and the creation of a significant network of the church and mission as a marketing strategy (an element lacking in the Judaism of the period). Rhetoric was only part of this communication process, and M. lingers solely on this aspect (which became a very important medium for the diffusion of ideas within the public sphere). One would have expected her to show some knowledge of the comprehensive picture, namely the continuity between the fourth century media revolution and earlier centuries, when Antioch played a significant role at the start of the process. M. does not even mention Chrysostom's famous predecessor Paul of Samosata, who introduced this kind of media in a visible manner.[2] The beginnings of a process and its outcome are important to such discussions. This book is rather like a study that describes the French Revolution without mentioning the Enlightenment that preceded it.

It has become impossible to write any book which tackles communication and media in the early centuries without a good understanding of communication studies. True, at one point M. refers to the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, but his theory of 'habitus' is adduced merely to pay tribute to the social sciences without showing a real understanding of it. Thus the connection to her theme is not meaningful. M.'s study could have profited significantly had it drawn on the vast scholarly studies on communication and media published since Harold Innis wrote his (more than half a century ago) and had attempted to combine these two fields of knowledge with the classics. Among the hundreds of bibliographical items, I would start with Denis McQuail's introductory work, *Mass Communication Theory* (Third edition, London-New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1997), and then would consult Ch.H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979), and of course J.D. Peters, *Speaking into the Air. A History of the Idea of Communication* (Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999). Be that as it may, the contempt which many classical philologists still show for the social sciences should come to an end.

In sum, the book is attractively written, gives some useful general information (also to the non-specialist reader, an important undertaking), and refers to the relevant bibliography in ancient history. But since it lacks an original methodological perspective, there is not much in it that is significantly new.

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Zsuzsanna Várhelyi, *The Religion of Senators in the Roman Empire. Power and the Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. xii + 267 pp. ISBN: 978-0-521-89724-2.

The interplay of power and religion has been an intriguing aspect of the study of the history of the Roman Empire. Research has primarily focused on the imperial cult as a paradigm of the interaction of religion and politics as well as on the negotiation of political power by pagans, Jews and Christians in late antiquity. It is surprising that the role of religion has not yet been

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1993, vol. II, p. 174.

2 See Eusebius, *EH*, 7.29.1-30.19, and F.Millar, 'Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria', *Journal of Roman Studies* 61(1971), pp. 1-17.